

Highlands' Newspaper

FREE every Thursday

Volume 10, Number 11

Internet PDF Version at www.HighlandsNewspaperPDF.com

Thursday, March 15, 2012

Thursday, March 15

• Sediment & Erosion Control Training: Thursday at 9 am at the Cashiers Library. \$20 for materials and a boxed lunch. Pre-registration required, call J-MCA at 828-526-0890 x320 OR annav@j-mca.org to register and for more information.

• Taize at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 5:30 p.m.

Sat. & Sun., March 17 - 18

• At The Bascom. Everything Kitchen. 10 am - 4 pm. Create your own custom pieces to use in the kitchen. Instructor: Frank Vickery. Levels: I, II & III. Tuition: \$175 member/\$210 non-member.

Sat., March 17

• At The Bascom. From Mud to Art Highlands High School Ceramics Opening Reception. 5 - 7pm

• At The Bascom. Art Cinema. Sit back and enjoy our weekly feature presentation "Secrets of Stonehenge" 2 pm.

• A Greenway Work Trip. Meet at the Rec Park at 9 a.m. A number of native plants, including sedges, ferns, azaleas, and rhododendron have been purchased and will be replanted along the Kelsey Trail. To help, call Hillrie Quin at 526-2384 or email at hmquin@frontier.com.

Sunday, March 18

• The Eckerd College Concert Choir and the Eckerd Ringers will perform in a concert at 11 a.m. and 3 pm at First Presbyterian Church. Everyone is invited to attend!

Mon. & Wed., March 19, 21, 26, 28

• At The Bascom. Ceramic Sculpture. 12noon - 2pm. This is a great class for all interested in learning how to construct sculptures in clay. Instructor: Colette Clark. Levels: I & II. Tuition: \$125 member/\$160 non-member per month.

Tuesday, March 20

• Highlands Dialogue at the Hudson Library from 10-11:30 a.m. The Great Reset by Richard Florida (book).

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Path for 2012-13 set at TB retreat

Course to cut costs, raise revenue for town

- Part One -

During a six-hour retreat last Thursday, Highlands town officials and department heads considered budgetary issues

pertaining to possible, pending and definite projects, as well as changes in fees and policies that will or could affect employees and

citizens beginning the next fiscal year.

Town Manager Bob Frye

• See RETREAT page 22

View's quilt on 'Quilts of Valor' tour



Highlands Quilter Liz View crafted this Quilt of Valor (QOV) quilt which was chosen for display on a national tour of QOV quilts through November 2012. Recently, QOV quilts were displayed at the Gwinnett Conference Center as part of its Sewing & Quilt Expo. For more on Quilts of Valor's mission see story on page 3.

Wayfinding explained; participation needed

In the wake of all the questions and some confusion concerning the recent branding exercise (Phase 1) and now the wayfinding project now in the works

(Phase 2), Frazier Associates from Staunton, VA, offers a wayfinding explanation.

Taxpayers have funded the design stages - Phase 1 and 2 - for

\$27,450. Though members of the Main Street Design Committee suggested going back to the Town

• See WAYFINDING page 2

• Inside •

Letters	2
Obituary	3
Wooldridge	4
Salzarulo	5
Back Days	6
Swanson	8
Investing at 4,118 Ft.	9
Just Hers	10
Events	11

Highlands School repairs may come with QZAB funds

A fax that came across the desks of County Manager Jack Horton and Macon County Schools Superintendent Dan Brigman a little over three weeks ago has the county and the school board scrambling.

Turns out the state has \$12.5 million in undistributed Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCB) and \$860 million in Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZAB). All school districts have to do is apply for them.

At the February School Board meeting, Superintendent Brigman announced plans to go after the funds - with the county as the lead agency, as usual.

The money comes in the form of zero-interest loans and both are programs the county/BOE has tapped in the past to renovate or construct schools

• See QZAB page 16

FRI	SAT	SUN
67 47F	68 48F	67 47F

• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• LETTERS •

History of Afghanistan

Dear Editor,

Dr. Salzarulo's observations on the situation in Afghanistan, in last week's edition and entitled "The answer to our Afghanistan problem is a simple one..." were an accurate reflection of the current and very flawed US foreign policy in that country. There is nothing to show for 10 years of fighting but the deaths and maiming of thousands of Coalition troops and civilians.

However, Dr. Salzarulo may be confusing Pakistan with Afghanistan in saying that Afghanistan is "...a product of British imperialism" and "...not a natural nation..." History tells us that it was Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1745, who forged the nation-state of Afghanistan by successfully bringing together, under one banner, the warring Pash-tun tribes. During his twenty-six year reign as Shah (King) Durrani built and expanded Afghanistan into a prosperous, albeit Imperialistic, nation.

Bernie Coulson
Highlands

• THANKS •

This letter is long over due, but I want to once again thank the wonderful Highlands EMS people who came to my house that snowy evening in January and took me to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and then on down to the hospital in Greenville. After spending almost seven weeks in the Highlands hospital, I also wish to express my gratitude to the doctors and nurses who were always so kind and considerate and to the therapists who worked so hard to get me back on my feet. We are so very fortunate to have such talented and dedicated people in our community. And I also really appreciated all the good wishes and support from so many of you. Thanks again - I love you all.

Edwin Poole
Highlands

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... WAYFINDING continued from page 1

Board for the costs associated with the construction phase of the wayfinding project, the town has not committed to that funding.

Frazier Associates will be designing schematic options for a wayfinding sign system based on the recent branding exercise conducted by Arnett Muldrow & Associates.

To better understand the community's desires for such a system, a questionnaire is being distributed and is available at Town Hall, the Hudson Library and the Chamber

of Commerce.

Members of the Design Committee, elected officials, citizens and business owners are encouraged to fill it out and return it by noon Friday, March 23.

Frazier Associates will also review the parking and sign study conducted by Wilber Smith in 2009 and the research the STMS Design Committee has already completed on wayfinding signs and destinations in Highlands.

What is Wayfinding?

• See WAYFINDING page 18

Questionnaire

Please fill out and return to Town Hall by noon Friday, March 23

1. Overall what do you view the goals to be for a wayfinding system in Highlands?
2. What are the biggest problems you hope to solve with such a system?

The STMS Design Committee has ID'd many potential destinations for vehicular trailblazer signs; however, it is not possible to sign to everything in Highlands using this type of sign. These destinations are listed in alphabetical order with no preconceived idea of importance. **Please rank them from 1-3 with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest for vehicular wayfinding.**

Note: Keep in mind that wayfinding signs are primarily for visitors. Since vehicular trailblazers can only have three destinations, think about the volume of visitors attracted to each of these destinations as you do your ranking. Consider the hours and season of operation. What are the key visitor destinations? Generally speaking, the post office, hospital, police/fire and route signs do not appear on custom wayfinding signs. These destinations have their own signing guidelines. Libraries may or may not appear on custom wayfinding and it depends on whether the library is a community gathering place for regional events or research. Likewise, schools generally do not appear on custom wayfinding unless they are the location for regional events. Private businesses also do not appear on custom wayfinding. Public restrooms would be best signed on pedestrian trailblazer and kiosks.

Ball Park	1	2	3
The Bascom	1	2	3
Carolina Square	1	2	3
Central Business District (Downtown)	1	2	3
Civic Center	1	2	3
Community Building	1	2	3
Crosby Center	1	2	3
Dog Park	1	2	3
Historical Society	1	2	3
Library	1	2	3
Nature Center	1	2	3
Parking	1	2	3
Performing Arts Center	1	2	3
Playhouse	1	2	3
School	1	2	3
Sunset Rock	1	2	3
Town Hall	1	2	3
Visitor Center	1	2	3

3. Are there other destinations that have not been included in this list?
4. Do you have any concerns about the implementation of a wayfinding sign system in Highlands and if so, what are they?

Quilts of Valor has valiant mission

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover all combat servicemembers and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor.

At least 380 quilts are needed each month to meet the requests of the country's standing destinations in Afghanistan, Germany and the United States.

National service can be as complicated as giving your life for your country while in the military or national guard or as simple as making a Quilt of Valor for a combat veteran.

Quilters already understand the therapeutic value of making a quilt and the joy of giving a quilt. Thousands of them, via Quilts of Valor (QOV), have made quilts of comfort for American service members.

Now, working with Under Our Wings (UOW), avid quilters can help someone who has never made a quilt before make a QOV. With the help of Under Our Wings, rookie quilters can confidently sew patchwork blocks guided by a



coach who cares.

If you are a quilt shop owner, your store can be a Victory Garden for your current customers and future customers by becoming an official Under Our Wings Quilt Shop.

Currently fewer than one percent of Americans serve in the military, though the United States is engaged in the longest protracted conflict since the Revolutionary War.



Armed service members undergo tremendous stress to leave family, friends, career, and country when they are deployed, stress that is beyond civilian capacity to comprehend.

The Quilt of Valor organization believes a comforting quilt can say "Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and valor," in a way nothing else can. Join Quilts of Valor or any service project that honors brave Americans. Take a non-quilter under your wings and serve your country.

Anyone interested in joining the cause at any level is encouraged to call Liz View at 526-9743 and visit the Quilts of Valor website at www.qovf.org.

• OBITUARY •

Valdarea Sharon Kinsey

Valdarea Sharon Kinsey, age 63, of Franklin, NC died Sunday, March 11, 2012. A native of Macon County, she was the daughter of LaVerne Stiles Henry and the late Leon Sellers. She was a CNA; a member of Cashiers Baptist Church and was a very loving mother, grandmother and sister.

She is survived by one daughter, Krista Neely and husband Les of Clayton, GA; one son, Travis Kinsey and wife Patsy of Mtn. Rest, SC; three sisters, Karen Forrester of Virginia, Brenda Henry of Franklin, NC and Kathie Henry of Sevierville, TN and one brother, Ronnie Henry of Cashiers, NC. Six grandchildren also survive.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, March 15 at 2 pm at Cashiers Baptist Church with Rev. Johnny Norris, Rev. Lewis Smith and Rev. Scotty Patrick officiating. Burial will be in Upper Zachary Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Merritt Rice, Deed Kinsey, Brandon Kinsey, Heath Henry, Ron Henry and Anthony Hooper.

The family will receive friends Thursday, from 12:30 until 2 pm, prior to the service, at the church.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

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The Adventures of Frisky – Part 2 of 4

A boy and his dog

Part one may be read on-line at www.highlandsnewspaperpdf.com or at the Highlands' Newspaper office at 265 Oak St. in Highlands.

My dad was never my friend....he was my dad. He wore the pants in the family and whatever he said was law. I know he loved me although he never said so. When he was

dying, I flew in from Miami and was at his bedside. I watched his face light up when he saw me. I took his hand; he shook his head and said, "I don't feel worth a damn." It was the first curse word I ever heard him say. Seconds later he was dead.

There was much uncertainty in my mind as I watched my mom explain why I had the audacity to bring a puppy into our home without permission. That alone could sway his decision in a negative way. I was not privy to the conversation and, to this day, don't know what was said. It was none of my business.

My dad sat me on a straight back dining room chair and reached to take the puppy from me. I prayed it wouldn't urinate on him. Pulling it to his chest, he said, "Are you aware of the responsibility you're taking on in raising a newborn puppy? It's only a few days old. This will consume the rest of your summer. Are you aware of that?"

I nodded, "They were going to drown it, Dad. Please, please, please let me keep it. I'll do all the work, I promise."

The silence was deafening. I couldn't look at him so I just stared at the floor and held my breath. After what seemed like forever, he said, "I'll hold your dog while you go over and see Frank at the poultry house and ask him for a crate. And don't bring it home with chicken poop all over it. You hose it off good at the poultry house with their hose. Do you understand?"

I looked up at him with a huge grin on my face and saw him holding out a one dollar bill. Before I could speak, he said, "After you come home with the crate, put the dog in it and then walk down to the five and dime and pick up a couple of Betsy Wetsy Doll bottles. I'll call the vet and ask about a formula, if there is one....and bring me the change."

I grabbed the dollar from his hand and ran for the kitchen door. My eyes were wet with joy. Pushing the screen open, I remembered I hadn't thanked him. I spun around and shouted, "Thank you, Dad. Thank you, thank you, thank you." There was no response.

Frank and I were real good buddies. He owned the poultry house just a block away. I spent countless hours watching him and his men slaughter chickens and



Fred Wooldridge

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askfredanything@aol.com

prepare them for sale. Once, he even let me cut a chicken's throat and throw it in the bleeder tank. By the time I reached my home, the cleansed crate was dry from the summer heat. I took Frisky from my dad and placed him in the crate on a pile of old clean rags. By now, Frisky was super hungry and was letting me know it. I ran as fast as I could to the five and dime and ran home with two small glass bottles.

When I reached the front door, my Mom was waiting with a bottle of karo syrup and a can of skim milk. I sat at the kitchen table while she carefully explained the formula she received from the vet. We prepared the formula together and she explained it would be the last time she would help so I better get it right. By this time, Frisky was out of control and yelping from hunger. I cradled him in my arms and shoved the bottle in his mouth. There was instant silence and we were bonded for life.

And so for the next six weeks, I was up four, sometimes five, times a night to feed my dog. Later in life, my parents told me they were astonished at my diligence, saying I was a good mother to a dog who could have been drowned.

I knew Frisky was smart because I only had to shove its nose in its poop and pee several times before it realized it was supposed to do that outside.

• Part three will be presented next Wednesday. Watch for it but in the interim, have you read Fred's mystery/thriller titled Deceived on your Kindle or Nook? Do it now.

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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

Do you believe in guardian angels?

Fifty-five per cent of Americans believe in guardian angels; 55%. Think about it. What's wrong with the rest of us? Only 40% believe in evolution. I don't think there's much overlap between the two groups, which means there are 60% who believe the creation story, but who reject the notion of guardian angels; healthy skeptics. Maybe they think God rested before he got around to creating a cadre of concierge companions for us.

If there really are guardian angels, I wonder if God made them up in advance, or if they're prepared to order. It's a beautiful thought. Life and an angel both created at the moment of conception. What happens to the angel in the event of a miscarriage or abortion? I don't think he could be reassigned; the whole guardian angel thing seems pretty personal. I don't think God's likely to say, "Osama bin Laden's angel just quit. The SEALs are in the air. Your person just got scraped out of the womb. Interested in a tough assignment?"

If angels have been around since creation and if there is no retirement plan, they might get bored after awhile. Teaching angels or nursing angels might be looking for a change. A teaching angel could go to God, or to the angel resource officer and say, "I'm pretty burnt out on classroom work. I'm looking for something more one on one, something with travel, excitement, adventure. Any openings over in guardian?"

The angel thing is pretty cool. You have this presence, always at your side protecting you from danger. So why do people get hit by cars, get pneumonia, flunk algebra? There is obviously a catch in there. You're protected as long as you drive less



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

•
Feedback is encouraged.
email:

hsalzarulo@aol.com

than 15 miles per hour over the speed limit, or only if you avoid napping on railroad tracks. Who knows? Maybe unprotected sex voids the warranty. That would explain syphilis and AIDS.

If all guardian angels did a really first rate job, nobody would die. But people do die. What happens then? If God made up all these angels in advance, how did he know how many to make?

Population is exploding. Did he think about penicillin, smallpox vaccine, and in vitro fertilization? Not even God could have guessed some lady would keep all eight embryos produced by in vitro. People will do anything to get a reality show.

Maybe God whipped up the angels when he was doing the universe, underestimated the lust of his human creation, and is running short. That might explain the plague. He might have let us think we invented the atomic bomb. Since the flood, God hasn't done a very good job of population control, and the guardian angel program is showing the strain; alcoholism, suicides, drop outs.

God made us so smart; he's having trouble staying ahead of medical technology. The pandemic of 1918; that was a beauty; 40, 50, maybe a 100 million people died. It's been all down hill since then. The swine flu must have been a terrible disappointment. Even the bird flu hasn't worked out yet, and it showed tremendous promise in the beginning. There seems to be a problem transmitting it from birds to humans without open mouth kissing. I'm sure He'll get it sorted out, a billion or so will die, and both the guardian angel service and the planet will get a reprieve.

Fifty-five per cent of the American population believes in guardian angels and 40% believe in evolution. And we say the Muslims are backward.

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If you are a slow pitch softball player at least 58 years old in 2012 and able to play during the day, please consider joining the Franklin Old Bones softball team. There is no upper age limit! The Old Bones softball team is sponsored by Macon Bank and they play in the Franklin Church League and against nearby cities, playing around 90 day and 14 night games from April thru October. Day games are double-headers on alternating Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday mornings all season. Church league games are played irregularly on Monday and Friday nights Mid April thru June. Playing in all games is not required. If you are interested, please contact Jim Hunter at 524-8974 for additional information.

• BACK DAYS •

Those who came before and after them – Part 8

The story of the family of John Edwin Potts

By Eva Potts Massey

John Edwin Potts was born Aug. 24, 1886, the oldest son, the second of William Thomas and Martha Ammons Potts' 10 children.

He was named for his grandfather, John Potts and for Dr. Edwin Kinnebrew who delivered him. He attended the schools in Franklin and Highlands. He finished the 7th grade, the highest grade available at the time.

He was needed at home to help so he did not attend Mars Hill or Sylva Collegiate Institute to get a higher education. When a person finished the required subjects for seven grades, he or she had a good basic education, especially if he or she retained and used the knowledge. John Edwin did just that. He had a talent for leaning and a wonderful gift of retaining what he read or heard and he continued to study on his own. His children used to call him a walking encyclopedia because he could always answer any questions asked of him.

The day John Edwin and Ellie Emeline Pierson married, his parents told Ellie "Now that you and Ed are married, you can stay here and help us while Ed goes to Mars Hill to study to be a preacher." This didn't suit Ellie for she had left school to marry Edwin.

Ellie Emeline Pierson, was born Feb. 24, 1888 in Norton, Jackson County, the daughter of Roderick Evin Pierson and Susan White Pierson. Her mother died when Ellie was 12 years old. Roderick Pierson had a big job raising a family of nine of 11 children. Ellie had two sisters younger than she. Their great uncle and aunt, Emma and Jerry Pierson, who ran the Pierson Inn in Highlands took Ellie and her sister Emma to live with them to help run the inn.

While they were living there, the Prince Hodgsons from Athens, GA, too an interest in Ellie and Emma and asked them to live with them in Athens where they could go to school and help with the Hodgson children.

Ellie attended the Athens Normal School, which is not the University of Georgia. She was interested in her scholastic subjects and was active in sports.



"Billy" Thomas and "Mattie" Ammons Potts
Photos: Highlands Historical Society

She played on the basketball team when the uniform was big black bloomers, a white middie blouse and long black stockings.

Ellie had beautiful blue eyes, naturally wavy dark brown hair and a flawless complexion. Even in her last years, she had no wrinkles. She walked very erect, always keeping good posture as long as she lived.

While with the Hodgsons, she had the opportunity to go to their summer home in Massachusetts where she enjoyed the ocean and the beautiful scenery.

Sometimes during that period of her life, John Edwin Potts and she became friends. When she was 22 and he was 24, he influenced her to give up school and return to Highlands to be his bride.

On Feb. 28, 1909, they were married at the house called "Springdale" on Chestnut Street. Ellie made her own wedding dress and traveling suit; their wedding trip was by horse and buggy from her home to the Central House on Main Street for the wedding supper.

The newlyweds lived at the Central House helping to run the business for a while. Their next move was to the Phelps House (the house that currently housed the Highlands Chamber of Commerce) where they ran the inn.

John Edwin Potts, Jr., was born at the Phelps House which was called the Crisp House at the time on July 1, 1910 and he died Nov. 13, 1910. The baby never could adjust to his mile or diet in the four months he lived. It was a sad beginning for a marriage that lasted 47 years.

...to be continued

• COACH'S CORNER •

Four to Score

Welcome to the 74th annual (that figure may be slightly inaccurate) version of my March Madness Four to Score column. Today we will look at the NCAA tournament, and since this paper now comes out on Thursday instead of Wednesday it may not be a huge help in your brackets, unless of course you are an early bird on Thursday morning.

Four Studs you know

Draymond Green-Michigan State. Dominant physically and improved mentally...big time presence for the Spartans.

Thomas Robinson-Kansas. Should be the player of the year in the NCAA, but won't be because of...

Anthony Davis-Kentucky. Davis is a one man goalie on defense, but his offense has seen the biggest improvement this season.

Tyler Zeller-UNC. The ACC Player of the Year is an offensive machine in the post.

Four Studs you don't know, but need to

Casper Ware-Long Beach State. Put up huge numbers in the spotlight this season, including 29 versus mighty UNC. Could carry LB to the sweet 16.

Doug McDermott-Creighton. Played his high school ball with Harrison Barnes in Ames, Iowa...turned out to be a better player than Barnes. Basketball can be funny sometimes.

Nate Wolters-South Dakota State. Wolters is unique for a small school player in that he isn't a terrific shooter but he can get to the rim at will and finish with authority.

Isaiah Canaan-Murray State. Shoots well over 40% from three and is a blur with the basketball. The Racers went 31-1 for a reason, and the reason is Canaan.

Four shooters who can change the game in a hurry

Brady Heslip-Baylor. Heslip is at 45% for the season behind the arc and can get hot in a hurry.

Matt Dellavedova-St. Mary's. The Gaels depend a lot on Dellavedova to run their offense but he can fill it up behind the arc if left open.

John Jenkins-Vanderbilt. Jenkins can be streaky, but if he gets hot then Vanderbilt can beat anyone, just ask Kentucky.



Ryan Potts
ryanpotts@hotmail.com

Devidas Dulkys-FSU. The Seminoles rely on Dulkys to stretch the defense with his shooting, and he can be deadly if left open on the perimeter.

Four Teams that the shoe fits (The Cinderella Shoe, that is)

Murray State-While they slipped under the radar with a loss, the Racers are essentially Missouri 2.0 this season. They have elite guards and spread the floor with their speed and quickness. They possess the firepower to make a Sweet 16 or Elite 8 run this year.

Long Beach State-The 49ers have all the ingredients needed to be an Elite 8 team. They have a star player in Casper Ware, they have shooters who can stretch the floor and they have a post presence in Larry Andersen who won't be overwhelmed by power conference frontcourts.

Belmont-The Bruins are deep, experienced and shoot the heck out of the three ball. They took Duke to the wire in Cameron earlier this season and have the chops to get to the Sweet 16 this season.

Florida State- While not a true Cinderella, I think most people would be surprised if the Noles made the Final Four. This team is capable of winning a NCAA Championship, primarily because they are tough defensively, they show no fear, and they possess the experience necessary to not be cowed by pressure situations.

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• CONSERVATIVE POV

March madness strikes U. S.

As the many conferences around the country are holding their playoffs to determine their champions and entrants into the NCAA playoffs, strange things are happening to provide distractions to this most critical time of American culture.

First, we were hit by one of the strongest solar storms in years. Solar wind attacked the Earth at 4 million mph. Little damage resulted from the storm, however, the satellite TV transmission of "The Bachelorette" was interrupted, resulting in several attempted suicides in Ash Flat, Arkansas. Evidently, it affected the GPS system in Lindsay Lohan's car to go on the fritz, causing her to get lost going home from her favorite club.

Moving on, the Senate rejected an attempt to fast-track the Keystone XL pipeline.

From Politico: "The White House and Democratic leadership squeaked out a 56-42 vote on an amendment to

the Senate's highway bill, winning only because 60 votes were needed for passage. President Barack Obama had personally lobbied Democrats with phone calls urging them to oppose the measure, as Republicans continue to push the pipeline as a job-creating project needed in these days of high gasoline prices." Thanks, Mr. President, for killing 20,000 jobs the project would create.

This one is really scary. From the American Thinker: "We all know Obama likes to outsource work and does not believe as much in national sovereignty as he does in giving power over our actions to foreigners. Under questioning by Sen. Jeff Sessions at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, Defense Secretary Leon



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

Panetta and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey indicated that 'international permission,' rather than Congressional approval, provided a 'legal basis' for military action by the United States.

Here is the exchange that we're talking about. The Iranians are listening and so are the Israelis:

SESSIONS: Do you think you can act without Congress and initiate a no-fly zone in Syria without congressional approval?

PANETTA: Our goal would be to seek international permission... Whether or not we would want to get permission from the Congress - I think those are issues we would have to discuss as we decide what we do here (WHAT?).

SESSIONS: Well, I'm almost breathless about what I heard what you say is 'we're going to seek international approval and we'll come back and tell the Congress what we might do, and we might seek congressional approval' ... Wouldn't you agree that would be pretty breathtaking to the average American?

PANETTA: If we are working with an international coalition of NATO we would want to be able to get appropriate permissions in order to be able to do that. All of these countries would want to have some kind of legal basis on which to act.

SESSIONS: What 'legal basis' are you looking for? What entity?

PANETTA: If NATO made the decision to go in, that would be one. If we developed an international coalition beyond NATO, then some kind of UN security resolution would be a basis for that.

SESSIONS: So you are saying NATO would give you a 'legal basis?' And an ad hoc coalition of nations would provide a 'legal basis?'

PANETTA: We would seek whatever

legal basis we would need in order to make that justified. We can't just pull them altogether without getting the legal basis on which to act.

SESSIONS: I'm all for having international support, but I'm really baffled by the idea that somehow an international assembly provides a legal basis for the United States military to be deployed in combat. I don't think it's close to being correct. They provide no legal authority. The only legal authority that's required to deploy the U. S. military is the Congress and the president and the law in the Constitution."

After the hearing, Sen. Sessions stated in an interview that Panetta's comments were "very revealing of the mindset" of the administration. Panetta "seemed so natural in expressing it as if he didn't understand this went against" the fundamentals of our government.

Panetta isn't the only member of the administration who has left the reservation. From Yahoo News: "Energy Secretary Chu Admits Administration OK with High Gas Prices. Chu uttered the kind of Washington gaffe that consists of telling the truth when inconvenient. According to Politico, Chu admitted to a House committee that the administration is not interested in lowering gas prices.

The Heritage Foundation points out that hammering the American consumer with high gas prices to make electric and hybrid cars more appealing is consistent with Obama administration policy and Chu's philosophy. That explains the refusal to allow the building of the Keystone XL pipeline and to allow drilling in wide areas of the US, including offshore."

Add to the above the Colts cutting Peyton Manning loose, and that's enough madness for March. Well, not quite. There will be endless college basketball games, culminating, strangely enough, with the Championship on April 2nd.

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• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT •

Outsourcing in 2012

In today's world, when you hear the word 'outsourcing,' sometimes negative thoughts come to mind. Over the last decade, the media has fueled the debate that outsourcing is only good for the owners of a company, and that by outsourcing they are taking American jobs away. This article will not refute those claims, but may give you another insight on outsourcing.

In the real estate field as in many occupations, there are several layers of operations – just like an onion has several layers and all are important and depend on each other to get the job done.

There are real estate Brokers, real estate appraisers, real estate attorneys, mortgage brokers just to name a few. Peel those layers back and you reveal even more layers — there are surveyors, pest control companies, insurance companies, etc., all which are important and play roles in completing the objective which is to close a transaction.

By now, most everyone has heard of the mega sites that offer 'all the latest and greatest' insights into the real estate market. There's Zillow, Trulia, and even Realtor.com, to name a few, and I'm sure there are more emerging everyday. You'd think with a name like 'Realtor.com' that real estate brokers would use that one as their 'Bible' but then, you'd be wrong.

One might argue that these sites are just a tool that we use to glean information, but others say that without these data bases, we'd be relying on human research — an actual live person to spend countless hours doing the research. So in some ways these sites are outsourcing for the real estate field.

On any given day in the real estate world, they can be both a simple tool used to help Brokers 'get the skinny' on the latest statistics to help us with listing prices and marketing, and sometimes they are relied on more heavily – almost as if they (the multiple sites) are indeed a person, an outsource robot if you will.



Jeannie Chambers
The Chambers Agency
REALTORS
jsc@chambersagency.net

Locally as Brokers, one of the most relied on tools we use is our multiple listing service, the Highlands-Cashiers MLS service, and members of the Highlands-Cashiers Board of Realtors. Some of the Brokers in the area are members of other broader area boards as well.

The information available from our MLS is invaluable to us in our profession, but as with any database or statistical research tool, the information is only as good as the information entered.

Our MLS records are meant for our eyes only — the site is password protected to prevent the general public from gaining access. I would tell you about the secret hand shake, but they'd probably kick

•See INVESTING page 19

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• JUST HERS •

Desperately seeking Ireland

“Do you know why it’s easier to be black than to be gay?” said the new tenor in the choir. Practice at the American Cathedral in Paris was over, and most of us were going to an inexpensive restaurant for a meal. This charming young man was doing what several men we knew had done by leaving a stuffy small town in the USA to come out of the closet in Europe. We waited in anticipation for the rest of his comment. “It’s easier to be black because at least you don’t have to break it to your mother.”

No one had to break it to me that we were French. We weren’t read stories about Christopher Robin and Winnie the Pooh, *Charlotte’s Web*, or *The Wind in the Willows*. Our childhood stories were all about *Bécassine* and Joan of Arc. The songs we learned were *Sur le pont d’Avignon*, *Frère Jacques*, and *Savez-vous planter les choux*. I didn’t wear Keds tennis shoes; I wore squeaky

leather sandals with crepe soles. We didn’t eat peanut butter or chew gum. For Christmas Eve, we gobbled down snails, to the disgust of my American classmates. No, there was no doubt that one half of the family was French. But what about the other side?

My father was not very forthcoming about his family. My grandfather Mead was supposed to be descended from the first Meads to come to America from England. There were vague hints about being part Mohawk Indian, and more hints about being related to “Old Snapping Turtle” - General George Meade of Gettysburg fame - but I can find no proof of this. Grandma was from Ireland, but nothing was ever said about where she came from,



Michelle Mead-Armor
michiemead@aol.com

and when she had left. It was a very lopsided family tree, knowing just about everything about Maman’s side, and next to nothing about Daddy’s.

In elementary school, one March 16th, I had come home all excited because the principal told us that we should wear green to school for St. Patrick’s Day. I couldn’t wait to go to my room, and find something appropriate for the

occasion. My father scowled. “You shouldn’t be wearing green,” he stated sourly, “You should be wearing orange.” I looked at Daddy with dismay. Boy, he must be pretty dumb, I thought. Even a fourth-grader knows you wear green on St. Patrick’s Day! It was just a small clue, but one that would lead to the realization that we were not the green-wearing, happy leprechaun, Guinness-drinking Irish. No, my grandmother’s folk were sullen, whiskey-drinking, Catholic-hating Protestants from Northern Ireland.

Not that you’d be able to pick up much from what was said when we were around. The majority of the anti-Catholic rhetoric had been spewed at my mother when she arrived from France at the end of World War II. My poor mother was nominally Catholic the way most French people are Catholic – she was baptized, did her first Communion, and expected to be married and buried in the Church. Other than that, most French people never set foot in church unless those churches are also historic monuments.

My grandmother Margaret was called “Peg,” to avoid confusion with her mother, also named Margaret. My great grandmother had come to America in 1908, leaving her home of Portadown in County Armagh, Northern Ireland. The name came from the Irish *Port a’ Dúnáin* meaning “port of the small stronghold.” The town sits on the River Bann in the north of the county, about 23 miles south-west of Belfast.

Great grandmother Margaret, aged 30, arrived in New York, passing through Ellis Island with the Irish-born part of her brood – daughters Ellenor, Margaret (my

grandmother) Sarah, and Emma, and son Henry. I assume that my great grandfather, Henry Harrison, was already living in America, and sent for his family to join him. Reunited, the family expanded in the New World, adding daughters Dorothy and Annie, and sons William and Edward.

Did they miss their home in Northern Ireland? They never said. What had been their professions when they lived in Portadown? The main industry was linen production, but it also included carpet-making, baking, engineering, and even whiskey distilling and brewing. The Harrison clan was very close knit, but our side of the family was sadly not included. My father had insisted on going to college on the GI Bill, and this gesture was considered an act of betrayal, that he thought he was better than the rest of the family. He probably was.

There was no nostalgia for the Old Country, no celebration of Irish culture, art or music. I’d asked Grandma about her Irish roots once, and got a short, bitter comment about the bad old days, when Help Wanted ads and signs often contained those words which make us flinch today, “No Irish Need Apply” or “Irish Need Not Apply.” Even at a young age, I realized that this was a topic best not brought up.

My father had shown no interest in visiting Ireland, but I had always longed to go there. In 1961, my mother, brother, and I had traveled down the St. Lawrence Seaway to Europe. I remember sailing along the coast of Ireland to Cork, whitewashed cottages dotting the hillsides of bright green. I even took a photo, wondering what circumstances could drive people to leave such a lovely place.

In 2008, John and I finally got our wish, when we joined Maman for a trip to Scotland and Ireland. Most of the two-week tour was spent under umbrellas. On the day we took the ferry from Stranraer to Larne, however, the sun burst through the clouds. It was fitting that John and I – both of us with Irish roots – discovered the land of our ancestors together. Our Christmas card that year featured John in his new Irish tweed jacket, a cap jauntily perched on

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Highlands Area Upcoming Events

PULL OUT



Bel Canto set for Sept. 9 this year

Stephen Mark Brown, tenor, was one of the performers last year.

composer, specializing in congregational hymns and songs, with pieces in the Unitarian Universalist Hymnbook, the Free Christian and Unitarian Hymnbook (United Kingdom), and the Quaker and upcoming American Ethical Culture hymnbooks. She is a member of Highlands First Presbyterian Church Choir, and is a member of the "Just Us 4" Quartet with her husband Ian and extended family members Tom and Jane Warth. She is also hoping to begin a choir for older students in the 7th through 12th grades which would be a more "formal" group to meet the needs of young people who are seriously interested singing.

She recently discussed the goals and purpose she had for the choral program:

- Provide Highlands students with an Arts activity that our school day cannot accommodate

- Enrich their lives
- Foster a love of singing
- Allow them to experience the meaningfulness and FUN of making music together!

- Singing in the After School Choir is an important way for children and youth to:

- Discover their ability to sing
- Teach young people to use their voices well

- Learn a wide variety of music
- Teach singing "by ear" AND reading music

- Enhance listening and blending skills

- Increase confidence & self-esteem
- Build community
- Establish new friendships of varying ages

- Allow children to work as a "team"
- Offer performance opportunities

The K through 6 group currently consists of 15 students and there is a group of older students who are interested in becoming the core of a choir for the 7 through 12 group.

The annual Bel Canto Recital will be held later this year on September 9.

For several years the annual Bel Canto Recital has had the music program at Highlands School as one of its beneficiaries. Since 2004 Bel Canto has donated over \$50,000 which has allowed the school music program to purchase much needed instruments for the band and music to expand its program. John Gorecki as music teacher at Highlands School has been leading this expansion including instruments and instruction materials for the Orff System aimed at younger children teaching them the basics of music and rhythm.

This year the Bel Canto Steering Committee is excited about a further expansion of the music program to include a choral group. The group meets on Mondays and Thursdays after school and is open to all students in K through 6th grades. Shelley Denham who is an active substitute teacher at Highlands School and has over 30 years of experience directing children's choirs as well as working with children and youth of all ages in various programmatic and educational capacities. She is a published

• Registration is now open for the 2012 summer nature day camps at the Highlands Nature Center. Five different camps are offered: "WOW! – a World of Wonder" (ages 4-6), "Amazing Animals" (ages 7-10), "NatureWorks" (ages 8-11), "Mountain Explorers" (ages 10-13), and "Junior Ecologists" (ages 11-14). Most camps are offered more than once during the summer. Sessions run from Tuesday to Friday each week. For complete schedules, costs, and other information, please call 828-526-2623 or visit www.wcu.edu/hbs.

Daily

- CORE classes at Mountain Fitness on Carolina Way. Tues., Thurs., Sat., 9:30; Mon., Wed., Thurs., 5:15. \$10 per class or ask about specials. Call 526-9083. (st. 6/9)

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. Call Mary Barbour for Franklin schedule: 828-342-2498.

Mondays

- Closed AA meeting, 5:30 p.m. at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

pal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

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 Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

- NAMI offers Peer-to-Peer Recovery Education Course. NAMI Appalachian South, the local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is offering a 10 week education class in Franklin on Tuesdays, starting March 13, 6:30-8:30. This is a nationally recognized course designed for individuals living with the challenge of mental illness. The course covers the major mental illnesses, treatments, coping strategies, relapse prevention, recovery and wellness in a confidential setting. There is no charge. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register contact: Paul 524-9133 or Hank 342-34789.

Wednesdays

- The Highlands Mountaintop Rotary meets at 7:30 a.m. in the dining room at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Enter the hospital in the main or emergency entrance and follow the signs down-

• See EVENTS page 12



THE BASCOM
A CENTER FOR THE VISUAL ARTS

2012



Upcoming Exhibitions

Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery

March 24 - May 10

Opening Reception, March 24, 5-7 pm

Support provided by the Koski Family Foundation.

Chicks: It's All Gone to the Birds

March 31 - June 17

Opening Reception, March 31, 6-8 pm

Support provided by Nancy and Larry Fuller and Audobon North Carolina.



Highlands, NC

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PULL OUT

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

March brings two exceptional exhibitions to The Bascom Plus, take advantage of The Bascom's early bird discount!



Communal Nest by Susan Taylor Glasgow is part of the **Chicks: It's All Gone to the Birds** Exhibition opening on March 31st in the Bunzl Gallery at The Bascom.

The Bascom's March schedule of exhibitions includes:

Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery from March 24- May 10 in the Atrium Gallery.

Every year, a graduate student from Western Carolina University is chosen to install his or her thesis exhibition at The Bascom. Frank Vickery, the honoree this year, is no stranger to us. He has been with our institution as an intern and is currently The Bascom's Ceramics Program Manager. Frank has been selected for the quality of his work, his dedication to the field of ceramics and his enthusiastic ability to share his talent with others. Join us for the opening reception for this exhibition on Saturday, March 24 from 5-7 pm. Support for this exhibition is provided by the Koski Family Foundation.

Chicks: It's All Gone to the Birds from March 31- June 17 in the Bunzl Gallery.

Join us in celebrating the fascinating world of our feathered friends. This exceptional collection of avian themed art showcases artists at their finest observing and creating images of the world around us through the eyes of scientists, environmentalists and conservators. A true celebration of the freedom of flight,

this exhibition is presented in partnership with the Highlands Biological Station and the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society. The exhibition's opening reception on March 24 from 6-8 pm features a presentation from artist Susan Taylor Glasgow. Support for this exhibition is provided by Nancy and Larry Fuller; Audubon North Carolina; and Delta Air Lines, The Official Air Line of The Bascom.

Don't miss out on a wonderful opportunity to take a class at The Bascom and receive a discount! Classes include ceramics, painting, drawing, photography, writing and much, much more. The Early Bird Discount at The Bascom runs until March 31st. Sign up for any 2012 adult class or workshop priced over \$100 dollars by this date and receive a 10% discount when you pay in full. This offer is good for classes valued over one hundred dollars based on the membership price.

The Bascom is open year-round - Monday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday, 12 noon to 5 pm. Enjoy workshops, exhibitions, special events and quality programs throughout the year at The Bascom. For more information, to register for Bascom workshop offerings or for more details on all Bascom activities, visit www.TheBascom.org or call 828.526.4949.

stairs. 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.

Wednesdays & Fridays

- Open AA meeting at noon at the Episcopal Church at Fifth and Main streets.

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 on Thursdays. Free writing exercises. Bring a seven-minute writing piece to read. Newcomers are welcome. 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!

Thursdays - Mondays

- At Paoletti's, 15%-25% off promotions. Call 526-4906 for reservations.

Every Saturday through March

- 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! For More Information call Dianne 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.

Thursday, March 15

- Sediment & Erosion Control Training: Thursday at 9 am at the Cashiers Library. Classroom presentation and hands-on field component by NCSU Soil Science Department. Learn how to properly install silt fences, drop inlets, baffles, wattles and ground cover. Earthmovers, Graders, Contractors, Landscapers, Architects, Designers, Engineers and Inspectors are encouraged to attend. The cost is \$20 for materials and a boxed lunch. Pre-registration required, call J-MCA at 828-526-0890 x320 OR annav@j-mca.org to register and for more information.

- Taize at the Highlands United Methodist Church at 5:30 p.m.

Friday, March 16

- An American Red Cross Adult CPR/AED course will be conducted through Macon County Public Health. The course will be held on Friday March 16th from 9:30 a.m. until 12:30 pm at Macon County Public Health located at 1830 Lakeside Drive. Participants must pre-register and pre-pay at the Macon County Public Health Center by Monday,

March 12. For more information on class fees and to pre-register please call Melissa at 349-2459.

- The High Mountain Squares will dance this Friday night at the Macon County Community Building on Route 441 South from 6:30 to 9 PM. Brenda Holt from Greenville, SC will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. There will be a Plus Workshop from 6:30 to 7. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-349-0905, 828-524-4930, 828-524-2280, or www.highmountainsquares.org

Sat. - Fri., March 17-30

- At The Bascom. From Mud to Art Highlands High School Ceramics, Landing Gallery. Explore with the students as they not only demonstrate their proficiency in pottery but their understanding of the science and chemistry that makes it happen. Student work and an explanation of clay bodies, firing and glazing will be on view. Now in its third year, the High School Ceramics Class is an ongoing partnership between Highlands School and The Bascom.

Sat. & Sun., March 17 - 18

- At The Bascom. Everything Kitchen. 10 am - 4 pm. You can make those every day happenings more fun by creating your own custom pieces to use in the kitchen. Make anything and everything you can imagine. Instructor: Frank Vickery. Levels: I, II & III. Tuition: \$175 member/\$210 non-member.

Sat., March 17

- At The Bascom. From Mud to Art Highlands High School Ceramics Opening Reception. 5 - 7pm

- At The Bascom. Art Cinema. Sit back and enjoy our weekly feature presentation "Secrets of Stonehenge" 2 pm.

- A Greenway Work Trip. Meet at the Rec Park at 9 a.m. The Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust and Highlands Plateau Greenway are planning a joint work trip event to plant various native species at the upper Big Bearpen Road trailhead at Rhododendron Park. Thanks to a grant from the Laurel Garden Club, a number of native plants, including sedges, ferns, azaleas, and rhododendron have been purchased and will be replanted along the Kelsey Trail. If interested in participating, call Hillrie Quin at 526-2384 or email at hmquin@frontier.com.

Sunday, March 18

- The Eckerd College Concert Choir and the Eckerd Ringers will perform in a concert at 3 pm on Sunday at First Presbyterian Church. The groups will also participate in the 11 a.m. worship service that morning. The concert choir and ringers are directed by Dr. Marion Smith, who serves as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Music at Eckerd College. Dr. Smith received his Ph.D. from Washington University. Everyone is cordially invited to attend the morning worship service as well as

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

PULL OUT

the afternoon concert, which will take place in the sanctuary at First Presbyterian Church. The church is located at the corner of Main and 5th Streets. Handicap entrances are located on Church Street and on 5th Street.

Mon. & Wed., March 19, 21, 26, 28

- At The Bascom. Ceramic Sculpture. 12noon – 2pm. This is a great class for all interested in learning how to construct sculptures in clay. Instructor: Colette Clark. Levels: I & II. Tuition: \$125 member/\$160 non-member per month.

Mon. – Thurs., March 19, 22

- At The Bascom. Drawing Basics and Beyond. 10am – 12noon or 5:15 – 7:15pm. For the absolute beginner or as a refresher for skilled artists, discover a new sense of self and spirit enhance your observational skills and develop confidence and awareness. Explore drawing without making a lengthy or expensive commitment. Instructor: Knight Martorell. Levels: I & II. Tuition: \$100 members/\$135 non-members per month

Tuesday, March 20

- Macon County Public Library Blood Drive, 149 Siler Farm Road, Franklin, 10 am to 7 pm. Please call 524-3600 for more information or to schedule an appointment. All presenting donors are automatically entered into a drawing for a pair of Delta Airline Tickets!

- Highlands Dialogue at the Hudson Library from 10–11:30 a.m. The Great Reset by Richard Florida (book). Coordinator: Virginia Wilson.

- Macon County Democratic Women will meet

at 1 PM at the Sunset Restaurant in Franklin. Plans will be discussed for the Democratic Women Cookbook and for the annual Potato Dinner to be held on March 22. Men are invited.

Wed., March 21, 28

- At The Bascom. Painting Basics and Beyond. 10am – 12noon. Enjoy the painting experience from inspiration, to design, to finished painting. An opportunity to create captivating works of art while learning or expanding your knowledge of the building blocks for application, design and color. Instructor: Robin

Swaby Levels: I & II. Tuition: \$100 member/\$135 non-member per month

Thursday, March 22

- Taize at Holy Family Lutheran Church at 5:30 p.m.

Sat. – Sun., March 24 – 25

- At The Bascom, Everything Bath. 10 am – 4 pm. Any decorative or functional ideas for that perfect soap dish, cup or wall tile? This is the class to try it out. Bring your ideas, samples or sketches

• See EVENTS page 14

Eckerd College Concert Choir and Eckerd Ringers to perform in March 18 Concert

The Eckerd College Concert Choir and the Eckerd Ringers will perform in a concert at 3pm on Sunday, March 18 at First Presbyterian Church. The groups will also participate in the 11:00 worship service that morning. The concert choir and ringers are directed by Dr. Marion Smith, who serves as Professor of Music and Director of Choral Music at Eckerd College. Dr. Smith received his Ph.D. from Washington University.

The Eckerd Concert Choir is open to the vocal amateur as well as the music major and performs on and off campus and tours each spring. One of the goals of the choir is to provide each singer a complete musical experience within the framework of a liberal arts education. The Concert Choir and Eckerd Ringers have made a number of International tours including a tour to England with performances in Oxford, York, Canterbury, and London; the People's Republic of China, Italy, Spain, and more.

Formed in 1990, The Eckerd Ringers is an ensemble of twelve ringers. Membership is open to all students. The Eckerd Ringers play on five octaves of Schulmerich handbells and five octaves of Suzuki handchimes. The Eckerd Ringers play a variety of music ranging from arrangements of familiar hymns and other well known works to original compositions written especially for bells and chimes. The Eckerd Ringers appear in concert with the Concert Choir throughout the academic year.

Since Eckerd College (formerly Florida Presbyterian College) opened its doors, it has earned a reputation for creating new and better opportunities for



learning. Eckerd has been consistently rated among the foremost of American colleges and universities. The college looks for superior methods of educating its students, not in order to be different but to offer a more rewarding and useful educational experience.

Eckerd College is located in St. Petersburg, Florida, and was named after philanthropists, the late Jack and Ruth Eckerd, long time seasonal residents of Highlands. Dr. Donald Eastman, III has served as pres-

ident of the college since 2001. He and his wife, Christine, are seasonal residents of Highlands, and attend First Presbyterian Church.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend the morning worship service as well as the afternoon concert, which will take place in the sanctuary at First Presbyterian Church. The church is located at the corner of Main and 5th Streets. Handicap entrances are located on Church Street and on 5th Street.



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PULL OUT

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

and the instructor will assist you in making them a reality. Instructor: Frank Vickery. Levels: I, II & III. Tuition: \$175 member/\$210 non-member

March 24 – May 10

• At The Bascom. Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery. Atrium Gallery. Every year, we select a graduate student from Western North Carolina University to install his or her thesis exhibition at The Bascom. Frank Vickery, the honoree this year is no stranger to us. He has been with our institution as an intern and is currently The Bascom's Ceramics Program Manager. Frank has been selected for the quality of his work, his dedication to the field of

ceramics and his enthusiastic ability to share his talent with others.

Sat., March 24

• Shiitake and oyster mushroom cultivation workshop at The Bascom at 2-5 p.m. Tools and tips on cultivating mushrooms. Hands-on project includes drilling mushroom logs, plugging the holes with mushroom spawn and sealing them with hot wax. Call JMCA at 526-0890 x320 to register.

• At The Bascom. Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery. Opening Reception. 5 – 7pm.

• At The Bascom. Art Cinema. Sit back and enjoy our weekly feature presentation "Roman City" 2 pm.

Friday, May 25-Monday, May 28

• At The Highlands Playhouse, Libby Whittemore. Call 828-526-2695 for ticket information.

Monday, March 26

• Franklin Health and Fitness Blood Drive, 1214

East Main Street, Franklin, 9 am to 1:30 pm. Please call 369-5608 for more information or to schedule an appointment. All presenting donors are automatically entered into a drawing for a pair of Delta Airline Tickets!

Tour de Cashiers: 'Ride for Health' is May 5

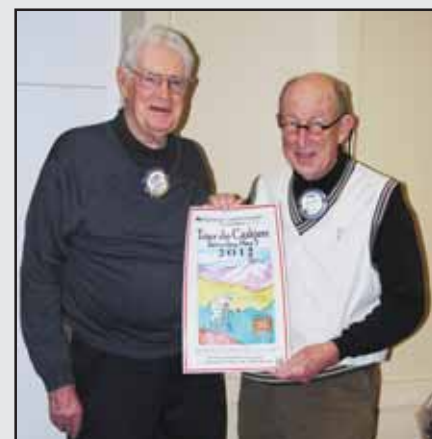
In its 20th year, The Tour de Cashiers 2012 theme is Ride for Health and will be held on Saturday, May 5th. Staged among the mountains of Western North Carolina, the tour consists of three routes, 25 miles, 62 miles and 100 miles. All routes take in vistas of springtime in the mountains along quiet mountain back roads. Riders from the Tour range from the occasional cyclist to some of the region's toughest riders. The event for some is a lifetime challenge and for the hardcore, a great training ride, such as the Assault on Mount Mitchell.

The Tour will continue to operate on a non-profit status with the Hospital Foundation as the lead organization. As in past years, any proceeds will benefit Cashiers non-profits that help with the event in addition to the Hospital.

"More than 50% of the budgeted revenue is provided by sponsorship contributions and I am counting on strong support this year," said Clark Moore. "It's a win-win for everyone."

Walker Taylor, food & beverage chair, has lined up local restaurants such as The Orchard, GameKeeper's Tavern, Fatigati's/Tommy's Coffee Shop, and Buck's to donate cuisine for the event.

Marketing efforts have been expanded with the re-design of two new websites by Callie Calloway, HCH communications specialist who is in charge of marketing the event. "We have already begun to receive enthusiastic feedback from previous year's riders; many are saying they will bring their friends this year," said Calloway. The tour is working with area chambers of commerce along with other cycling events, bicycle shops and clubs from Atlanta to Greenville and Asheville as well as local retailers and organizations to get the word out. More than 250 participants are expected. The surrounding communities benefit through increased tourism, image en-




From left: Charter volunteer and sponsorship chair, Clark Moore with veteran tour enthusiast and artist, Ethan Staats display Tour de Cashiers new look and artwork for the 2012 Tour de Cashiers Ride for Health.

hancement and retail patronage as bicyclers bring their families and friends to the Cashiers and Highlands area.

"We are thrilled to have the help of the team at the Hospital," said faithful volunteer William McKee. "The Tour de Cashiers is a favorable tradition in our community and with their direction, the event will continue to thrive. The Tour will be a great boost for the Hospital as well as our area."

As in previous years, the Tour will be partnering with a similar ride in Walhalla, SC, "Issaqueena's Last Ride". The combination of these two rides called the Blue Ridge Double has become popular. The events will be on consecutive weekends.

All rides for the Tour de Cashiers start at the Village Green on Saturday May 5, at 9 a.m. The early-registration cost is \$40 or \$35 for riders who sign up for the Double. The entry fee includes a t-shirt, light breakfast and a hearty post-ride lunch donated by local restaurants, as well as on-road support and well-stocked rest stops. All rider registration is through our website, <http://www.TourdeCashiers.com>. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Callie Calloway at (828) 526-1313.







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Poisoning from prescription medication is a growing problem in North Carolina – Since 1999 nearly 4,500 people have died from prescription drug poisoning. Operation Medicine Drop helps prevent accidental poisonings and drug abuse while protecting our waters.

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Operation Medicine Drop is a program administered by Safe Kids North Carolina and the N.C. Department of Insurance in partnership with:



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Date: **MARCH 24, 2012**

Time: **10 AM- 2 PM**

Location: **Highlands Pharmacy & Main Street Pharmacy**

Contact: **HIGHLANDS POLICE (828)526-9431**

For more information visit www.ncsafekids.org or www.cd10-nc.org

• HEALTH MATTERS •

Why are more preschoolers getting cavities?

By Dr. Joseph H. Wilbanks

The New York Times reported about the rise in cavities among the preschool population – the first such rise in 40 years. Dentists all over the country are reporting seeing young children with 6 to 10 cavities. Some have even more and the levels of decay are so severe that treatment must be completed using general anesthesia.

Dental decay is the #1 chronic disease in children and the problem is growing. Why are kids suffering from dental decay?

Bottled Water – More families are drinking bottled water rather than fluoridated water from the tap. Fluoridated water is a proven cavity fighter.

Snacking – Kids used to eat three meals a day with one or two snacks. Now children (and adults) are snacking all day long which provides an unlimited supply of food for the oral bacteria that cause cavities.

Lack of Knowledge – Parents are

unsure about when to start using fluoride toothpaste or when they should take their child to visit the dentist, many people don't worry about baby teeth because they assume they are only temporary anyway.

Sippy Cups – Sippy cups and baby bottles keep the floor a lot cleaner but they also allow the child to walk around for hours with sugary liquids coating their teeth. Limit sippy cups to water only (tap please) and allow small amounts of juice only with meals.

Losing the toothbrush wars – Many toddlers, actually most toddlers, don't like brushing their teeth so the twice a day ritual becomes an ordeal for parents and children. Keep up the fight! A soft toothbrush is a lot less upsetting than having several cavities that need to be filled. Parents need to remember that small children don't have the coordination to brush by themselves so a little help is needed.

The American Dental Association

• See HEALTH MATTERS page 19

Dr. Joseph H. Wilbanks, D.D.S.

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... QZAB continued from page 1

throughout the system.

At the Tuesday, March 13 Macon County Commission meeting, Brigman got the go-ahead to begin the process.

"If the county is awarded the funds, the money is sought through normal lending procedures and the interest rate is based on the county's credit rating and then the Feds buy it down to zero percent," said Horton.

The county's credit rating is golden and was just given another positive adjustment according to County Finance Director Lori Hall.

The county/BOE is applying for \$1.5 million of QZAB funds targeted for Highlands School for repairs and renovations, as required. Specifically, elementary wing renovations – HVAC, new ceiling, electrical upgrades, lights, paint, window replacements – middle school roof replacement, sidewalk repairs, and more as funding permits. Brigman said some of this will require engineering studies and architectural services.

In addition, part of the QZAB allocation requires a 10% match from the community which can

be "in-kind" services.

QSCB funds totaling a little over \$2 million would be used for construction, repairs and renovations at Union Academy, Macon Middle School, Franklin High School and Nantahala School.

The request and draft proposal for the QSCB funds had to be postmarked March 16. The county has more time for the QZAB request which will give Brigman time to work on the required community match.

Commissioners agreed to go after the money, but said they were only agreeing to "get in line" for the funds not committing to

using them if awarded.

"But if you have capital needs that you know you will have to do, you can either budget for them and do them a little at a time, or use these funds to do it all at once at zero percent interest," said Commission Chairman Kevin Corbin.

At its Tuesday budget meeting, the BOE drafted about \$1.7 million in Capital Outlay needs for the county, some of which are included in the QZAB and QSCB requests.

It was also reported that Highlands School's new boilers have been delivered and will be installed on a warm day when

students aren't in attendance.

At Tuesday night's meeting the Macon County Commission also OK'd funding a new, automatic fire alarm system for The Hudson Library. Its manual 1984 system is antiquated and does little good if no one is there to pull the switch.

Commissioner Jim Tate requested that the project be considered in FY 2012-13 budget discussions, but Horton said it's likely it could be funded in this fiscal year. He said he and Hall will know more by April's commission meeting.

– Kim Lewicki

Volunteers needed!

The Community Care Clinic in Franklin, which is located at the Macon County Public Health Center, desperately needs volunteers. If interested call 828-349-2085 or email communitycareclinicfranklin@gmail.com

Nursing/Clinical Volunteers:

These individuals provide clinical services to patients including intake (BP, Temp., Height, and Weight), limited testing (finger stick glucose, dip stick urine, and pregnancy testing), and assisting the providers during patient treatment.

Position Requirements: Individuals must have practical skills necessary to provide the services listed. Individuals may have formal training such as RNs, LPNs, MAs, and other clinically trained individuals.

Clerical and Administrative Volunteers:

The clinic utilizes a number of volunteers to assist with the clerical and administrative functions of the clinic. Volunteers in this category will assist directly with patients in the intake and overall treatment of the patients. Volunteers will work at the reception desk assisting patient with the completion of forms. Volunteers will assist the clinic administrator with other clerical tasks both during the clinic and between clinics such as typing, filing, phone calls, etc.

Position Requirements: Volunteers must possess a positive attitude, be interested in helping others and maintain strict confidentiality regarding patient medical information. No formal training is required. The clinic will provide volunteer orientation and training for all individuals.

Communications and Marketing Volunteers:

The clinic relies on volunteers and donations to sustain the clinic's important services. Volunteers are needed to provide written communications to media, volunteers, and clinic supporters. In addition, there is a need for a volunteer to maintain the clinic's website. Special projects may include annual reports, grant reporting, etc. **Position Requirements:** Volunteers must possess excellent written communication skills, and be interested in promoting the work of the clinic.

ALL VOLUNTEERS

The clinic provides a mandatory orientation and training program for all volunteers. Medical volunteers receive an orientation by the Medical Director and Clinic Director. Most volunteers agree to provide services at least once per month. Individual scheduling is done by the volunteer and the responsibility for absences is left to the volunteer to fill. Clinic volunteers can either be full time residents or part time residents.



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Jerry W. Mitchell, MD



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Board Certified by the American Board of Radiology, Dr. Jerry W. Mitchell specializes in diagnostic imaging for the evaluation of a wide range of diseases and injuries including cancer, bone fractures, aneurysms, kidney stones, diverticulitis, appendicitis, and more.

Now practicing at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, Dr. Mitchell has earned a stellar reputation through his 29 years of experience at the Erlanger Health System, an 813 bed level one trauma center, and Parkridge Medical Center in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He was graduated from Vanderbilt University and the University of Tennessee College of Medicine and completed residency at the University of Colorado Medical Center. Dr. Mitchell is trained in the latest procedures and technologies in diagnostic imaging.

Diagnostic imaging services at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital include:

- Bone Densitometry
- Computed Tomography (CT)
- Digital Mammography
- Fluoroscopy and x-ray
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Nuclear Medicine
- Ultrasound

**Highlands-Cashiers Hospital**
Imaging Services
(828) 526-1450
190 Hospital Drive, Highlands NC 28741



• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

What are you hungry for?



Pastor Clayton Lopez
Mountain Bible Church

The trail led up the mountain. We could see it from where stood. If you followed it with your eyes, you'd see that it ended in a dark gash. It looked like a gaping mouth opening up ready to devour whatever dared to scurry by.

That was our destination. So we loaded up our water bottles and whatever else we had and headed up the trail. The first mile or so took as through the village, then as we left the village and began to climb the mountain we started to sweat; the going got slower and harder.

Our party was made up of adults and us kids so the pace was erratic. Some of us kids would dash ahead only to be reined in again, "Don't get too far ahead!" As we climbed and started approaching our destination the lighthearted conversations tapered and were replaced by a foreboding sense of apprehension. We were heading closer to the gash on the mountain.

Instinctively, the kids remained with the group instead of dashing ahead. At the final fork in the trail we took a last head count and were told to stay together, were almost there.

I remember thinking; you know the trees and the undergrowth are darker here. The air even seemed to have a foul sense about it.

And as we marched on we could almost feel something holding us back and at the same time corraling us in.

The last turn, over a large tumbled litter of boulders and a mess of tangled tree roots and brambles and there it was—the witch doctors cave.

The walls and ceiling of the cave were covered with dark soot, making them ash black. As we looked around we saw why, there were many altars all over the floor of the cave. Candles and incense had been burning.

Along with the candles, we also saw chicken heads and the remains of animals that had been sacrificed. There was also red spattered among the white of the wax and the feathers; blood of the sacrifices.

The whole scene was intriguing. We looked around and saw that the witch doctor was not there, but he had been and not too long ago.

We lingered just a bit more, then we all got together

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 18

John 3:16

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

Proverbs 3:5

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY

Sky Valley, GA
Church: 706-746-2999
Sundays: 10 a.m. – Worship
Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month
Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer w/Holy Communion

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011
Worshipping at the facilities of Whiteside Presbyterian Church,
Cashiers

Sun.: Holy Communion - 9 a.m.; Adult Forum - 10:45 at Buck's
Coffee Cafe, Cashiers

Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.

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

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays – 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC
Senior Pastor Gary Hewins
Sun.: 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School
10:30 am: Middle School; 10:45 am: Children's Program, . Worship
Service. 12:30 pm Student Arts Group, 5 p.m. HS
Wed.: 6pm: CBC University Program

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

526-2968 • Reverend Bruce Walker
Sunday: Education for children & adults and choir rehearsal
beginning at 9:00am. Holy Eucharist Rite II Service held at 10:30am
in the Main Nave of the Church.

Monday: 4 p.m. Women's Cursillo Group

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.; Evening Worship
6:30

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m.,
Prayer Meeting – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 7:15-8:15 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor
Dr. Don Mullen, Parish Associate 526-3175
Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun. School – 9:30
Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast
Wednesdays – Choir – 7

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)
Rev. Carson Gibson
Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am
Bible Study – 6 pm

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor
828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street
Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson
670 N. Fourth Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)
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 9:45 a.; Worship 10:50 a.; 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)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;
Worship/Communion – 10:30

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah
Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
Choir – 6 p.m.

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin
828-369-9270 or 828-293-5197

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

Pastor: Clayton Lopez • 828-743-9704
Independent Bible Church
Sundays: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church, 4224 Big Ridge
Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

Weds: Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Youth Group 6 p.m.

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Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor – Parish office: 526-2418
Mass: – Sun: 11 a.m.; Thurs & Fri.: 9 a.

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Clifford Willis
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road: Pastor Alfred Sizemore • 526-3212
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Worship – 6
p.m.

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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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11

... WAYFINDING continued from page 2

Successful wayfinding is more than just signs. It is crating a "seamless experience" of a community through the use of websites, printed materials, GPS, QR codes and signs.

Since every destination in a community can't be on a wayfinding sign, the ultimate goal of a successful sign system is to get visitors to key destinations in the community. Here, they will be able to get more information through maps, brochures, kiosks, pedestrian level wayfinding signs and personal assistance.

For instance, in Highlands, getting visitors to public parking is already known to be an essential function of wayfinding signs particularly during the busy summer months.

Once visitors are parked, having pedestrian oriented wayfinding signs or

kiosks may be the next essential wayfinding element. However, the questionnaire is designed to get essential community input to ensure that the sign system addresses the primary goals of the system.

Sign Types:

To better evaluate the types and content of signs needed, here is summary of the various wayfinding sign types:

- **Gateway Signs:** Located at the town limits, welcomes visitors and employs the brand in its design. (NCDOT review is likely required for these.)

- **Vehicular Trailblazing Signs:** These signs are sized to the speed and size of the road. They can have no more than three destinations per sign in or to be readable. These signs will be on the major routes coming into Highlands -- again, it's likely NCDOT review will be required. Destina-

tions on these signs are usually key visitor destinations such as a visitor's center, downtown and large attractions like theaters or convention centers. Supplemental trailblazer signs can be used to direct visitors once they are in close proximity to a particular destination.

- **Parking Directional Signs:** Gets visitors to major public parking areas or lots. They can employ the "P" symbol that coordinates with the brand designed by Arnett & Muldrow.

- **Pedestrian Trailblazer Signs:** These signs are much smaller in size and can have many more destinations since the information is being read from a pedestri-

an perspective instead of from the automobile.

- **Kiosks:** These signs can contain maps, current event information and so on and are best located in areas with high level of visitor parking. They need to be designed and placed so they are easily seen..

"The branding stage of the process is still receiving public input and isn't complete yet, but the wayfinding stage, which is the most important part of the entire project, will begin at the end of March. Public input on this questionnaire is vital to its success," said Ran Shaffner.

Please fill out the accompanying questionnaire and return it to Town Hall.

... SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 17

and we prayed. We prayed for the man who did all this. We prayed for the town, we prayed for God's light to penetrate the darkness. Then we left, headed back down the mountain. Our yearly trek accomplished.

No matter where you look men and women, human beings have an itch, a hunger, a craving for the spiritual.

As a child my family would take a week or so vacation to a beautiful lake in Guatemala surrounded by volcanos and mountains. One of our "traditions" was to take this hike to the witch doctor's cave. It was always an eye-opening experience. Man has a hunger for God. But without the knowledge of truth, God's light, seeks to fill that hunger in so many wrong ways.

Even in our society that in many ways "pooh poohs" any religion as backwards, old-fashioned or naïve, we find that the very

ones who consider themselves to be the top of the evolutionary pile speak of their own existence in spiritual terms.

So whether it is in a dark cave with chicken heads and feet scattered around or in the halls of our institutions of higher learning, we express our spirituality.

We are beings who are physical and soulish. We are more than just a bundle of flesh and chemistry, we transcend our physicality, and we express our soulishness with our bodies. We have been created with a spirit.

We have a hunger, a craving, a deep desire, a latent zeal for . . . God.

But thank God we have a light, we have God's Word, the Bible and we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without these — God's revelation to us — we are all dabbling with chicken heads and chicken legs in a dark mountain cave.

• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SPORTS •

Highlander baseball drops season opener to Andrews

By Ryan Potts

The Highlands School baseball team returned from a one year hiatus and began their season with a trip to Andrews to face the Wildcats. Last season's lack of baseball was due to low turnout, but increased numbers have helped first-year coach Jerry Moore field a roster of 14 players with varying levels of experience.

The game at Andrews started well for the Highlanders as their bats showed little rust from the year off. The Highlanders were able to connect enough to build a 6-5 lead going into the late innings. However, some unfortunate fielding errors allowed Andrews to battle back and take an 8-6 lead going into the top of the final inning. The Highlanders were able to push a run across, and had the tying and winning runs on 2nd and 3rd respectively before a strikeout ended the game in an 8-7 Wildcat victory. Despite the loss, many of the Highlands players were excited about their first game in two years. "We definitely have some things to work on," said Senior Isaac Beavers, "but it was good to get out there and play again and we now know what we need to do to improve and compete for the rest of the season."

The Highlanders will travel to Swain on Friday to face the Maroon Devils in another Smoky Mountain Conference baseball matchup.

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... INVESTING continued from page 9

me out for that infraction. Public sites like Zillow and Trulia get some of their information from the MLS sites, Realtor.com and other places and their information is more generalized which can be make it seem less accurate.

There are plenty of public sites that offer some of the same information for anyone with enough time on their hands. Locally, you can visit the Macon County site, (www.maconnc.org) or the Jackson County site (www.jacksonnc.org). You can check out the tax value of your home, see what image the county shows, see how much property tax has been paid over the years, see a rough sketch of your home, etc. Those sites have been providing public information for many years, and before that (as is still the case) you can visit the courthouse and do your own property research for your own property or anyone else's property – it's all public information.

Add those sites to the newer ones like Trulia and Zillow, and you've 'got more information than you can shake a listing contract at.' We are being bombarded with information these days, not just in our field of expertise, but everywhere you look. Google and Wikipedia have changed the way we reference most anything — even before you can type in your word or phrase to be researched and you're being given countless other tidbits of information just floating around in the cyber universe.

... HEALTH MATTERS continued from page 15

suggests taking your child to visit the dentist at around age 1 to be assessed for future cavity risk. Early and regular visits will also allow your child to feel comfortable in the dental office and allow us to stop small problems before they become

Some of this is paid advertising, but for the most part it's just free information.

Yes, there are multiple sites available for research and they all have their place in our field, but you have to be careful with what you do with the information you get. Just because a site says a home has a value of X amount, doesn't make it so, and as long as you look at these sites with that in mind, there's no reason *not* to use them.

As a real estate Broker, I consider them a tool in my toolbox – a box filled with various tools to get the job done. Imagine trying to build a house with just a hammer. If you are building a house, you wouldn't ask your babysitter down the street for a floor plan, or your plumber about which floor covering to choose. Instead, you would hire a building contractor because it's what they do.

When you want to buy or sell your home, you need to have a Realtor because it's what WE do. We may 'outsource' a little, but we also use the tools we've been educated with, tools we have used for years in the business, tools we know that work. Contact a real estate professional – a Realtor if you are serious about buying or selling your home.

• Jeannie and Tucker Chambers are brokers and co-owners of The Chambers Agency, REALTORS in Highlands, specializing in second home investment homes and vacation rentals. 828-526-3717 www.chambersagency.net gitit@chambersagency.net

big ones.

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... JUST HERS continued from page 10

his head. He looked as if he was born to be there, and perhaps he was. If only Daddy had lived long enough to see this, to drink in the bracing air and a wee dram of Bushmills straight from the distillery.

So, with no possible help from my family, I'm making up this Irish thing as I go, discovering Riverdance and Jameson whiskey, Belleek china and Aran Sweaters. I've even discovered there's such a thing as Irish cooking. My good friend Mary Ellen Lavin is married to John, delightful man from an Irish family. One weekend, she was off to have

Sunday lunch at her in-laws. "What's Irish cooking like?" I asked. "Oh," she replied, grinning. "It's kind of like English cooking – only not so spicy."

**Go néirí an bóthar leat
May the road rise to meet you**

• Michelle is a writer and translator who moved to Highlands after years of living in Baltimore, Sydney, Paris and New York. She lives in town with her two very spoiled cats, Orion and Weasel. A striking redhead, Orion has declared that for St. Paddy's Day, he prefers to be called "O'Ryan."

• TOWN BOARD TIDBITS •

At the March 6 Town Board meeting, commissioners learned that if an 18-wheeler turnaround on the Highlands side happens it won't be until 2015. At the very least, signs will be erected to direct trucks weighing 2,000 lbs. or more down NC 106 rather than the Gorge Road.

Alex Osteen, who has been working with the Peace Corps for the past two years, requested town support for a fundraising campaign he is holding in Highlands to fund a health clinic in San Luis Planes in Honduras. Commissioners said they won't be writing checks but did offer him a facility to hold the event.

The board finalized the contract with Tate Landscaping to maintain Kelsey-Hutchinson Park and to refurbish the landscaping at Wright Square along the sidewalk. The existing trees will be removed and new plants, trees or shrubs will be planted.

Commissioners agreed to begin work on the sidewalk along US 64 and NC 106 adjacent to the new post office. NCDOT plans to rework the intersection, at some point, and said the \$45,000 the town is pay-

ing for the sidewalk will count as its match toward DOT improvements in the area.

Town Attorney Bill Coward presented a fee simple contract that guaranteed that should the Post Office no longer want the property – 1.87 acres — reverts to the town.

– Kim Lewicki

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CLASSIFIEDS

• POLICE & FIRE •

Highlands PD log entries from March 8. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

March 8

• At 9:30 a.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident at Webbmont and US 64 west.

March 9

• At 11:45 a.m., a homeowner on Cullasaja Drive reported damage estimated at \$1,000 to the gutter and cornice of the home.

• At 4:50 p.m., officers received a call about a suspicious driver who was possibly intoxicated traveling toward town on US 64 east. Officers stopped him and determined he wasn't intoxicated just in a hurry. He was told to drive with caution.

March 10

• At 7:40 a.m., officers received a call about water running over Wahoo Trail. The water dept. was called.

• During the week, police officers responded to 3 alarms and issued 8 citations.

Highlands F&R Dept. log entries from March 2.

March 2

• At 2:25 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Joe Pye Trail. The victim was taken to the hospital.

March 3

• At 7:10 p.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on the Cashiers Road. It was set off by workers.

March 7

• At 12:19 p.m., the smell of propane in the basement of a home on Sagee Drive was reported. It was turned off and the gas company was notified.

March 8

• At 9:15 a.m., a power line on Webbmont Road was reported. It was extinguished and the Electric Dept. was notified.

March 9

• At 7:23 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Garnet Rock Road. It was false.

• At 11:40 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the Community Bible Church. It was set off by workers..

March 11

• At 6:47 a.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on Country Club Drive. It was false.

• At 3:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire in a pit at a residence on Apple Mountain Lane which caught a Polaris Ranger on fire and destroyed it.

March 13

• At 9:32 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a home on Sassafras Gap Road. The victim was taken to the hospital.

• At 8:06 a.m., the dept. responded to an accident at the entrance of Wild Cat Cliffs Country Club. There were no injuries.

• At 9:44 a.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at VZ-Top. It was set off by workers.

• At 3:02 p.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at Community Bible Church. It was set off by workers.

March 14

• At 8:20 a.m., the dept. responded to an alarm at a business on Main Street. It was due to a faulty alarm system.

NOTE: Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. has requested homeowners to trim back foliage around their driveways and 9-1-1 addresses.

COMMERCIAL SPACE PLUS RESIDENTIAL APT. -- 535 N. 4th St. In town. Great location. \$285,000. Fresh remodel. Business upstairs, one-bedroom apartment downstairs. Call 770-827-0450. (St. 2/8)

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20-TON LOG SPLITTER, \$900. Call 828-526-9027.

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... RETREAT continued from page 1

opened discussions and continued to note numerous times during the day, that thanks to the town's Electric Fund, which is the town's main enterprise fund, over the past few years Highlands hasn't faced what other North Carolina municipalities have faced, but said commissioners need to be aware and take into account the state of the current economy in whatever decisions are made concerning the upcoming budget.

Since the town's expenditures depend on its revenues, Frye opened the meeting outlining the town's "Revenue & Expenditure Statement by Funds."

The bottom line indicates that Highlands is on target both with its expenditures and its revenues – revenues budgeted for fiscal year 2011-12 are \$3,633,906. Year-to-date collections are \$3,334,696.06 and current period is \$487,476.38.

Collections from the NC Franchise Tax are good — \$99,785.86 year-to-date with \$100,000 budgeted for 2011-12.

The NC Local Option Sales Tax is \$4,000 less than this time last year, but revenues sent by the state are always behind. \$770,000 was budgeted for 2011-12; \$532,073.06 has come in year-to-date with \$63,730.93 coming during the current period.

But Frye offered this warning. "There is no "sales tax talk" in the General Assembly yet, but the state budget is in trouble. The state could keep the sales tax and leave us on our own," he said.

Money collected from 2010 and 2011 property taxes was actually over what was budgeted, which was a surprise, considering the state of the national economy during those two years. Money budgeted for the 2011-12 fiscal year from 2010 taxes was \$10,000 – so far \$14,271.92 has come in. For 2011, \$2,425,000 was budgeted and \$2,427,455.21 has come in. All tolled, the town is up \$6,727.13 in property tax revenues.

"Revenues are on track and expenditures are on track, so do we need to tighten our belts? Basically, yes," said Frye. "We still need to keep on track to be safe. We need to budget for what we can pay for but over the next year we need to be careful about things we haven't budgeted for."

All of the town's enterprise funds – the Electric Fund, the Sanitation Fund and the Water/Sewer Fund – by state law are supposed to be self-sufficient which means money shouldn't be transferred from the fund balances of healthy enterprise funds, like the Electric Fund or even the General Fund to keep them afloat..

"The Sanitation Fund is at the break-even point but that's because we transfer money from the General Fund, so it's not truly an enterprise fund, yet," said Commissioner Amy Patterson. "We still need to work on making it self-sufficient."

Since current sanitation fees aren't covering operation costs in that department, Frye said a rate increase is needed so the fund can become self-sufficient and not depend on the other funds' fund balances..

In addition, Frye initiated talk about a constructing a recycle/convenience center in town – somewhere on town property – and suggested supplying bear proof garbage receptacles for citizens. Bears and dogs getting into garbage is one reason the town picks up twice a week, which he said is far from the norm across the state.

He also suggested decreasing residential pick-up to once a week instead of two times as it is now, the idea being that citizens could make use of the recycle/convenience center in town.

The town's major revenue sources are the Ad Valorem taxes, other taxes and licenses, unrestricted intergovernmental revenues, water and sewer charges for services, sanitation charges for services and the electric fund.

Frye said he doesn't expect much Ad Valorem growth in 2011-12 – the actual amount collected in 2010-11 was \$2,580,690 and year-to-date for 2011-12 is \$2,466,843.

"Due to the economy, and the fact that a reval is coming in 2015 when it's possible house values will decrease, I don't anticipate much growth in the next several years," he said.

Highlands' Fund Balance, which is the money it uses to fund capital projects, operational expenses, and just about everything else – sometimes items budgeted for, sometimes not – has always been very healthy.

The General Fund Fund Balance minimum in North Carolina is 8% of a municipality's operating expenses, or what it would take to operate a municipality for three months.

Highlands General Fund Fund Balance has decreased over the years but it is still much more than the minimum 8%.

In 2007, the Fund Balance in the General Fund was 43% of the operating budget; in 2008 it was 44%; in 2009 it was 42%; in 2010 it was 41% and in 2011 it was 38%.

"At 38% we are in the upper tier of municipalities in North Carolina," said Frye, "however, if the downward trend in the Fund Balance percentage continues, we

will use it up and once it's drawn down it's hard to replenish. We have to protect the Fund Balance," he said.

Frye also said that if the property values decrease after the 2015 reval, it will be hard to keep the budget revenue neutral without raising taxes. "We may have to raise taxes to generate the money we generated at the old rate due to the possible decrease in property values," he said.

At the current levy the town generates \$1,880,234,633 in revenue from property taxes. Increasing taxes by .1850 cents could bring in \$940,117 more.

Continuing to stress the importance of the town's Electric Fund, Frye said that an eye-opening chart shows that mostly transfers from the Electric Fund's Fund Balance to other departments is what's making them self-sufficient. "They are cushioned by the transfers out of the Electric Fund," he said. "The Electric Fund is a huge resource for the town."

He said if the healthy Electric Fund wasn't available, money to support the other funds and support the operation of the town would have to come from other sources.

"If these funds weren't available, we could have to find the money from somewhere else or curtail the level of services we now offer. What we have been able to do is due to the healthy Electric Fund. For instance, we just bought a \$200,000 bucket truck for the Electric Department and we paid cash," he said.

Since FY 2006-07 through FY 2011-12 year-to-date, the Electric Fund has bolstered the town's other departments and capital improvement projects by \$3,179,402.

Since so much concerning Highlands governance depends on maintaining its Electric Fund, which in turn is dependent on the wholesale price Highlands pays Duke Power, Frye stressed the importance of maintaining a Rate Stabilization Fund so Highlands won't have to raise citizens' electric rates each time Duke raises its wholesale rates to Highlands.

At the end of each year, Duke Power does a True-Up Estimate which includes the Coincident Peak Variance, the Demand Rate Estimate, and the Energy Rate (fuel only). Turns out in 2010 and again in 2011 Highlands overpaid Duke to the tune of \$142,834. Highlands won't get the money back, but it will show up as a credit.

"True up has gone our way so far, but it could go the other way," said Frye. "The figures depend on Duke's rates, the weather and useages. It's good to have a Rate Stabilization Fund so if the True Up doesn't go our way, we will have the funds to deal with the situation." Some of the money the town makes off electric rates goes into the Rate Stabilization Fund.

All said, it's obvious the town depends

heavily on the Electric Fund. "It's critical to our operation," said Frye. "It enables us to transfer money out of its Fund Balance when needed, instead of just from our General Fund Fund Balance."

Nevertheless, just to be fair to citizens, Frye asked Duke Power if it would be interested in buying Highlands' electric system.

"I thought they would say no, but they said yes they would be interested," said Frye.

He said if the commissioners are interested in pursuing this avenue, the selling price would be the book value plus some. "It would have to be a really big check to make it worth while," he said. "Plus, without control of our electric system, we would be dependent on Duke if there were outages and citizens would talk to an automated system instead of a real person. Plus, response time would go up on people's repairs and outages."

Frye also reminded the commissioners that if Highlands sells its system, it doesn't remove rate increases which could be more than Highlands' current rate structure and he said with the electric system gone, all the fund transfers would be gone, too.

The commissioners said they would not be interested in selling the system to Duke.

"We would just have to raise taxes to make up the money we would lose," said Commissioner Gary Drake. "

This led to an interesting discussion concerning the town's defunct hydro-electric plant. Turns out for an estimated \$3 million, it's likely the plant could be put back on line, not to handle Highlands' electric needs – the hydro plant could only generate 1 megawatt and the town of Highlands has a 8 megawatt load.

However, the power generated by the hydro electric plant could be a revenue source and could offset Highlands' wholesale costs to Duke, which could help the town keep its retail rates low, said commissioners.

Highlands could get green credit for selling the power generated out-of-grid to the tune of \$28,500 per month after the \$3 million investment is paid off in 12 ½ years.

Right now, the USFS is the only hurdle. It's believed the plant, which is downstream of the Lake Sequoyah Dam, is on USFS land – or at least must be accessed via USFS land. The commissioners gave Frye and Town Engineer Lamar Nix the green light to pursue all aspects of the project.

• Next week: Changes in fee schedules and rates, the phasing out of family coverage for employees, a plan to lease town fiber to Internet providers and more.

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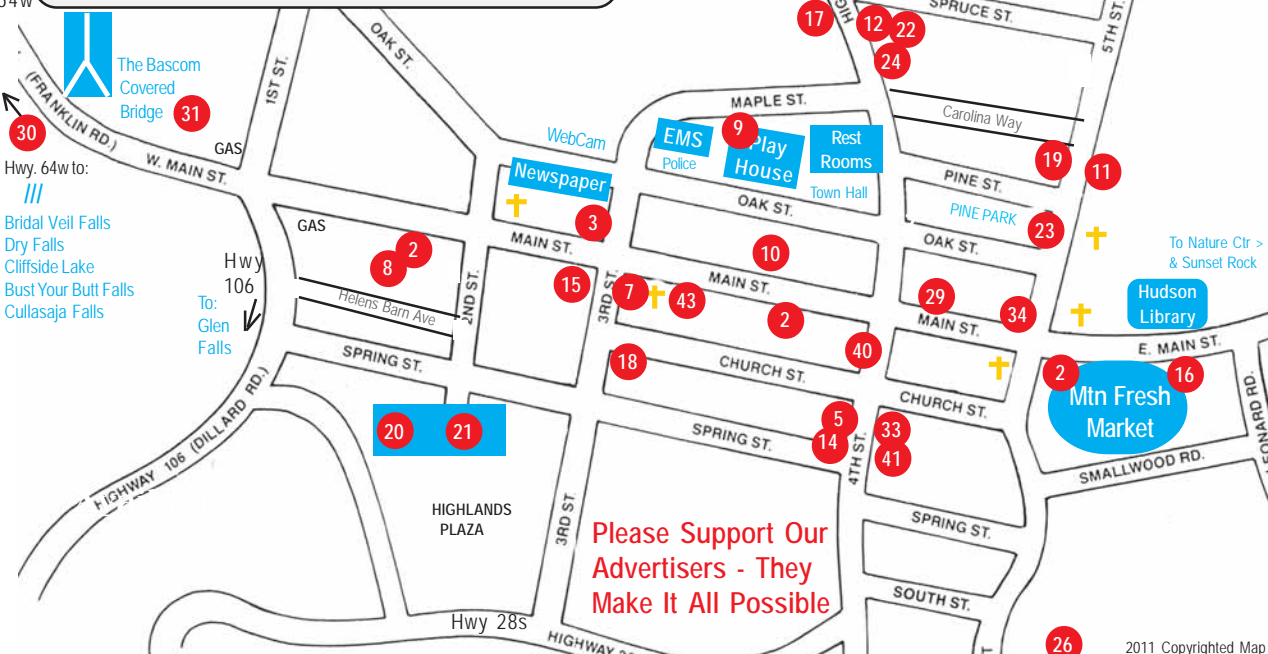
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Thursday, March 15
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Sat., March 17
• A Greenway Work Trip. Meet at the Rec Park at 9 a.m. To help, call Hillrie Quin at 526-2384 or email at hmquin@frontier.com.
Sunday, March 18
• The Eckerd College Concert Choir and the Eckerd Ringers will perform in a concert at 11 a.m. and 3 pm at First Presbyterian Church. Everyone is invited to attend!

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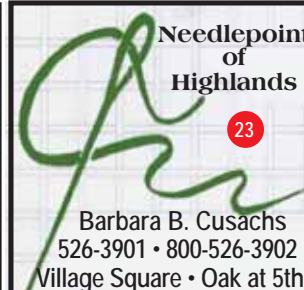
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