

Highlands Newspaper

FREE every Thursday

Volume 10, Number 49

Internet PDF Version at www.HighlandsNewspaperPDF.com

Thursday, Dec. 6, 2012

Thurs., Dec 6

• Taize at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation at 5:30 p.m.

Sat. & Sun., Dec. 8 & 9

• The Highlands Community Christian Chorale's Christmas Concert sponsored by Highlands United Methodist Church is Saturday and Sunday at 5 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 315 Main Street. A reception follows the Sunday evening performance. Performances are free to the public.

Sat. Dec. 8

• At The Bascom, Family Storytime: J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit, 3-4:30p.

Sun., Dec. 9

• A musical presentation by the children, youth and adult choirs of Community Bible Church at 7 p.m. All are invited!

Tuesday, Dec. 11

• Come and listen to stories at the Story Swap on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 7 pm, at the Ugly Dog Pub at 294 S. Fourth St. in Highlands. If you have a 3-7 minute story to tell or read, call 526-8322. Pre-registration is required. We are starting a half-hour earlier and this will be our last swap until next summer!

Wed., Dec. 12-Jan 2

• A free support group on Wednesday evenings at 6PM December 12th through January 2nd. Sessions are an hour at the Peggy Crosby Center, 348 South 5th Street, Room 203 (just behind the receptionist desk.) The group will be facilitated by Bonnie Gramlich, a licensed professional counselor. Anyone who struggles with sadness or depression over the holidays is welcome to attend. There is no fee. Contact Bonnie at 828.342.0546 to more information or to sign up for this group.

Thurs., Dec. 13

• HCP's free Christmas reading, 7:30 p.m. at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street in Highlands. No reservations required. Hot cider and holiday sweets will be provided by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and the HCP board.

Town gets tough on overdue electric bills

As of Tuesday, Dec. 4, town employees were instructed to turn off electricity to 200 homes and businesses in Highlands.

According to Town Manager Bob Frye the accounts were between 60 and 90 days past due.

"I was instructed by the Town Board to take this approach," said

Frye. "We have over \$212,000 in past due accounts greater than 90 days which need to be collected. Apparently, because of the past policy of being lenient, many in town feel they can ignore paying a town utility bill. The Town Board feels that this behavior needs to be modified and it is not fair to

those who pay on time to let others slide as much as has occurred."

Due to the seasonality of Highlands and the fact that work slows with winter, the town has always been lenient when it came to cutting off someone's power – especially in the winter when heat

• See ELECTRIC page 5

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New park to put county in line for tournament money

What do ballfields have to do with Economic Development? Apparently, a lot.

At the Nov. 13 Macon County Commission meeting, commissioners learned that Macon County has been missing out on a lot of money – money that could be coming in if the county was set up for traveling softball/baseball team tournaments, known as travel teams.

A number of parents and coaches were at the meeting urging the county to move forward on plans to purchase property and develop a new outdoor recreation park for that purpose.

They said their families travel to other counties in the region and drop up to \$1,000 a week-end for lodging, food, shopping,

• See MONEY page 22

Highlands on Parade



The new Santa and Mrs. Claus make their debut run. For more photos, see page 14.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

Exchange students tell of experiences

A highlight of the Rotary Club of Highlands speaker schedule each year is the presentation by the Rotary Youth Exchange stu-

dents. Introduced by Jeff Weller were Hayden Bates and Samuel Craig, the 2011-12 outbound students from Highlands School who

spoke at the Nov. 13 meeting.

A 'legacy' exchange student, Hayden Bates had two older sib-

• See EXCHANGE page 3

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• LETTERS •

'Bah Humbug!'

Dear Editor,

In regards to Don Swanson's column in the Nov. 28 edition of Highlands Newspaper where he states: "I'm not concerned about retail sales people having to work on what used to pass for a holiday. They knew the rules of the game when they hired on."

Thanks, Don Swanson, thanks!

Now try this line: "A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket every twenty-fifth of December. But I suppose you'll want

the whole day. Be here all the earlier next morning."

Great! You'll be perfect in the role of Scrooge for the community production of "A Christmas Carol."

Somehow I've already been cast as Bob Cratchit.

Merry Christmas and God Bless Us, Every One! (Even those who have to work December 25th).

Luke Osteen
Highlands

LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY

We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions.

NO ANONYMOUS LETTERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.

Please EMAIL letters by Sunday at 5 p.m. There is a 500-word limit without prior approval.

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• MILESTONE •

MC Commissioners take oath

At a special called meeting Monday, Dec. 3, newly elected Macon County Commissioners took the oath of office in the commissioner boardroom in the county courthouse. The oath was delivered by Superior Court Judge James U. Downs.

At the same meeting, Commissioner Kevin Corbin was elected to retain his seat as chairman and Commissioner Ronnie Beale was elected vice chair.

Pictured from top: Jim Tate with his wife Allison, son Ethan and daughter Eliza; Kevin Corbin with his wife Beth and Paul Higdon with his family.



Photos by Don Swanson



... EXCHANGE continued from page 1



Rotary Youth Exchange Students Hayden Bates and Samuel Craig, pictured here with Rotary Club Youth Exchange Liaison Jeff Weller.

lings who were also Exchange Students, her brother Tucker who spent a year in Argentina, and her sister Sara who travelled to South Africa. She felt she had big shoes to fill when she was selected to spend the past school year as an exchange student in Para De Minas, Brazil.

Hayden very fluently began her presentation in Portuguese, the language she was able to learn while living and attending school in a small city where one of the host Rotarians provided tuition for her to attend a parochial.

During her almost full year stay, she was hosted by four different families, travelled with the soccer team to the championship, enjoyed "Fazendas" (farm experience), and traveled with the other 80 Brazilian Exchange Students on group trips.

She joined a street dancing team, participated in Carnival, volunteered at APAE, a school for special needs students, and took both pottery and tennis classes in addition to her academic course work.

Hayden said she "gained confidence and independence as she learned new social norms" and that she grew as she "learned to appreciate small success, and gained an international perspective on world events."

"Thank you Rotary Club of Highlands and Rotary International - you have changed my life," said Sara.

Ms. Bates is now a Senior at Highlands School and is the daughter of Lisa and Thomas Bates

Beginning his presentation in Turkish was Samuel Craig who spent a year living and studying in Ankorah, Turkey, the Capitol City.

Samuel was hosted by three different families and said that he enjoyed the great support system that Rotary provided as well as the contacts with the other Ex-

change Students he met while in Turkey.

"This was the greatest part of my life so far" said Samuel, and "I am so grateful for the outstanding organization and supportive network that the Rotary Exchange program provides."

The son of Kay and Thomas Craig, Samuel is also a student at Highlands School.

Although both Exchange students were geographically in two different hemispheres, they both had many similar experiences that went beyond the mastery of a new language.

Each has great appreciation for the Rotary Exchange program when it came to travel arrangements, country and host family placement and overall support.

Both students also enjoyed having their parents visit them and appreciated being able to show them around their 'new' countries.

Samuel Craig and Hayden Bates were great ambassadors for Highlands.



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Town Board Meeting
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Thursday, Dec. 6 at 7 p.m.
AGENDA

Public Hearing:

- Conditional Use Zoning 594 Main Street
- A. Open Public Hearing
- B. Staff Comments/Recommendation
- C. Public Comments
- D. Close Public Hearing
- E. Council Action

Regularly Scheduled Public Comment Period

Reports:

- A. Mayor
- B. Commissioners and Committee Reports
- C. Town Manager

Planning Matters:

- Request to Appeal Planning Board Decision
- Stephen Ham

Financial Matters

Miscellaneous Matters

- A. Council Committee Appointments
- B. Board Meeting Schedule for 2013

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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Bummer

Life without Buck Trott as Santa is like peanut butter without jelly, like ham without eggs, like soup with out salad, like Highlands without a parking study....like....well, you get the point. Buck is my kinda guy, folks. Maybe if I promised I would never sit on his rickety old knee again he would change his mind? Probably not.

I'll miss him as Santa just like I missed making fun of him when he was mayor of Highlands for so long. When I would zing him in my column for doing some boneheaded thing, he would laugh and proclaim, "Say

whatever you want about me, Fred, just spell my name right." So from that day forward I misspelled his last name and called him Mayor Trout. His sense of humor peaks mine.

He's also a strong member of the "greatest generation" that helped build this country to greatness and to what it used to be.

In my opinion he was the perfect politician and the perfect Santa. How many towns could say they had a mayor and a Santa who were one and the same? As our mayor and Santa, he said yes to everyone and everything and then did what the hell he pleased. Fun, fun, fun! And he did it with a smile on his



with Fred Wooldridge
Feedback is encouraged!
askfredanything@aol.com

face. How can you get mad at someone who is constantly smiling at you? In fact, it's hard to find Buck when he doesn't have a smile on his face, even in more frequent moments of personal physical pain.

He is retired military and I admire him for that also. Being a retired cop, I love and understand the discipline. Surviving as mayor for such a long time in such a quirky town as Highlands also makes me admire him. But I can't imagine life with-

out Buck as Santa. He's held the position for twenty years for crying out loud!

And remember, I'm an old, angry, cranky, grumpy has-been full blooded white American male who was also part of the "greatest generation" that helped build and change this country to greatness. Maybe it's the "greatest generation" era and the changes that were made that also draw me to Buck. You remember change, don't you? You voted for it four years ago. Ha! While I'm always ready for change, it doesn't mean I'm ready for a new Santa. It just won't be the same without Buck as Santa.

And to Allan Dearth, our new Santa, I say thanks for picking up the reins. I wish him well but want to warn him he has a huge pair of shoes to fill. Even though I haven't met him yet, I'm sure he'll be a great Santa for Highlands. He's just not my Santa.

• Time is running out until the end of the world. Hurry and buy Fred's two books, Deceived, a mystery thriller, and I'm Moving Back to Mars, an official book of nonsense, at your local book store or download them on your Kindle or Nook.

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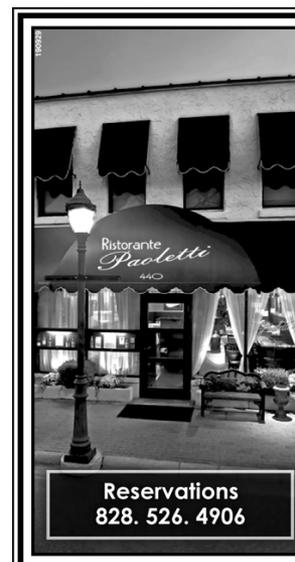


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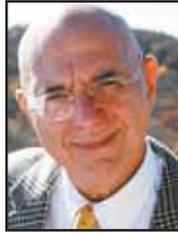
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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

Change is hard



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

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For nearly 20 years the Highlands Christmas has been a must visit, and springboard into the season for me. I'd guess I'm not the only one.

When Buck Trott was mayor and superb Santa, I delighted to see him play twin roles in the parade. I told friends around the country what a magical little mountain town we'd found.

"Imagine," I would begin, and try to adequately describe the wonderful transformation. Near the end, I was sad to see Santa's suit on a hanger in the back of a police car within sight of the Cub Scouts. But if they didn't notice Santa was married to their kindergarten teacher, Buck's metamorphosis probably eluded them as well. Buck was the real Santa. I'm sure he has been adequately replaced and I plan to catch a glimpse of the new guy next weekend, while I'm in town. We all wish him well. He has enormous boots to fill. I was cheered that Buck was Grand Marshall, and hope the position will be his as long as he wants it.

Although the parade is a rich enduring Christmas tradition, it has changed. The march of the basset hounds warmed my heart. Last summer I met a couple from Charlotte. While they were admiring Marley they mentioned that they missed their dog, a Basset. I told them with great excitement about our Basset brigade and suggested they return for the parade. I did warn them the bassets did not march in 2011 and was uncertain of their participation this year. I hope they'll

return next year, but suspect they will waddle down Main only in my dreams. I miss the little guys with ears longer than their gnarly legs which always reminded me of grape vines.

Where have the Thunderbirds gone? Dozens have joined the parade for as long as I can remember. I was a teenaged kid when they first appeared and I thought them the most beautiful car in the world. I still love the early two seaters and can understand why owners of later, less graceful, models were eager to share the route with them.

There must be a club in Atlanta whose members marked the calendar each year in anticipation of our little mountain parade. Owners age, even as their rides remain frozen in eternal glory. Perhaps too many were having their hips replaced, their prostates removed, or their coronary arteries bypassed to make an appearance this year. Join me in wishing them a speedy recovery and a return to next year's parade.

I wish things could be as they were, but there is one constant. The ladies of the Garden Club seem as ageless as the vintage cars. Each year their dedication and hard work produces a wonderful show. Bull and I followed them down the street to catch the second performance, and noticed we were part of a parallel parade, as a dozen or so Garden Club groupies had the same idea. Thank you ladies for the lively steps, graceful gyrations, and wonderful cheer. And thank you for the constancy, without which, Christmas wouldn't be Christmas.

... ELECTRIC from page 1

is key.

However, Frye said those who pay on time are in effect being forced to subsidize those who do not.

"If no attempt is made to collect what is owed us, then rates will inevitably have to be increased to compensate for the loss in revenue," he said.

In January 2012, the Town Board increased electric rates by about 25% to offset the rate hike Duke Power imposed on the town. The town buys electricity from Duke at a wholesale price and resells it to citizens. The rates went into effect at the end of FY 2012 and though the hike was immediately noticed, bills have skyrocketed just with the few cold snaps Highlands has experienced.

The Electric Fund is the town's most lucrative enterprise fund and is one of the reasons the town is habitually in the black and can offer the amenities and infrastructure it can for a town its size.

Frye said the town's policy on late payments is that all bills are due within 30 days of issuance and are subject to disconnection once it passes 30 days.

"We allow for a payment plan which goes for a period of three months but to qualify, half of the bill must be

• See ELECTRIC page 9



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And the loser is ... you

Again I look into a blank screen, without an original thought in my mind. Now that the misery caused by 'Superstorm Sandy' has subsided somewhat (talk about desper-

ation) and the anticipation of the powerball results having been resolved, we are left with "the Fiscal Cliff" occupying the news 24/7. It feels like "Ground Hog Day."

What we are faced with is an

ideologic tug-of-war that, unless someone blinks (the new description of statesmanship) our existing no-growth economy will tank to new depths.

Since Obama would rather exercise his campaigning skills than sit down with Congressional leaders to work out



Don Swanson
Feedback is encouraged. Email swansonson@dnet.net

our fiscal future, he is out among the folks, blaming the Republicans in advance for the economic collapse that appears more and more certain every day.

Then I found an opinion of Rush Limbaugh as covered by mediaite.com:

Conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh challenged political analysts who have repeatedly said this week that President Barack Obama wants to avoid going over the fiscal cliff. Limbaugh said that the automatic, across-the-board tax increases that are coming in January amount to the Democratic party's 'nirvana.'

"Obama wants to go over the cliff," Limbaugh said. "You cannot look at Barack Obama as a

• See SWANSON page 16



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• COACH'S CORNER •

ACC Hoops preview

With my SEC Championship prediction ALMOST coming to fruition (always kill the clock there Mark Richt...jeez) but falling just short-it is time to focus on the college basketball season and the ACC. The bad news...the ACC is really down this year-almost to the point of embarrassment. The good news? The ACC is really young and with some quality new coaches in new places, the league looks set up to be really good in the near future-particularly since we are getting rid of the battery throwers from Maryland. So, without any further ado, let's look at the ACC and predict how the teams will fare this year.

The Favorite?

Duke-A few weeks ago you probably would have had to put NC State in this spot, but after a few uninspiring performances they seem to have been overtaken. This Duke team has a bunch of quality wins, much like last year's team-but that seems to be the only similarity. Duke this year has the balance that most coaches crave, getting double figure scoring out of all 5 starters and not nearly as reliant on the three point shot as in recent years. The only question mark for this group is in regards to their ceiling...guys like Ryan Kelly and Seth Curry have reached their potential, but teams from the next tier may have a higher upside.

The Second Tier

UNC, NCSU, Maryland

Carolina has two blowout losses, but still has the highest upside of any team in the league. They pack a huge scoring punch, but could see more rough sledding if PG Marcus Paige continues to miss time with injuries. NC State is an interesting mix of talent and poor chemistry. If Mark Gottfried can get his team to come together then the Wolf-pack has the ability to win the league. Maryland is a surprise here, but the play of center Alex Len cannot be discarded-



Ryan Potts
tryanpotts@hotmail.com

he has been a rock in the post.

On the Bubble
Florida State, Miami, Virginia Tech

Miami has the ability to be a top tier team, provided that Durand Scott stays healthy. Va Tech has a good record, but no major wins at this point. FSU is always tough defensively under Leonard Hamilton.

All the rest

Boston College, Clemson, Wake Forest, Georgia Tech.

Yikes...not a whole lot here, except that Clemson and Boston College look to be on the rise under two quality coaches. Clemson played very well at times last year, and are rebuilding a bit this year after losing their top two players. Boston College is improving, and Steve Donahue looks to be the real deal coaching wise and will have the Eagles in the right direction.

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A client of mine from Atlanta called me last week, and he expressed an interest in buying another property through me. He reported that he and his family have been thoroughly enjoying their rustic, mountain getaway; they spend every weekend they can in Highlands, sometimes stretching those weekends into 4 days.

He said that he feels (and that some say looks) 10 years younger and is thrilled that he and his daughter can spend time exploring the woods and discovering new hiking trails, like he did when he was a young boy.

In the couple of years he has been a home owner in Highlands, he has noticed the ever-increasing vibrancy to the downtown and the increased number of visitors throughout the year. He remarked to being a bit surprised that Highlands doesn't seem to have as much of an "off season" as before and could see that the time was now to jump back into the market and make another investment.

He and I began discussing different



Susie deVille,
Broker-in-Charge
susie@WhiteOakRG.com

commercial real estate buying opportunities. Each had compelling attributes, charm, and potential for garnering passive income. When it came time to move from discussing surface appeal to having a deeper understanding of the numbers, I stepped him through a cap rate analysis.

So what is a cap rate?

Cap rate is short for capitalization rate. Capitalization rates are an indirect measure of how fast an investment will pay for itself. Cap rates provide a tool for investors to use for roughly valuing a property based on

its Net Operating Income. How do you determine cap rates?

Cap rate is calculated by dividing the Net Operating Income (NOI) by the sale price. So if you take your gross income generated by the property, subtract all normal operating expenses, excluding depreciation and loan payments, you get your NOI. Divide this NOI by the sale price and you have a cap rate expressed as a percentage. Stated as an easy formula: Cap Rate = NOI/Sale price.

And what is considered to be a good cap rate? The answer is it depends. Cap rates vary depending upon on the property, stability of tenant, length of lease, location, etc. Remember the cap rate is just a quick "curb appeal" measurement. Generally speaking, if we are in a cap rate range of 5% - 7% or more, the property warrants further investigation.

Once we have calculated cap rates, if we are still a go, we turn things over to the Buyer's preferred financial advisor for a more detailed analysis of the property, including perhaps determining its internal rate of return (IRR). The IRR is a rate of return used in capital budgeting to measure and compare the profitability of investments. Once this data is in hand, we may consider all the elements of the investment decision and proceed accordingly.

There are many, compelling commercial investment opportunities available in the Highlands area. And as our market growth increases and strengthens, wise investors are now considering buying options while selection is still diverse and prices are competitive.

• Susie deVille, ME, ABR, SFR, is Owner/Broker-in-Charge of White Oak Realty Group. Her areas of expertise include real estate investments, niche marketing, social media, and strategic property positioning. An expert in entrepreneurship and anthropology, Susie applies her acumen in human behavior toward negotiating and advocating on behalf of her clients. White Oak Realty Group's sales office is located at 125 South Fourth Street in the heart of the retail district in Highlands. For more information, visit WhiteOakRG.com or call (828) 526-8118.



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... **ELECTRIC** continued from page 5

paid up front and the rest paid over three months with the understanding that the current account charges must be paid as well," said Frye.

Frantic citizens have been turning to the Highlands Emergency Council for help.

"We have had an increase in requests for help with electric bills but we typically don't help with electric," said Emergency Council Treasurer Jennifer Creswell. "But our mission is to prevent people from going cold or hungry, so if a client heats with electric we do what we can with funds available. Sometimes the fuel committee may approve an electric bill if the client heats with electric but we only approve based on funds available." In addition, the Emergency Council has a separate account for extreme emergencies – for locals in extreme need and funds are always paid directly to the provider, not to citizens.

The Emergency Council's Fuel Account is a separate account for which money is raised to help with people's fuel bills – wood/propane/fuel, not usually electric.

An "Accepting Applications" notice in publicized with a deadline for help with fuel heating.

"A client can come by and fill out the application. We have a committee that vets and approves those clients. The council will approve an amount based on the monies available and the number of families who have applied. The council tries to give everyone the same amount but with different types of heating (wood, fuel, propane) it varies a little and the amount paid per person is based on need," said Creswell.

However, if a client has received help from Social Services they cannot receive help from the Emergency Council.

"If there is an extreme need, and

there are some funds available but not enough to cover the entire amount I have seen multiple parties or nonprofits help the client," she said.

Frye said many feel that Highlands is a small town and don't realize its utility operation is a \$9 million a year operation which has to be run like any other business. That means requiring people to meet their responsibilities and pay their bills on time or at least make arrangements for a

payment plan.

"Since we find ourselves with such a large amount of unpaid bills, the Town Board determined it was time for a more stringent collection process" he said.

Frye said neither he, his staff, nor the Town Board take such steps lightly and they don't enjoy having to tell someone they must pay their bills 'or else.'

"But at this point, we will work to collect what is owed the town," he said.

To keep the money coming in and to offset rate hikes Duke Power imposed and will likely continue to impose on the town, the Town Board is considering raising rates again in 2013.

However, Frye said collection of utility bills could very well be the determining factor over whether or not there will be additional rate increases next year.

– **Kim Lewicki**

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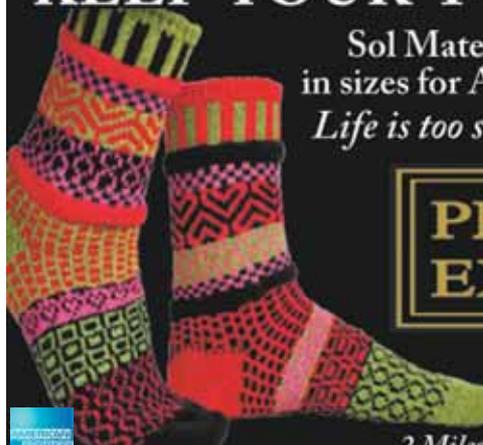
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Highlands Area Upcoming Events

Ongoing

• Eastern Star will also be selling pecan pieces and pecan halves from the 2012 crop. The pecans are in 16 oz bags and will be on sale for \$9/bag. Please call Naomi Chastain, Worthy Matron, at 526-3487 and leave a message with your name and phone number. Call backs will be made once the pecans have been received in mid-November.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class at the Rec Park. 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$20/month.

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at the Rec Park, 8-9 a.m. \$10 per class or \$40 a month.

• Zumba at the Rec Park, 9:05a-10a. \$5 per class. First class free.

Mondays

• Mountain View Group of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held in the Faith and Fellowship Center of First

Presbyterian Church. Enter via the entrance on 5th St. and proceed a few steps down to the library.

Tuesdays

• Highlands Rotary Club meets at noon at the Highlands Conference Center at noon.

• Closed AA Women's meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Wednesdays

• The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the H-C Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs downstairs. Visitors are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 am.

• Men's interdenominational Bible Study at 8:30 a.m. at First Baptist Church.

• The Homegrown Buds, a homeschool 4-H club, meets at noon at the Macon County Library on Siler Road in Franklin at 1 p.m.

• Mah Jong games will be held, open to the public, at the Albert Carlton Cashiers- Community Library at 1 p.m.

Wednesdays & Fridays

• Open AA meeting at noon at the Presbyterian Church at Fifth and Main streets.

Thursdays, Fri., Sat., Sun.

• Live music at Altitudes at Skyline Lodge, 470 Skyline Lodge Road off Flat Mountain Road. Call 526-2121.

Thursdays

• Al-Anon meeting, noon at the Episcopal Church on Main and Fifth streets.

• The Highlands Writers Group meets at 1 p.m. at the Hudson Library. Call Anne Doggett at 526 8009.

• Free dinner at the Cashiers Community Center from 5-7 p.m. Mostly organic, healthy food. Donations accepted. Call 743-5706 for more information. Volunteers needed!

Second Thursdays

• The regular meeting of Highlands Chapter #284, Order of The Eastern Star is held at 7:30 p.m.

Saturdays, Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15

• Santa will be hearing wishes at the Highlands Visitor Center on Main Street near Third from 10a-4p and by appointment on Saturday, Dec. 22

Saturdays

• At Mountain Fresh Grocery, free wine tastings from 2-4 p.m.

• The Art Room, 45 East Main St. in Franklin is having free Make & Take Classes from 10am to 12:30. Come make a Card...Ages 15 and up please! Call Diane 828-349-3777 or Robin 828-421-9891.

Every Third Saturday

• The Highlands Memorial Post #370 of the American Legion meets at the Shortoff Baptist Church. Breakfast is at 9 am. Meeting is at 10 a.m. All veterans are invited to attend.

Through Sun. Jan. 6

• At The Bascom, 'Tis the Season Giving Trees. Live and artificial trees will be decorated for the holidays by area nonprofits. Donation boxes will be at each tree.

Thurs., Dec 6

• Taize at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation at 5:30 p.m.

Sat. & Sun., Dec. 8 & 9

• The Highlands Community Christian Chorale's Christmas Concert sponsored by Highlands United Methodist Church (HUMC) is Saturday and Sunday at 5 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 315 Main Street. A reception follows the Sunday evening performance. Performances are free to the public.

The Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner



What will you be doing in the days before Christmas? Shopping, wrapping? I can tell you how Marty Rosenfield, Donna Woods, Holly Roberts, and Martha Porter will be spending a lot of theirs. Preparing the awesome foods and deserts that will be served at The Hudson House on Christmas Day to the many Highlanders and Highlands visitors. A scrumptious buffet of turkey, ham, tenderloin, all sorts of fresh vegetables and, of course, Donna's always delicious cornbread dressing, and more confection varieties than I can mention. Hours are spent cooking 15 turkeys, 100 pounds of dressing, casseroles, and side dishes, and pounds of pastries!

The dinner will be served from 11am until 5pm by our all volunteer staff, and seating is by reservation only. The Dinner, for adults, will be \$35, children under 12, \$15, and kids 5 and under are free.

The dinner, as always, is a fundraiser for local nonprofits. This year, all proceeds go to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, REACH of Macon County, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands.

To reserve your place at the table, call 828-526-9419. Bring your family, and meet your friends for dinner on Christmas Day, and we'll do the dishes!

HCP's free Christmas Reading

The 18th annual Highlands-Cashiers Community Players Holiday Reading Program is on Thursday, Dec. 13 at 7:30 pm at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street.

The theme this year is "Christmas

Memories" and features personal stories written and presented by local residents, some of whom are accomplished writers, several are seasoned actors and singers and some are familiar faces in various community activities.

Mrs. Edna Bryson who is a native of Highlands, will share a humorous story of one Christmas in particular from her childhood, growing up in the Shortoff community.

As a special addition, Betty Holt is allowing one of her new songs, "When I think of Christmas" to be introduced by Vangie Rich and Wayne Coleman.

Additional presenters are, Lee Lyons, Diane Rosazza, Donna Cochran, Glen-



Edna Bryson with Vangie Rich

da Maxwell Bell, Virginia Talbot, Jennifer Royce, Curtis Rich, Luke Osteen, and Susan Duncan.

The annual Christmas Reading program is the Highlands-Cashiers Community Players gift of appreciation for community support and admission is free of charge, no reservations are required. The doors open at 7 p.m. and early arrivals will enjoy music during Gathering Time by Les Scott, Minister of Music at Highlands United Methodist Church playing the Dulcimer and Guitar accompanying Michelle Hott, vocalist. Following the program everyone is invited to fellowship with hot cider and special homemade cookies and cakes provided by the volunteers of the Hospitality committee. Vintage and collectible set decorations loaned by Donna Cochran, Virginia Talbot and Dean Zuch, Lee Lyons, Vangie Rich and Barbara Werder. Plan to attend this unique Christmas program not soon forgotten!

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

Sat. Dec. 8

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 3-mile moderate hike with elevation change of 600 ft. on Ranger Falls Trail from Cliffside Lake on an interesting interpretive trail of historic significance. Meet in Franklin at BiLo at 9:30 a.m. Drive 24 miles round trip. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

• At The Bascom, Family Storytime: J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit, 3-4:30p.

Sun., Dec. 9

• A musical presentation by the children, youth and adult choirs of Community Bible Church at 7 p.m. All are invited!

• The High Mountain Squares will be having a special "TOY'S FOR TOTS DANCE" on Sunday, December 9th at the Macon County Community Building on Route 441 South from 2-5 PM. Jim Duncan will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. Everyone is welcome and please bring a new toy for a child. For information call 828-349-0905, 828-524-4930, 828-524-2280, or www.highmountainsquares.org

Tuesday, Dec. 11

• Come and listen to stories at the Story Swap on Tuesday, Dec. 11, 7 pm, at the Ugly Dog Pub at 294 S. Fourth St. in Highlands. If you have a 3-7 minute story to tell or read, call 526-8322. Pre-registration is required. We are starting a half-hour earlier and this will be our last swap until next summer!

Wed., Dec. 12-Jan 2

• A free support group on Wednesday evenings at 6PM December 12th through January 2nd. Sessions are an hour at the Peggy Crosby Center, 348 South 5th Street, Room 203 (just behind the receptionist desk.) The group will be facilitated by Bonnie Gramlich, a licensed professional counselor. Anyone who struggles with sadness or depression over the holidays is welcome to attend. There is no fee. Contact Bonnie at 828.342.0546 to more information or to sign up for this group.

Thurs., Dec. 13

• HCP's free Christmas reading, 7:30 p.m. at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street in Highlands. No reservations required. Hot cider and holiday sweets will be provided by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and the HCP board.

Fri., Dec. 14

• Christmas Bird Count: Highlands Plateau Audubon invites you to participate in their 113th year of Christmas Bird Counting. Join them the morning of Friday. No experience needed. Binoculars available. Warm \$5.00 chili lunch follows count. Contact Brock Hutchins at 828-787-1387 or 404-295-0663 or brockhutchins@bellsouth.net. For details and to sign up. This is a popular and fun event!

Sat. Dec. 15

• At The Bascom, Family Storytime: J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit, 1:30-3p.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 7-mile moderate-to-strenuous hike with elevation change of 1300 ft. on Bradley Fork and Smokemont Loop in the GSM-NP with a side trip to Chasteen Creek Cascade. Meet at Oconaluftee Visitor Center at 9 a.m. Drive 8 miles round trip. Call leader Keith Patton, 456-8895, for reser-

ervations. Hike limited to 15 hikers. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

• American Red Cross First Aid, CPR & AED Class 2-year certification at 8 a.m. \$75. Questions and registration at the Highlands Rec Park/Civic Center. 526-3556.

• The Franklin Cross Country team will be hosting the Grayson Hall Memorial 5K race on Saturday at 10 a.m. at Tasse Park on the Little Tennessee Greenway in Franklin, NC. For more information and registration forms contact Denise Davis at 828-524-6467 or denise.davis@macon.k12.nc.us. The registration fee is

\$20 and you can register online at active.com. Registration for students is \$15, but can't be done online. Register before December 7th and get a free t-shirt.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 9-mile strenuous hike with elevation change of 500 ft. following the Appalachian Trail from Deep Gap to Raven Rocks for great views of Lake Chatuge, Shooting Creek Valley and Brasstown Bald. Meet in Franklin at Westgate Plaza at 9 a.m. Drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Don O'Neal, 586-5723, for reservations.

Sun. Dec. 16

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 2-mile easy

hike up an old road to Mud Creek Falls, a lovely falls despite its name, with an interesting old bridge at the trail head. Meet at Smoky Mtn. Visitors Center in Otto, 2 pm. Drive 12 miles round trip. Call leader KayCoriell, 369-6820, for reservations.

Sat. Dec. 22

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 4.4-mile easy-to-moderate hike with an elevation change of 400 ft. from Sloan Bridge to Whitewater Falls on the Overlook Trail with great winter views from ridge above the falls. Meet at Cashiers Recreation Park at 10 a.m. Drive 14 miles round trip. Call leaders Mike and Susan Kettles, 743-1079, for reservation.

The Highlands Community Christian Chorale presents 'An Appalachian Christmas'



By Wiley Sloan

The Highlands Community Christian Chorale's Christmas Concert sponsored by Highlands United Methodist Church (HUMC) is Saturday, December 8th and Sunday, December 9th at 5 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 315 Main Street. A reception follows the Sunday evening performance. Performances are free to the public.

"An Appalachian Christmas" features choral and instrumental arrangements by Les Scott, Minister of Music at HUMC. The piece was inspired by the widowed matron of the Eller Family from Hiwassee, GA. Mrs. Eller, known to all in the area as "Miss Loethe", was a talented songwriter. As a pioneer woman made a quilt from various types of cloth, Miss Loethe combined snippets of her favorite songs into a wonderful song that tells the story of early Christmases in the region. You'll recognize parts of Go Tell It on the Mountain, Mary What You Gonna Name that Baby, and some old-time gospel beat in her creation that she called

What You Gonna Name That Pretty Baby? Listen for this masterpiece as one of the songs in An Appalachian Christmas. The cantata is composed from songs and accompanying readings rich in Appalachian history and culture – from pioneer days until the present, from Virginia to Georgia.

Les excitedly tells me, 'An Appalachian Christmas' is a celebration of Appalachian Mountain Christmas traditions both old and new, near and far. All the music comes from folk music collectors, such as John Jacob Niles, the famed Kentucky folklorist, Art Rosenbaum, professor of folklore at the University of Georgia, and the singing traditions of Appalachian families, such as the Ritchie Family of Perry County, Kentucky, the Beers Family of Virginia, and the Eller Family of Hiwassee, GA, who have lived in these mountains since pioneer days. A large ensemble of Appalachian instruments - guitars, fiddles, banjos, and dulcimers as well as piano - will accompany the Chorale."

Christmas bird count is counting on you!



As we have done for many years now, Highlands Plateau Audubon Society will once again participate in the Christmas Bird Count which takes place nationwide each year, collecting data on species which aids in following trends that indicate "the state of our birds," their increases and declines. Our date is Friday, December 14th, and all are welcome, from beginners to experienced birders, we need your help!

Participants can aid in recording species and numbers, driving, looking and listening, as we try to cover our usual territories in and around the Highlands Plateau that day. This is a really fun morning (starting at 7 am), with a noon gathering for a warming chili lunch and comparison of successes, failures, and star birds for the day. If interested, and we hope you are, please call Brock Hutchins, 828-787-1387 or 404-295-0663, or email him at brockhutchins@bellsouth.net. Loaner binoculars are available if needed. Come join us and participate in one of Audubon's oldest and most fun events!

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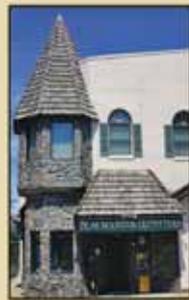
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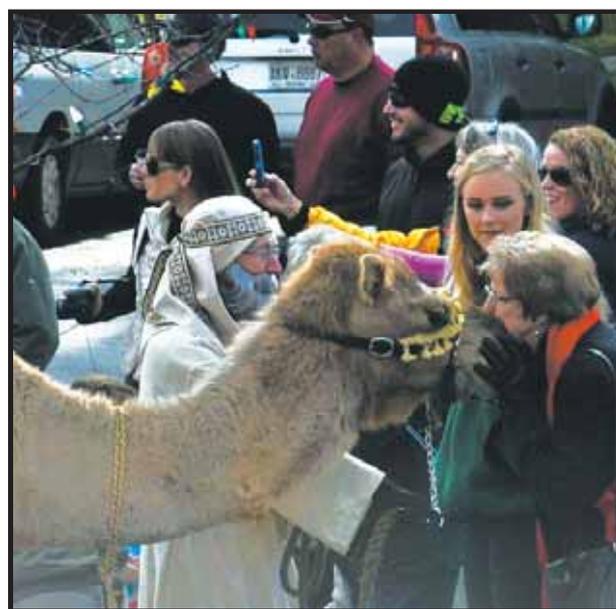


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Highlands Annual Christmas Parade – Saturday, Dec. 1

There were 58 entries in the parade this year, which was a little less than last year. The Thunderbirds, which take up about 20 spaces, had to go to a car show in Helen, GA, the same day. The parade began at 11 a.m. and stayed right on schedule. Santa crossed 3rd Street four minutes before noon. The parade ended at 2nd Street.



Photos by Jim and Kim Lewicki and Rick Glass

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Making room for Jesus this Christmas



Pastor Charles Harris
First Baptist Church
of Highlands

We are entering the Christmas Season. I am concerned that some of us may get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of the Christmas season that we will fail to observe and celebrate its real purpose. The story is told of two ladies shopping during the Christmas Holidays. They were commenting on a manger scene in a store front window. One lady said as she observed the manger scene "Look at that. . . .religion is trying to take over Christmas." Let me remind you that Jesus' birth is the "Reason for the Season!"

Dr. Luke is the only gospel writer that shares information about Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:1-7). He shares six facts: 1. Joseph and Mary had traveled from Nazareth down to Bethlehem. 2. The reason for the trip was that a "taxation enrollment" had been issued by the controlling Roman government. 3. That Jews were to return to their birth place when possible to be enrolled for taxation purposes. 4. That Mary was pregnant and was about to give birth to Jesus. 5. That Jesus was Mary's first child, implying that she would give birth to additional children. 6. That Mary gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem.

It is interesting that Dr. Luke casually mentions the no-vacancy event and does not even mention the Innkeeper. We do not know the innkeeper's name or the name of the Inn that he operated. Dr. Luke simply tells us that Jesus was born in a stable "because there was no room in the inn."

It is possible that the innkeeper was insensitive. . . .even callous. If that is true perhaps he turned Joseph and Mary away without any feeling of remorse. If he did, then he deserves the negative things that have been said about him because he forced Mary and Joseph to find shelter for the night elsewhere.

My 18 years as Director (Innkeeper) of Caraway Conference Center and Camp, Asheboro, NC, reminds me that the innkeeper had at least three options regarding Joseph and Mary's need: 1. The innkeeper could have appealed to his guests to give up their room by explaining Mary's circumstances and need. 2. He could have considered this an emergency situation and commandeered an occupied room. 3. He could have given Mary and Joseph his own living quarters.

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 17

John 3:16

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

Proverbs 3:5

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Wed.: Men's Bible Study -8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church
Thurs.: Women's Prayer Group - 10 a.m., Whiteside Presbyterian Church;
Healing Service at noon

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Tuesday: 8 a.m. Men's Cursillo Group; Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Reverend Howard L'Enfant
Thursday: 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Dr. Charles Harris, Pastor • 526-4153
Sun.: Worship 10:45 a.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.
Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m., Prayer Meeting – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 5 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor • 526-3175
Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun. 8:30a communion service June-Labor Day;
School – 9:30
Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast
Wednesdays – Choir – 7

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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Rev. Carson Gibson

Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am
Bible Study – 6 pm

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Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson
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Sunday: School 9:30 a.m.; Morning Worship 10:45 a.m., Evening
Worship, 6:30 p.m.
Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.m.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376
Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 8:30 & 10:50.; Youth Group 5:30 p.
Wed: Supper; 6: 7:15 – children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 – Adult
choir (nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)
Thurs: 12:30 – Women's Bible Study (nursery)

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Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425
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Choir – 6 p.m.

Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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... SWANSON continued from page 6

typical American or Washington politician. He doesn't have the same concern." Limbaugh said that Obama cares nothing for his legacy of reducing the nation's debt. He says that Obama's goals are far different from those of presidents who care about the long-term health of the nation.

The other day, the Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner made an offer from the administration to deal with the impending crisis.

From Charles Krauthammer as reported by realeclearpolitics.com: "It's not just a bad deal, this is really an insulting deal. Robert E. Lee was offered easier terms at Appomattox than what Geithner offered to the Republicans.

This idea - there are not only no cuts in this, there is an increase in spending with a new stimulus. I mean, this is almost unheard of. What do they expect? They obviously expect the Republicans will cave on everything. I think the Republicans ought to simply walk away. The president is the president. He's the leader. They are demanding that the Republicans explain all the cuts they want to make.

We had that movie a year-and-a-half

ago where Paul Ryan presented a budget, a serious real budget with real cuts. Obama was supposed to give a speech where he would respond with a counter offer. And what did he do? He gave a speech where he had Ryan sitting in the front row. He called the Ryan proposal un-American, insulted him, offered nothing, and ran on "Mediscare" in the next 18 months.

And they expect the Republicans are going to do this again? The Republicans are going to walk on this. And I think they have the leverage. Yes, for congressional Democrats it will help them in the future if Republicans absorb the blame because we have a recession. But Obama is not running again unlike the Congressional Democrats. He's going to have a recession, 9% unemployment, 2 million more unemployed, and a second term that's going to be a ruin. This is not a good proposition if you are Barak Obama."

On a related front, Geithner says "Eliminate the debt ceiling." From the Washington Free Beacon: "Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner says he believes the U. S. debt ceiling should be eliminated in a new interview with Bloomberg's At Hunt. "Do you agree with Alan Greenspan that we ought to just eliminate the debt ceiling?" Hunt asks Geithner. "Oh, absolutely," he replies.

The Treasury estimates the United States will surpass the debt ceiling - a legal restriction on the amount of money the U. S. government can borrow - at the end of 2012. The current debt ceiling is approximately \$16.4 trillion. Congressional action is required to increase the debt ceiling."

Don't you think it's a good idea that the executive branch should be forced to ask permission before they spend our children's money?

I wonder if any of our genius officials remember an action taken last year by one of the bond rating agencies. From Bloomberg on Aug. 6, 2011: "Standard & Poor's downgraded the U.S. one level to AA+ while keeping the outlook 'negative' as it becomes less confident Congress will end Bush-era tax cuts or tackle entitlements. The rating may be cut to AA within two years if spending reductions are lower than agreed to, interest rates rise or 'new fiscal pressures' result in higher general government debt."

Just a guess, but I'm willing to bet that our bond rating will fall to A or lower by 2020. Won't the interest rate on that debt be a killer?

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There is not any evidence to prove that the innkeeper was callous or caring. The Bible seems to leave it up to us to decide. History does suggest that inns of that day were simple and rustic. Many stables of that day were similar to the inns....reasonably clean, and usually quieter and more private than the inn. Guests usually brought their own food. The innkeeper would have provided a way to heat the food and a place for his guests to sleep. Also, he would have provided shelter and food for their animals. The innkeeper may have been sensitive

and caring by providing Mary and Joseph with the most private accommodations that he had available.

Chuck Swindoll, a popular and respected Bible teacher and preacher, tells a memorable story regarding the presentation of a Christmas pageant. Wally, a socially promoted fourth grade student, desired to be "Joseph," but had been chosen to be the "Innkeeper" because he was physically larger than the other boys in the fourth grade. During practice Wally did as he was told. He responded to Joseph's request for a room with a gruff voice saying "I have no more

rooms!" However, during the pageant's first presentation after Wally said to Joseph gruffly "I have no more rooms!" he watched Mary and Joseph as they walked away. Suddenly, overcome with emotion and teary-eyed, Wally cried out "Come back Joseph and Mary...you can have my room!" For a moment, the Director and the audience thought Wally's emotional outburst would negatively affect the pageant. Instead it added new depth.

Christmas will be a busy time for most of us. Unfortunately, even Christians can get so busy that we forget to observe Christmas for the

right reason. Will you make room for Jesus in your life this Christmas Season? A more important question, if you have not already do so, will you make room for Jesus permanently in your life as I did 58 years ago at the age of 13?

This will be my last article since I will be concluding my ministry at First Baptist Church Highlands as Intentional Interim Pastor. Please welcome Dr. Mark Ford

and His wife Teresa as Mark becomes our senior pastor, January 1, 2013. It has been a delight for my wife and me to serve here in Highlands. We have gained many new friends and some precious memories to treasure.

May I be one of the first to wish you and your family a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New year!"

Julie A. Farrow, MD Specialized Women's Care

"After a recent, and what I considered an emergent surgery, I'm left with wellness and nothing but praise for Dr. Julie Farrow and staff at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Suffering with extreme pain and grief from a large infected fibroid tumor, I needed relief! I was quickly seen by Dr. Farrow who fully explained my condition and possible treatment options. In just a few days, surgery was performed and my pain had subsided. I cannot express my gratitude for the speed and efficiency of care I received. My appreciation for Dr. Farrow and for our exemplary community hospital is immense!"

-Tamra "Tammy" Talley
Scaly Mountain, NC

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Julie A. Farrow, MD
Gynecology

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Certification

- Dr. Farrow is Board Certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology, a fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and a member of the North American Menopause Society. She is a graduate of Mercer University School of Medicine, Macon, GA and completed her residency at St. Paul University Hospital at UT Southwestern, Dallas, Texas.

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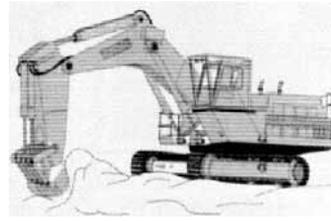
In honor of Hudson Library's November display featuring area canners, the library staff hosted an open house complete with the canners serving samples of their fare on Friday, November 16. Pictured are Mozelle Edwards and Beth Crisp of The Condiment Shop.

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Rotary's 'students' of the month

The Rotary Club of Highlands honored the November Highlands School Scholars at its Nov. 27 meeting. Pictured from left to right are: Thomas Jessup, School Counselor, Stephanie Barnes, Caroline Christy, Tiffany Preda, and club President, Brian Stiehler



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Sale of book benefits H-C Hospital

The book, "Age With A Giggle," is an inspirational pep talk for all women and recently a generous benefit for Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. With book sales exceeding 800, "Age With a Giggle," has raised over \$8,000 and is being sold in 20 retail shops in Highlands and Cashiers with all proceeds donated to the hospital. Author Sharyn Chapman has been contributing to the hospital through the sale of her art for numerous years, but last year completed "Age With a Giggle" the first book in a three-book series entitled "Learn Laugh Learn." Call (828) 526-1435 for store locations.

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• BIZ NEWS •

Andy Muncey graduates from the UNC CGCIO™ Certification Program

Andy Muncey, Macon County, has successfully graduated from the 2012 Certified Government Chief Information Officers Program™ at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Government.

The CGCIO™ program is the first local government specific program for CIOs in the nation and began in 2005. The program is designed for local government Chief Information Officers and Information Technology Directors whose challenging responsibilities require a broad understanding of management, leadership, legal, regulatory, and enterprise topics. The course is approximately 240 hours in length and course instruction covers strategic technology planning, communica-

tion, project management, emerging trends, risk assessment and management, acquisition management, change management, leadership, security, legal issues and financial trends. The program seeks to elevate the position of the dedicated and talented cadre of public sector technology leaders who work tirelessly to serve the public good through strategic investments in technology.

Andy Muncey is Macon County's IT Director and is one of the 40 public sector leaders who successfully completed the course this year. Over the course of its existence, the CGCIO™ program has graduated over 800 public sector technology leaders across the nation

Magruder joins Mountain Area Family Medicine

New Family Medicine physician, R. Lawrence "Larry" Magruder, MD joins Highlands-Cashiers Hospital's Mountain Area Family Medicine Practice in Cashiers, NC beginning to see patients on December 10th.

Larry Magruder, MD, who is board certified in Family Medicine has more than 20 years clinical experience in Family, Emergency, and Geriatric Medicine. He will join Family Physician Toby Lindsay, MD, Physician Assistant, Richard Wayne and Family Nurse Practitioner, Jane Pressler.

"I'm really looking forward to his arrival. He's going to be a great addition to the practice, and to our community," said Dr. Toby Lindsay. "We share very similar philosophies when it comes to giving our patients very thorough, personal health-care. His experience is vast in both clinical and emergency medicine and I believe will be a perfect fit for the community's needs."

Magruder, a native of Texas, was until recently in Emergency Medicine serving on the Medical Staff at Hopkins Memorial Hospital. Prior to that, he was in private practice in Rockwall, TX. He completed a Fellowship in Academic Medicine from the Faculty Development Center in Waco,



Texas and taught Family Practice Residency during 10 years of his full time clinical practice. Magruder is the author of numerous articles published in Family Practice News.

"Dr. Magruder's decision to relocate to our area is very welcome news here at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital," said Craig James, President and CEO at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. "Bringing a primary care physician to the Cashiers area will meet a critical need here.

A graduate of Duke University, Magruder earned his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, TX, and completed his internship and residency at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. As part of his agreement with the hospital, Magruder will join the hospital's team of emergency room physicians.

"My wife Diane and I both love the rural mountains and could think of no place we had rather relocate than Highlands/Cashiers, and look forward to becoming members of the community," said Dr. Magruder. "We have enjoyed meeting the staff at Mountain Area Family Medicine, and look forward to a long relationship with the hospital and with the people of the community. I'm excited to get started!"

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• POLICE/FIRE DEPT. REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from Nov. 23. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Nov. 23

• At 10 a.m., Johnathon B. Smith, 21, of Highlands, was arrested for possessing drug paraphernalia, possessing up to 1/2 oz of marijuana and for driving recklessly to endanger when he was stopped for a traffic violation on Oak Street.

Nov. 24

• At 7:45 a.m., officers were called the Citgo gas station where a \$20 smoking pipe considered drug paraphernalia containing up to 1/2 oz of marijuana was found on the ground.

Dec. 3

• At 1:34 a.m., Johnathon B. Smith, 21, of Highlands, was arrested for DWI, failure to stop at duly erected stop sign on Oak Street and possessing less than 1/2 oz of marijuana.

• At 5:04 p.m., Onofre Tecuatl Ismael, 26, of Sylva, was arrested for driving with a revoked license on Webbmont Road.

• At 3:30 p.m., a forgery case involving \$3,550 that took place last

May at PNC Bank was finalized.

Dec. 4

• At 8 a.m., a breaking and entering was reported at a residence on Cobb Road where a set of golf clubs valued at \$2,000 were taken.

• During this timeframe, officers issued 14 citations (warnings, ordinance violations and citations)

Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Nov. 27

Nov. 27

• At 1:14 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Whiteside Mountain Road set off by a Jackson County building inspector.

• At 5:16 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence at Highlands Walk.

Nov. 30

• At 2:54 a.m., the dept. responded to a possible electric fire in a building on N. 4th Street. Town crews handled the problem.

Dec. 1

• At 11:15 a.m., the dept. responded to a possible structure fire caused by a problem with the furnace.

• At 2:15 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call on Main Street.

• HS SPORTS •

Lady Highlanders win a pair

By Ryan Potts

The Lady Highlander basketball team won their first two games of the season last week with a pair of victories against Tallulah Falls and Tamasee-Salem. Against the Lady Indians of Tallulah Falls, the Lady Highlanders used a full court press to open up an early double digit lead, but some hot three point shooting from the Lady Indians helped them to take a one point lead in the third quarter. Highlands was able to respond thanks to the play of Junior center Emily Shuler, who scored 16 points in the 56-35 victory. Ann-Marie Crowe added 10 points for the Lady Highlanders.

Wednesday, the Lady Highlanders came out strong from the get-go and dominated the Lady Eagles from Tamasee-Salem to the tune of a 48-16 final score. All Lady Highlander players scored, and Kirstyn Lamb and Emily Gabbard both scored 10 points each for Highlands.

Highlanders move to 3-1

The Highlands Highlanders won a pair of games last week, defeating the Tallulah Falls Indians and the Tamasee-Salem Eagles in two home matchups. Highlands dominated the Indians from the opening tip, using ball pressure and balanced scoring to race to a 58-34 victory. Four Highlanders were in double figures, with Tyler Munger scoring 16, Taylor Osteen with 15, Davis Moore with 11 and Brent Amundrud with 10.

The story was much of the same for the Highlanders against Tamasee-Salem, with more balanced scoring and excellent work on the defensive end for Highlands. Munger led Highlands with 19 points, Osteen added 13 and Amundrud 12 in the 65-28 victory.

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... MONEY continued from page 1

etc., – money people could be spending in Macon County if the county was set up to accommodate the travel teams.

Macon County Economic Development Director Tommy Jenkins reiterated what citizens said calculating the economic impact to be \$259,000 per two-day event for a 24-team tournament and \$519,000 for a 48-team tournament.

The problem in Macon County is the availability of flat land but as luck has it, due to the downturn in the economy, a 48-acre site on Old Patton Road – the former Parker Meadows Farm – is available in a short sale for \$550,000. The value of the property is \$750,000.

Macon County is eligible for a 50% match from the NC Parks and Recreation Fund (PARTF) making the purchase price \$275,000. In addition, there is matching monies for development of the property.

Senators Jim Davis and Representative Roger West have vowed to support the effort.

"This project represents a tremendous positive economic impact for Macon County as one 30-team tournament brings approximately \$250,000 a weekend," said Davis. "There is a potential of having 25-30 of these events annually. The total annual economic impact could be more than \$6 million."

Finance Director Lori Hall said instead of financing the purchase, the county could pay for the tract out of the fund balance and then get reimbursed from PARTF.

"Economic times have provided the county a golden opportunity," said Commissioner Ron Haven.

Currently, existing softball/baseball facilities include three youth fields, two adult fields, one youth field in Highlands, one youth field in Nantahala and one T-ball field in Cullasaja Park.

There are six leagues – Little League Baseball, Little League Softball, Church League Softball, Men's Industrial League Softball, Women's League Softball and Co-ed Softball – a total of 92 teams which all vie for time on the nine fields – which means late game nights for the players who range in age from 4-84.

Developing the new Outdoor Recreation Park would mean better game schedules and fields locally, but also would make Macon County a tournament destination.

Plans for the new park include one clover-leaf competition softball field which includes four fields; one clover-leaf little league baseball field which also includes four fields; greenway with cross-fit training stations; a splash-pad, a playground, and several covered pavilions with picnic tables.

The county hopes to close on the property by Dec. 31 and be ready for PARTF in February. If all goes as planned, the fields will be open for business in time for the 2014 travel team season which could bring big changes to the county.

– Kim Lewicki

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 • The Highlands Community Christian Chorale's Christmas Concert is Saturday and Sunday at 5 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 315 Main Street. A reception follows the Sunday evening performance. Performances are free to the public.
 Sat. Dec. 8
 • At The Bascom, Family Storytime: J.R.R. Tolkein's The Hobbit, 3-4:30p.
 Sun., Dec. 9
 • A musical presentation by the children, youth and adult choirs of Community Bible Church at 7 p.m. All are invited!



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