

Highlands' Newspaper

FREE every Thursday

Volume 10, Number 12

Internet PDF Version at www.HighlandsNewspaperPDF.com

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Thursday, March 22

• Special called Town Board meeting at 4:30 p.m. at the Community Building to discuss the town's insurance plan.

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

Friday, March 23

• Senior Luncheon on Friday from 12-2p. Menu will be Meatloaf, Green Beans, Red Skin Mashed Potatoes, Salad, and rolls. Dessert will be Chocolate Cake and Carrot Cake.

Sat. – Sun., March 24 – 25

• At The Bascom, Everything Bath. 10 am – 4 pm. 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.

Sat., March 24

• Operation Medicine Drop off at Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy from 10a to 2 p.

• 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.

• Father/Daughter Dance at Highlands United Methodist Church, located at 315 Main Street Saturday from 5-7pm. Admission is free and the dress is semi-formal. Refreshments will be served. The legendary DJ Michael Murphy will spin music for the evening. Everyone is welcome

Monday, March 26

• Mirror Lake Improvement Assoc., meets at the Rec Park at 6 p.m.

Tues., Mar 27

• Highlands Dialogue at the Hudson Library from 10-11:30 a.m.

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Chowan closing for repairs and more

The Tuesday night Town Board meeting was short and sweet but dealt with important matters all the same.

Citizens living in the vicinity of Chowan Road will have to change their routines as of Friday, March 23. The road will be closed — possibly for as long as six

months — while town officials find out what it's going to take to repair the embankment which is falling away.

"Part of the road is breaking off and it's going to be very expensive to fix," said Town Manager Bob Frye. He said it's not safe for vehicular traffic and it's a liability

at this point. Repair estimates range from \$250,000 to \$1 million.

Frye said it will be closed until core samples and an engineering study can be done to determine the extent of damage and to determine if one side of the road

• See CHOWAN page 19

Path for 2012-13 set at TB retreat

Course to cut costs, raise revenue for town

– Part Two –

During a six-hour retreat Thursday, March 8, 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 FY 2012-13.

(This is part two of the series. Part one was in the March 15 edition.)

Next fee schedules were discussed with Frye opening the conversation saying across the board fee schedules should be looked at once a year, adopted by the board and they should be a point of budget talks.

"There are some fees that haven't been looked at in 10-15 years," he said.

Possible rate increases include utility service deposits, penalties for delinquent and non-payment on accounts, re-connection fees, monthly minimum fees for electricity, water, sewer and garbage service, regardless of use; temporary electric service, special readings, service call fees, water and sewer connection fees, water rates outside of town, all recreation related fees, as well as all fees associated with zoning, planning and signage.

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Photo by Jim Lewicki

The two sides of boating on the Upper Chattooga

USFS ready for boaters on Upper Chattooga when physical conditions are right

U.S. Forest Service officials announced today that beginning March 16, 2012, boaters with permits may float the upper segment of the Chattooga River when flows are high enough.

"As soon as the weather cooperates and provides suitable flows, we anticipate that boaters will be floating the upper Chat-

• See BOATERS page 10

Conservation groups file appeal of Forest Service's plan to allow boating on the Upper Chattooga

This week the U.S. Forest Service announced plans to allow boating for the first time in more than 35 years on the upper portions of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River and through the Elliott Rock Wilderness.

Environmental groups are outraged because allowing this

• See FILE page 10

"Typically across the state, anyone getting water or sewer outside of a municipality pays double the rate in town," said Frye. "All these fees need to be re-considered."

For instance, currently, clients outside Highlands pay \$52 per month for ¾-inch water meter and clients inside pay \$32.

Concerning water leaks, it's been the town's policy to adjust the portion of the bill 50% less the minimum charge if the leak is on the customer's side, but Frye said that needs to be adjusted, too.

Across the state, it is the responsibility of the homeowner or the business to pay for the water. "It's not their fault, but it's not ours either," said Frye. "We can put them on a payment plan, or charge them the wholesale treatment cost of the water."

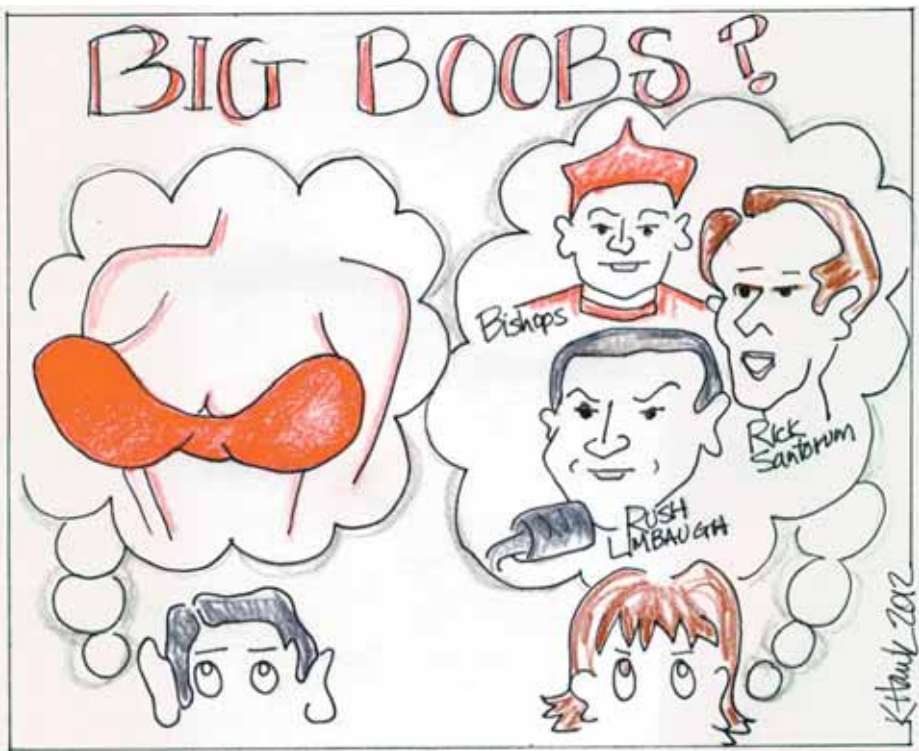
Commissioner Patterson reminded the board that there are so many second-home owners

• See RETREAT page 19

FRI	SAT	SUN
69 49F	66 45F	64 44F

• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• HAWK'S EYE VIEW •



• LETTER •

Jury's out on reason they returned

Dear Editor,

I am writing in regard to the March 8, 2012 article "Those who came before and after them - Part 7."

My letter is about Helen and Belle McKinney. I was delighted to see a photo of them from their childhood. I grew up knowing them and their children. It was my grandparents, Alexander P. and Lydia J. Anderson, who took them to Chicago for about three years when they were in their teens.

The following quote is from the introduction of June Thompson Medlin's book "Mama's Recipes." June was Helen's youngest daughter and my friend until she died several years ago.

"When they grew up, Helen (Mama) and Belle had their own little private Westward Movement. They went to Chicago. They went with the family of Professor (botanist) A. P. Anderson, to help with the children and the housework. They came back from Chicago as sophisticated young ladies." (Readers can learn more by reading June's Introduction.)

I grew up hearing from my mother, Louise Anderson Sargent, that her parents would not let Helen and Belle marry, in spite of many beaux in Chicago. They insisted the girls return to Highlands.

So - we'll never know whether my mother or those who claimed that Grandma McKinney insisted they return, was right. History is only what is recorded!

Lydia Sargent Macauley
Highlands

•See LETTERS page 9

• OBITUARIES •

Charles Rowe Coley, Jr.

Charles Rowe Coley, Jr., age 47, died on March 7, 2012. He was born in Staunton, Virginia, the son of Patricia and Charles Coley of Blowing Rock, NC and grew up in Newton and Blowing Rock, NC. He is survived by his wife, Cindy Barloga Coley and her family, his parents, Pat and Charles, his brother Scott and family, and numerous extended family and friends.



their two dogs, Geminga and Floyd, aka Big Foot

Charles had a deep appreciation for nature and loved being outdoors. He enjoyed hiking, camping, music festivals and playing guitar around the camp fire, boating, long walks in the woods with his dogs and spending time with family and friends.

Charles graduated from UNC Chapel Hill with degrees in psychology and communication and received his MBA from Appalachian State University. Charles lived in Winston-Salem for many years, where he worked as an information technology/ business analyst and project manager for Wachovia and Wells Fargo. He was happily married to Cindy Barloga Coley and they made their home in Scaly Mountain, N.C for the last several years with

He will be remembered for his sensitivity and compassion, his clear blue eyes and quiet integrity. He had a healing presence and a kindness that held all knew him. He was loved by so many and is greatly missed.

Funeral services were held Saturday, March 10th 2012 at 2:30pm at Rumble Memorial Presbyterian Church in Blowing Rock with Reverend Lynn Stall officiating. Burial was in Eastview Cemetery in Newton, NC.

Domingo "Dominick" Sanchez-Colon

Domingo "Dominick" Sanchez-Colon, 60, of Highlands, NC, died Tuesday, March 13, 2012.

Born in Utuado, Puerto Rico, he was the son of Juana Rodriguez and the late Marcello Sanchez. In addition to his father, he was preceded in death by his wife, Irene Sanchez-Colon who died in 2004. Dominick was a member of the St. Francis Catholic



Church where he enjoyed playing the guitar with the choir. He was a talented chef working over 30 years at Nick's Restaurant in Highlands. He was an active member of the community, who enjoyed giving to others using his culinary talents. Dominick was known to always have a smile on his face and a loving caring heart. He positively impacted the life of many people in the community.

He is survived by three children, Vas Sanchez-Colon of Atlanta, GA, Alex Sanchez-Colon and wife Lauren of Orlando, FL and Angela Sanchez-Colon of Highlands and one brother, David Sanchez-Colon and wife Rosa.

Memorial Mass was held at 6 p.m. Monday, March 19, at St. Francis Catholic Church. Father Tien Duong will officiate.

Memorial donations can be made to Macon Funeral Home, PO Box 1175, Franklin, NC 28744.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

• CORRECTION •

In last week's article entitled "Path for 2012-13 set at TB retreat" a paragraph read: 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.

It should have read: At the current levy of .1350 cents on Highlands property valued at \$1,880,234,633, the town generates \$2,538,317. Increasing taxes by .1850 cents could bring in \$940,117 more.

We regret the error and are happy to set the record straight.

•See OBITUARIES page 3

• ENGAGEMENT •

McCall-Bryson to marry

Mr. and Mrs. Craig (Yogi) McCall have the honor of announcing the marriage of their daughter Kayla Lynn to Ryan Michael Bryson.

Ryan is the son of Mr. Mike Bryson and Mrs. Suzanna Murray.

Ryan is the manager of Bryson Grading and Trucking and the owner of Rocket Hauling. Kayla is a registered technologist of Vascular Interventional Radiology at Mission Hospital.

The wedding is planned for Saturday, June 2, 2012 in Highlands.



Kayla McCall and Ryan Bryson

... OBITUARIES continued from page 2

Effie Hunnicutt



Effie Hunnicutt, age 84, of Franklin, NC, died Wednesday, March 14, 2012. She was a native of Macon County, the daughter of the late James and Ethel Wilburn Jenkins. She was married to the late Robert P. Hunnicutt. She was a member of Rose Creek Baptist Church. She was a homemaker, a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

She is survived by three daughters, Brenda L. Martin and husband James of Kenosha, WI, Janet Burnett and husband Eddie and Aretta L. Anten and husband Robert of Franklin, NC; two sons, Robert Allen Hunnicutt and wife Yvonne of Clayton, GA and Jack E. Hunnicutt and wife

Renee of Tawas City, MI; two sisters, Mary Baty of Highlands, NC and Phyllis Pierson of SC; two brothers, Billy Jenkins and Donnie Jenkins both of SC; 13 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren also survive. Burial was at Crescent Lake Cemetery in Waterford, MI.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

• See OBITUARIES page 22

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The Adventures of Frisky • Part 3 of 4

A boy and his dog

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

By the time school started Frisky was almost fully grown, weighing in at about 20 pounds, with short floppy brown ears. Everyone said he was a terrier mix but I didn't care what he was; we were in love. Frisky was fully toilet trained and permanently out of his crate. As promised, I returned the crate to Frank at the poultry house. I also realized I had properly named my dog. Actually Frisky was an understatement as he was as hyperactive as his owner. Frisky and I ran the streets dai-

ly and everyone in the neighborhood knew us. Did I mention Frisky was not allowed in my parents' restaurant? Other than that and school, Frisky was with me every moment, lying patiently next to me on the floor while I finished my homework and we could play.

The Catholic school I attended was directly across the street from my home. The sisters of Saint Bridget's School all knew Frisky. Shortly after morning roll call, we would all march, two abreast, to church for morning mass. It was the job of the last eighth grader to close the large doors in the back of the church. When that didn't happen, sometimes on purpose, it would only

be a matter of time until we would hear the tick, tick, tick of Frisky's nails on the church's marble floor. It was uncanny how that dog could find me in a church full of children. No matter where I was, Frisky would stand there staring down the pew where I knelt. If I didn't acknowledge his presence, he would sit up and beg quietly, making my fellow students giggle.

All the sisters at St. Bridget's used World War II combat clickers to control their students. I think they got them from the 82nd Airborne. When sister clicked once, it was a signal for me to get up and put Frisky out of the church. When I headed for him, he would start doing circles in the aisle and whine, knowing I was going to pick him up. As I walked out of the church with Frisky in my arms, I could hear snickering from the other students. There wasn't a student in that school that didn't know my little dog.

Each day when school was over, Frisky was waiting for me. He also learned when I had recess and, weather permitting, was always on the playground to enjoy a game of dodge ball. Attacking the ball was his favorite thing to do. Even though his mouth was too small to bite it, he would always try.

When the first snow of the season was over two inches deep, I would load Frisky on my sled and pull him to Wyandotte Park for a day on the slopes. Even though Frisky was a short-haired dog, the cold never seemed to bother him. But after a couple of rides on the sled to the bottom, Frisky would take advantage of the bonfire at the top of the slope. Later in the day, though I was soaking wet, freezing and shivering, I would pull a dry and warm Frisky home on my sled.

Then, on a bitter cold day in February, I was cleaning my bike in the front yard when I heard car tires screech and Frisky yell out in pain. I was panic-stricken as I raced toward him. Baxter Avenue was a busy street and Frisky had been hit by a pickup truck. He was lying motionless at the curb. Tears filled my eyes as I dashed toward him. The driver stopped, took an old rag from his truck and was tying Frisky's mouth shut to keep from being bitten. We loaded Frisky into his truck and headed for the vet. The driver kept apologizing and I didn't know what to say to him because I was angry at him. I think I just said nothing.

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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

I'm thankful for medical advancements



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

**Feedback is encouraged.
email:**

hsalzarulo@aol.com

A classmate in medical school was diagnosed with leukemia in the fall and died before the end of our freshman year. While the battle against cancer is by no means won, many leukemias, lymphomas, and cancers are now curable.

Minimally invasive procedures, performed through tiny puncture wounds have revolutionized surgical care. Operations which once required prolonged hospitalization are now done

as outpatient procedures. Following gall bladder surgery, patients who were once out of work for six or eight weeks are able to return in a few days. Robotic surgery promises to further expand our capabilities.

Advances have been dramatic in every field of medicine. As a resident, I learned to expect one death for every 4,000 procedures. Safer drugs, improved training, and sophisticated intraoperative monitoring have reduced that number to roughly one in 200,000!

Joint replacement surgery was in its infancy when I was a resident. It seemed that every academic orthopedist wanted to have his name attached to a joint and worked with companies that were eager to gain a foothold in the nascent market.

At Penn, one surgeon invented a knee joint that was more similar to a door hinge than a complex functioning physiologic joint. Another used a hip joint that was so poorly designed that it routinely failed within a year. As our knowledge grew, our products improved. We considered the physiologic, as well as the mechanical demands of the joint, and incorporated that knowledge into better designs.

I need not look forward to limping on a cane for the rest of my life, nor is it likely I'll outlive my new joint, nor do I have much to fear from the operation. Sure, things still go wrong from time to time, but the overwhelming probability is that I'll enjoy freedom of movement and freedom from pain that I haven't experienced in years, something unimaginable when I entered medical school.

Sometime before the end of the year I'll have my right hip surgically replaced. The pain in the joint and the limp have gotten progressively worse in recent years. It could be worse. It could be 50 years ago.

In 1962, the year before I started medical school, my Dad had a heart attack. Coronary artery bypass was not yet available. Cardiac catheterization was years away. Clot busters, drugs that can stop a heart attack in its tracks, weren't even in development. The only treatments available were morphine to ease the pain, and oxygen, delivered under a gossamer tent of plastic film. Two weeks later, Dad had a second attack and died.

When I was growing up, kids in our neighborhood were not permitted to play outside in the dog days of summer, so terrified were our mothers of polio. And why not? Black and white newsreels showed row upon row of shiny steel cylinders, each with a child's head popping out the end; iron lungs drawing breath into those paralyzed by the feared disease. Polio has been almost eradicated and small pox exists only in carefully guarded labs.

Bill Slack implanted the first intraocular lens in Duluth, Minnesota a year or two after I finished residency training. He was roundly criticized by the other ophthalmologists in town. The procedure, they claimed, was dangerous and experimental. Prior to the introduction of the replacement lens, cataracts were a progressive disease which led to impaired vision and even blindness.

I remember the grotesquely thick glasses my grandmother wore in the years before her death. I remember the complication Uncle Bob suffered; permanent blindness in one eye after a lens implantation. Progress has a price. A few years later American ophthalmologists were traveling to remote corners of the globe, and in a 20-minute operation, restoring perfect vision to peasants whose sight have been reduced to indistinct shadows or worse.

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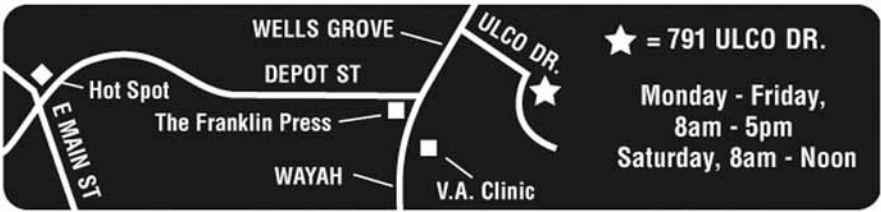
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... WOOLDRIDGE continued from page 4

From the vet's office, I called my parents at the restaurant to tell them of this disaster. My Dad said he'd be there in an hour. By then, it was determined Frisky had a broken front leg, a few abrasions and missing hair but little else. The driver asked the vet for the bill and kept apologizing for running over Frisky. When my Dad arrived, he shook hands with

the driver and thanked him for stopping and then paying the bill. We loaded Frisky in our car and headed home.

• Part four, the final chapter, 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.

• BACK DAYS •

**Those who came before and after
them – Part 8**

**The story of the family of
John Edwin Potts, cont.**

By Eva Potts Massey

On Nov. 26, 1911, their second child was born, William Roderick Potts. He was named for his two grandfathers and was well and strong and helped to ease their grief over the loss of John Edwin.

Next they moved to the Clark Place, a house on the property where Helen's Barn was later built. There Eva Fritz Potts was born March 30, 1914.

From 1915 to 1925, John Edwin worked for the U.S. Forest Service. Peggy, his horse, was his means of transportation in his work. His office was on the second floor of G.W. Marrett's store.

Ellie's father, Roderick Pierson was a builder and built a little five-room bungalow on Fifth Street where he lived alone. Because of ill health, he decided to sell the house and so John Edwin and Ellie bought it and lived there for years. Roderick built a one-room shack in the backyard and lived there for a while.

Mary Elizabeth Potts was born in the little house on July 12, 1916 and she grew up to be a nurse having gone on calls as a child with their neighbor Miss Durgin.

One night it snowed real deep and in the morning there were little humps here and there in the front yard. The boys in the family went to investigate and found that everywhere there was a hump, there was a rabbit. They took sticks and knocked the rabbits in the head. Ellie was kept real busy making batter and frying up rabbits over the next couple of meals.

World War I was over in 1918 and there was quite a celebration in Highlands. There was a parade from the school, down by the Anderson Place and on down Fifth Street and around Lindenwood Lake (now called Ravenel Lake).

June 13, 1919, Emma Louise Potts was born at the sanatorium (where the Rec Park is now) run by Dr. Lapham and her helpers. When Emma was little they would ask her where she was born and she'd say the 'cemetery' She couldn't say sanatorium. Roderick Pierson died when his granddaughter



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

Emma was a baby. He had been in the sanatorium for some time with tuberculosis and died there.

On Sept. 3, 1921, Margaret Carolyn Potts was born in the little house on Fifth Street.

Edwin Potts was well-versed in the Bible and frequently quoted verses. When the Baptist preachers would call on him and Ellie, they would go away knowing more about the scriptures than they'd known before. He favorite hymn was "How Firm a Foundation." He believed that we should always remember that there is a mercy seat and a Throne of Grace that we can approach at any time. He said God is always there for us.

At an early age, Bill Potts joined the Baptist Church followed a little later by Eva and Mary. They were baptized in Harris Lake by the Reverend John Baty. The churches at this time didn't have a baptistery but used Harris Lake, Lindenwood Lake and Mill Creek.

When Emma and Margaret were baptized, a young boy climbed a tree near Lindenwood Lake to watch. According to him, he saw them in pretty white dresses, hair all in place wading out into the lake. The preacher said "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the son and the Holy Ghost." Under the water they went and came out, hair all wet and dripping, pretty dresses limp and clinging to them. In fact, he said they looked like drowned rates. Bill Nall was the boy in the tree and 11 years later he and Lynne were married. Bill remembered to tell her he had attended her baptizing.

•to be continued ...

• COACH'S CORNER •

Random thoughts from a busy weekend

Normally I would just use this space to talk about MARCH MADNESS (or, for us Duke fans, March Sadness...but more on that in a bit) but because of one major event from the weekend I must use the random thoughts program to cover it all.

Peyton Manning is now a Bronco, which is great news for Manning and Denver fans, but I can't help but feel sympathetic towards Tim Tebow. Denver made the right move, you have to get a HOF level quarterback if you have the chance, but it just stinks for the kid because he keeps getting the rug pulled out from under him despite having great success. I hope for Tebow's sake that a moribund franchise takes a chance on him and builds around him, but the more likely scenario is that he ends up in New England or Philly as a hybrid player.

So Duke lost on Friday, which really came as little surprise to me. I did expect them to beat Lehigh, but after CJ McCollum drove into the lane for the 17th time in the first half I realized that Coach K was not going to adjust and that McCollum was going to destroy Tyler Thornton...just like Eric Maynor destroyed Greg Paulus...just like Wayne Turner destroyed Wojo. So, McCollum goes for 30 and Duke now has a hated player to hearken back to in the same manner that UNC fans fondly remember Harold Arceneaux.

Speaking of UNC, tough luck on the injury to Kendall Marshall. Marshall is a great kid and a terrific player who surely deserves better than to deal with an injury. UNC has been pretty snakebitten this year with injuries, but they are the one team in the US that is equipped to lose 3 players to injury and still throw out tremendous talent night after night.

There were a couple of other upsets of note...one being Norfolk State beating Missouri in what was a



Ryan Potts
tryanpotts@hotmail.com

FANTASTIC game and also NC State making it to the sweet 16 after a long layoff. Norfolk State caught lightning in a bottle for one night and played the game of their lives...Mizzou didn't play poorly in that game at all, it was just that Norfolk State played better. NC State has some elite talent on their team, and if Scott Wood continues to

shoot well then they have what it takes to advance to a matchup with...gulp...UNC on Sunday.

And finally, I guess I need to jinx some teams by making them my final four picks for next weekend. I will go with UNC, because I think that Marshall will find a way to give them some minutes. I will go with Marquette, because Jae Crowder can match Draymond Green and Sparty has no answer for Darius Johnson-Odom. I will go with Wisconsin, because I think that their outside shooting and rebounding will pose problems for a Fab Melo-less Syracuse. Finally, I will go with Kentucky, because they are in a league of their own this year and the only team that can beat them will have to do so with an injured PG.

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• CONSERVATIVE POV

Are you having fun yet?

Do you remember the last presidential campaign? Of course you do. Certainly you remember Obama's mantra – Hope and Change. While the mass of sheeple are preoccupied with the Republicans reputed "War on Women" (what a crock) you may have noticed that our country (I believe we are still the USA) going to hell in a handbasket. I know you libs are going to have a spasm at the idea, so let's look around.

Obama promised us that he would sit down and reason with those around the world who oppose us around the world. Take the Iranians, for example. No problem, he'll sit down with the little despot and tell him we like him a lot, and then he'll say OK, you're a nice guy and you talk good, so we'll stop developing nuclear capability right away – I promise. That strategy worked well, don't you think?

Afghanistan is another matter. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta paid a visit where both Afghan and US troops were present. As a precautionary measure, the General-in-charge of hosting the visit

had OUR troops leave their weapons at the door. In an active war zone! We were told the rationale was "to make our troops look like the Afghans" who were not allowed to be armed during Panetta's visit. Talk about political correctness gone awry. Or maybe there was fear that one of our guys might not be a Panetta fan. Who knows.

Maybe they were on high alert because some Afghan loony stole a truck loaded with gasoline with the intention, evidently, to torch Panetta's plane upon landing. His plan foiled, and rather than letting the whole thing go to waste, he lit himself on fire, ending the incident.

Maybe, we should face the fact that the Afghans enjoy their way of life, as backward as it seems to us, and we don't need to try and remake them in our image. Instead of rebuilding their nation, perhaps we should be improving the in-



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

frastructure of the good old USA.

Israel. Our smooth talking ambassador in charge of making friends has seemed to drive US/Israel relations to their worse level in my memory. Assuring the Israelis that we have their back, the Iranians, Syrians, the Saudis, etc. assure Israel they have their front. The remarkable "miscalculation" that there is still time to let diplomacy work is putting Israel's neck in a noose. Hopefully, they will ignore Obama's insistence that

they wait while Iran is buying delivery systems to send their destruction and "wipe Israel off the face of the Earth."

Meanwhile, back on the home front, things don't appear to be so hot, either.

Even with the Rs beating the snot out of each other, Obama isn't looking so great.

Perhaps his inane opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline project, which has upset everybody except the handful of folks who have their fingers on his buttons, has something to do with it.

You have probably noticed that gas prices have escalated recently to dramatic levels, and promise to get worse. Of course, producing our own gigantic reserves is out of the question. Why? Because in between campaign trips, Obama says it is. When he picked Stephen Chu as his Secretary of Energy of Energy, the country shuddered. He was known as the poster boy for "green" energy.

From Investors Business Daily: "As pump prices for gasoline hit \$4 a gallon, Energy Secretary Stephen Chu admits the administration has no interest in bringing them down. Is it any wonder Democrats are growing increasingly agitated with this White House?"

At a hearing this week, Rep. Alan Nunnelee, R-Miss., specifically asked Chu if 'the overall goal' of the administration is to 'get our price down.' Chu's answer was no. In fact, he said that 'somehow we have to figure out how to boost the price of gasoline to the levels of Europe,' which are in the neighborhood of \$8 per gallon.

The situation predates Obama, but

the fact is that he's done nothing to reverse it and much to make it worse. Indeed, he gives every indication of relishing high gasoline prices, since they help power his environmental agenda. But now even some Democrats – sensing a political disaster in the making – are starting to put the pressure on the president to confront pump prices head-on. That's unlikely to happen, at least not as long as Obama keeps taking advice from Secretary Chu."

A few days ago, I thought I heard some mention that Obama, in conjunction with British PM David Cameron, who was in town for a photo-op with the prez, was going to open the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Then – silence. What's up?

Reuters reports: "A formal request from the United States to the UK to join forces in a release of oil from government-controlled reserves is expected 'shortly' following a meeting in Washington between President Barack Obama and Prime Minister David Cameron."

This leak brought fury down on the idea, since the reserves are there for national security emergencies, and the only emergency is Obama panicking over the hit to his popularity caused by escalating gas prices.

Immediately upon Reuter's release, the Washington Examiner reported: "I am not going to discuss specifics about it," White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said of Obama's energy conversation with Cameron when asked if they had talked about tapping the oil reserves. "I can say very clearly that the report that plans were made 'is false.'"

Obama, on his campaign tours, points out the improving economy as an accomplishment of his administration. With a tepid growth rate and still way to high unemployment, he has little to brag about.

Also from POLITICO: The Congressional Budget Office said that President Barack Obama's tax and spending policies will yield \$6.4 trillion in deficits over the next decade, more than double the shortfall in CBO's own fiscal baseline.

Throw in the extreme unpopularity of Obamacare and Obama's negatives continue to pile up. I'm not having much fun yet, how about you?

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• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT •

Highlands, NC Real Estate receives global recognition

Earlier this month, readers of Barron's Penta supplement (which was launched approximately two and a half years ago and targets investors with \$5M in assets) were introduced to the magazine's top 20 choices for the best locations in the United States for second homes.

Located on the list between Jackson Hole, Wyoming and Palm Beach, Florida, the tony community of Highlands, North Carolina made its debut in the #14 spot.

Barron's readers were treated to a sneak peek into what Highlands residents and visitors have long known: our mountain community, blessed with phenomenal beauty, is the perfect destination for those seeking refuge from summer heat, as well as for those seeking top-notch dining, shopping, spa, golfing, hiking, fishing, and cultural experiences.

The article pointed to a recovery in the affluent, second-home market overall, with prices rebounding as we have moved out of market bottom. While bargain hunters are out, luxury home buyers are investing again and are more than willing to pay for properties with the best locations and highest quality.

I did have one small quibble with the article's authors. They noted that Highlands was "on the cusp of becoming a destination." Given the plethora of visitors (from points all over the nation and overseas) we have enjoyed this winter (during what is a typically very quiet time of year for us), I would assert we already are a destination.

And, as this year's spring temperatures in the southeast rival those of summer's past, I predict our "season" will begin much earlier. Real estate investing will similarly enjoy a surge of activity as more buyers jump back into the market, securing their own summer havens in our community.

Our mantra at White Oak Realty Group is this: Invest in Highlands, NC Real Estate ... and Invest in Your Life!" We are thrilled that Highlands is among



Susie de Ville-Schiffli
Owner/Broker-in-Charge
White Oak Realty Group
526-8118

the top 20 locales for second-homes in the United States. We look forward to welcoming back our friends and to introducing newcomers to the highest caliber of life quality one may experience anywhere in the world.

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

... LETTERS continued from page 2

Thankful for Highlands

Dear Editor,

As some of you may know, my mother has recently re-located to Indiana to live with my sister. Violet Betz has enjoyed living in Highlands for the past ten years, a community made very special by the loving care of the many friends she has met here. I would like to single out three organizations which have made her stay here unique:

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital HealthTracks. This program has been invaluable in providing an excellent, hands-on wellness program for all ages. Its staff and volunteers have helped keep my 89-year-old mother healthy and independent, proving that it is never too late to start a program of exercise.

Home Delivery Meals. This service of Macon County Senior Services provides nourishing meals to seniors who want to live independently as my mother has. Its volunteers have often braved harsh weather conditions to provide not only a healthy meal, but also a visit, a bright smile, and a friendly voice every weekday.

First Presbyterian Church of Highlands Our church has claimed my mother as one of our own and has ministered to her in many ways. Pastor Lee Bowman has served communion to her at her home, and she has enjoyed countless visits from members of our church who have embraced her with the love of Christ that extends beyond the walls of a church.

My mother wants to thank everyone who has been a part of her life in Highlands, from good neighbors to a wonderful landlady to the Highlands Roadrunners Club who have made her an honorary member. The visits, cards, gifts, and food – even fuel assistance from the Highlands Emergency Council – have all been much appreciated.

Richard Betz
Highlands

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... BOATERS continued from page 1

tooga," said Paul Bradley, forest supervisor for the Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests. "I want to emphasize, though, that this section of the river is not a place for most boaters - floating in this area at high, fast flows will be dangerous for people who don't have specialized skills and experience."

Boating is allowed:
• On the main stem of the upper segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic

River between the confluence of Green Creek in North Carolina and one-quarter mile downstream of the Lick Log Creek confluence in South Carolina.

- From December 1 to April 30.
- From the time that flows reach 350 cfs or greater at the USGS Burrells Ford gauge during daylight hours. Daylight hours will be 30 minutes before official sunrise to 30 minutes after official sunset. Once boating is allowed, it may continue until 30

minutes after official sunset that same day.
• With a self-registration boating permit.

• Using tandem/single capacity hard boats or tandem/single capacity inflatable boats.

• Starting or ending only at specific put-ins and takeouts as outlined on the self-registration permit:

• Put-ins: downstream of the Green Creek confluence in North Carolina; Norton Mill Creek confluence in North Carolina; Bullpen Bridge in North Carolina; and Burrells Ford Bridge in Georgia.

• Takeouts: Norton Mill Creek confluence in North Carolina; Bullpen Bridge in North Carolina; Burrells Ford Bridge in

Georgia; and Lick Log Creek confluence in South Carolina.

• With a minimum of two craft and a maximum of six people per boating group.

Boaters and other users can confirm water flows on the upper segment of the Chattooga River at the USGS gauge at Burrells Ford at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?02176930>

Before visiting, boaters should check <http://fs.usda.gov/goto/scnfs/upperchattooga> for the most current information on where to pick up boater registration permits, parking, access and the decisions related to recreation uses on the upper segment of the Chattooga River.

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2012



Upcoming Exhibitions

Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery

Opening Reception, March 24, 5- 7 pm

Support provided by the Koski Family Foundation.

March 24 - May 10

Chicks: It's All Gone to the Birds

Opening Reception, March 31, 6-8 pm

Support provided by Nancy and Larry Fuller,

Audobon North Carolina and DELTA

March 31 - June 17

Highlands, NC

TheBascom.org 828.526.4949

... FILE continued from page 1

boating would cause extensive damage to water quality, soils, the riverbank, and the solitude visitors now experience. The plan violates environmental laws designed to protect these resources.

Greenfire Law, an environmental law firm, is challenging the Forest Service's decision on behalf of Georgia ForestWatch, the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club, and Wilderness Watch. The groups submitted an appeal of the decision on Wednesday, and will request an immediate stay based on violations of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Wilderness Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and a host of internal Forest Service practices.

"The Forest Service's decision favors narrow recreational interests at the expense of irreparable damage to fragile and rare wild areas that belong to everyone," said Rachel Doughty, lead attorney at Greenfire Law. "None of this damage is necessary because boaters have plenty of options elsewhere to recreate. It is a very poorly thought-through plan. For example, boaters are en-

couraged to find and create their own put-ins and take-outs along miles of delicate river bank during high water events when erosion is most likely."

There are as many as 89,000 boating trips a year on the lower 37 miles of the Wild and Scenic River. The upper 21 miles have always been reserved for quieter pursuits — hiking, walking, botanizing, hunting, angling, and swimming — to name just a few.

Forest Greenfire Law has issued a notice of appeal filed pursuant to 36 CFR 219.14(b)(2) on behalf of appellants: Georgia ForestWatch (c/o Robin Hitner, 15 Tower Road, Ellijay, GA 30540, 706-635-

8733)/Service on the issue; Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club (c/o Colleen Kiernan or Larry Winslett, 743 East College Avenue, Suite B, Decatur, Georgia 30030, 404-607-1262, Fax: 404-876-5260) and Wilderness Watch, (PO Box 9175, Missoula, Montana 59807, 406-542-2048)

Appellants have come together to appeal the joint decision to amend the Land and Resource Management Plans ("LRM-Ps") of the Nantahala and Pisgah, Chatahoochee-Oconee, and Sumter National Forests.

In addition, Greenfire has also issued a "Stay Request for Amendments to Boating Provisions of the Proposal for Management of the Upper Chattooga River."

Specifically, a stay of the specific activities and projects listed below that implement changes to management of the twenty-one miles of the Upper Segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor ("Upper Chattooga") contained in or permitted by the joint decision to adopt the management direction of "Alternative 13A" presented in the Environmental Assessment: Managing Recreation Uses in the Upper Segment of the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River Corridor.



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Highlands Area Upcoming Events


PULL OUT

'Chicks! It's all gone to the Birds' opens at The Bascom on March 31

Chicks! It's All Gone to the Birds opens at The Bascom on March 31 and runs through June 17. Join us in celebrating the fascinating world of our feathered friends. 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. Support for this exhibition is provided by Nancy and Larry Fuller; Audubon North Carolina; and Delta Air Lines.

In conjunction with the exhibition, The Bascom is hosting a number of "avian" related programs.

- The exhibition's opening reception on Saturday, March 31 from 6-8 pm featuring a presentation from artist Susan Taylor Glasgow.
- The Birds of the Highlands Plateau, Amazing Stories from a Remarkable Place on Saturday, May 12 at 4 pm with Curtis Smalling, Mountain Region Biologist and NC IBA Coordinator.
- Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship Project on Friday, June 1 at 7:30 pm with Dr. Mark Hopey.
- The Early Birders - Antique Nature Prints and Decoys on Saturday, June 9 at 4 pm with Dr. Lloyd Newberry, author of European Hunter: Hunting in 33 Countries.
- The Armchair Birder on Saturday, June 16 at 4 pm featuring Dr. John Yow, author of The Armchair Birder.

Mark your calendar for the March Winter Barn Dance at The Bascom. Gather with friends and neighbors, enjoy great music with The Runners of the Green Laurel and relive the memory of a great Highlands' tradition.

Honoring police, firefighters and EMS on Saturday, March 31st; the fun begins at 7 pm. Tickets are \$5 per person and can be purchased at the door. Admission for honorees is complimentary. Food and libations will be available for purchase. The Bascom's Winter Barn Dances are sponsored by The Bascom, The Highlands Area Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, Mountain Fresh Grocery, the Ugly Dog Pub and the Highlands Historical Society. Special thanks to caller Donnie Callo-way.

The Early Bird Discount at The Bascom runs until March 31st. Don't miss your final opportunity to 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. 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.

• 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.

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 downstairs. Visitors are welcome. Meetings end at 8:30 a.m.

• 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.

Sat. - Fri., through March 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.

Thursday, March 22

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

• Macon County Public Health will hold a special WIC enrollment event on Thursday from 5 to 7 pm. WIC is a supplemental food program for pregnant women, infants, children under the age of 5, and breastfeeding mothers. The special enrollment event will be held at the public health center's WIC office at 1830 Lakeside Drive. A light meal and babysitting services will be provided. Many families in Macon County meet the guidelines for WIC. Call 349-2448 for more information about what you'll need to bring with you.

Friday, March 23

• Senior Luncheon on Friday from 12-2p. Menu will be Meatloaf, Green Beans, Red Skin Mashed Potatoes, Salad, and rolls. Dessert will be Chocolate Cake and Carrot Cake.

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 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

• Operation Medicine Drop off at Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy from 10a to 2 p.

• 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.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an 11-mile strenuous hike with a 3,000 ft. elevation change on the Pinnacle Park loop via Black Rock and Pinnacle Mts. near Sylva. Meet at Dillsboro Huddle House at 8 a.m. Drive 10 miles round trip. Bring plenty of water and lunch. Call leader Don O'Neal, 828-586-5723, for reservations. Visitors are welcome but no pets please.

• FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE FOR THE HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY. Highlands United Methodist Church, located at 315 Main Street, is inviting the community to a Father-Daughter Dance on Saturday from 5pm to 7pm. Admission is free and the dress is semi-formal. Refreshments will be served. The legendary DJ Michael Murphy will spin music for the evening. Know that the public is welcomed to this special event.



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Spring Home Improvement

Ways to beautify your garden

(StatePoint) Whether your garden is a source of food for your family, a way to beautify your home's outdoor spaces, or a gathering place for parties, you already know how beneficial your outdoor hobby can be.

But a garden needn't only be a human habitat. If you cultivate it right, you can encourage beautiful wildlife to become regular visitors to your garden all season long.

Here are some tips to get started:

- Plant native flowers, shrubs and trees to give local wildlife the proper sustenance they need to survive. Skip flowers bred strictly for size and color and opt for high-nectar yielding flowers instead.

- Incorporate birdfeeders into your garden. Not only will they look great, they are an excellent supplemental food source for your feathered friends. And you can keep furry friends at bay with a squirrel-proof feeder.

- If you build a water source, they will come (and stay). A pond or birdbath will help prevent birds from eating and going in search of



water.

- Birds need cover to protect themselves from predators. Planting densely with a mix of smaller trees, shrubs and beds of annuals and perennials will do the trick.

- Avoid pesticides. These chemicals are potentially harmful to you and your family, and the same goes for wildlife. Also, by killing garden pests, you will eliminate a primary source of protein for birds in search of nourishment for their migration ahead.

Once you've invited all these creatures to share your garden, you're going to need to take some steps to make it safe for them.

While a garden might be

a safe haven, your home can be a death trap According to Wyoming-based Western EcoSystems Technology, an estimated 98 million birds are killed annually in the U.S. from colliding with glass windows. That is one bird fatality per house.

But you don't need to be part of the problem. Applying static-cling decals to your windows will prevent birds from mistaking your windows for thin air. And you can apply such a decal without affecting the appearance of your home. For example, decals from WindowAlert rely on a special ultra-violet-reflecting coating that is invisible to humans but looks like a brilliant glow to birds. You can learn more at

www.WindowAlert.com.

"Your home needn't pose a danger to birds," stresses Spencer Schock, founder of WindowAlert, Inc.

If you spot an injured bird in your garden, don't rescue it. If it's young, its parents are likely nearby. If you want to take action, call your wildlife office for information on licensed rehabilitators.

With a few tweaks to your garden, you can create an eco-friendly habitat for the birds and the bees and everything in between. After all, there's nothing more beautiful than a garden that is not only good to you and your family, but to wildlife, as well.

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Spring Home Improvement

Quick and easy ways to update your kitchen



(StatePoint) For many families, the kitchen is the most important room in the house, topping the list of rooms where they gather most. And it's almost always the busiest room when entertaining friends.

But if your kitchen is outmoded or looking just plain drab, some easy, cost-efficient updates can make it more inviting, without undertaking a major remodeling job.

Walls

Wallpaper styles come and go. And if your walls were papered more than a few years ago, you are probably living with a design that's no longer in fashion.

For a timeless look, strip the dated wallpaper and replace it with a bright new coat of paint. Be sure to choose a color that nicely complements the floors, countertops and cabinets.

For a modern take on wallpaper, look for mosaic tile collections that show-

case beautiful tiles and patterns, providing texture for any wall in your home. For example, Trend USA offers patterns ideally suited to give tired accent walls a fresh twist.

Countertops

Inconvenience is a major factor with a full kitchen remodel. But you can update the overall appearance of the kitchen by redoing just the countertops. For example, Granite Transformations, a kitchen and bathroom remodeling company, can transform a kitchen in one day by replacing your countertops with heat, cold and scratch resistant glass or granite.

For an even more elegant look, consider opting for mosaic tiles, inspired by traditional Italian glass mosa-

ics.

If you're nervous about making such a drastic change, fear not, new technologies are making it easier for consumers to visualize potential refurbishments. A new iPad application, iGRANITE, for instance, allows users to upload a snapshot of their space, and change the colors and textures of every surface of the room. More details about downloading the app can be found at www.granitetransformations.com.

Appliances

When is the last time you replaced your kitchen appliances? No appliance, however durable, will perform optimally forever. It may be time to evaluate if your products are really doing the

job.

Replacing major appliances like stoves and refrigerators might sound like an expensive prospect, but outdated products are not always as energy-efficient as newer models. Swapping these items will not only give your kitchen a sleek new look, they might also save you money on utilities in the long run.

According to real estate experts, kitchen updates offer homeowners the highest return on investment than any other home improvement job. So whether you're planning to sell your home, or simply bring it into the 21st century, you'd be wise to start with the kitchen.

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PULL OUT

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

Sun. March 25

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take 7-mile moderate-to-strenuous hike to Boteler Peak via the Chunky Gal Trail for a great view at the top. Meet in Franklin at the NHC Club House at 9 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Drive 30 miles round trip. Call leader Chris Shaw, 371-0183, for reservations. Visitors welcome but no pets please.

Monday, March 26

• Mirror Lake Improvement Assoc., meets at the Rec Park at 6 p.m.
• 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!

Tues., Mar 27

• Highlands Dialogue at the Hudson Library from 10-11:30 a.m. The Force of Character and the Lasting Life

by James Hillman (book). Coordinator: John Carr.

• The Power of Nutrition in Preventing Disease. Come learn simple ways to prevent disease and improve the quality of your life. Bring friends and family and learn the health advantages of eating whole grains; the truth about sugar, cholesterol, and carbohydrates; and how oxidation affects the body; plus much more. Mill demonstration & oven-fresh hot bread will be served. Taught by nutrition counselor, Carol J. Taylor, and Rebecca Cothran. Cost is FREE, however reservations are required for planning purposes: 828.526.4297 or fullcup99@aol.com at the Albert Carlton Community Library in Cashiers 6-8 p.m.

By March 30

• April is Public Health Month in NC and to raise awareness about the important role public health plays in our lives, Macon County Public Health will recognize a "Public Health Hero" in the month of April. Citizens may nominate community volunteers for this award by

completing the short nomination form found at <http://maconnc.org/public-notices.html>. We'd like to hear your stories about people who've made a difference in the health of our community, so nominate a deserving volunteer by March 30th.

Thursday, March 29

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

March 31 – June 17

• At The Bascom. Chicks It's All Gone to the Birds, Bunzl Gallery. The gallery will be filled with a plethora of art works that portray an avian theme. Despite the focus on a single theme, the exhibition offers rich variety. Artists pursue the topic through a range of approaches and media. This exhibition, devoted to our feathered friends, provides a broad look into the world of contemporary and traditional art, letting divergent approaches take wing. From the traditional to the way out and wacky, visitors will experience a flight of fancy. Presented in partnership with the Highlands Biological Station and the Highlands Audubon Society.

Saturday, March 31

• Oliver Rice and the Dixie Blue Ridge Mountain Boys will play two sets, one at 5 p.m., the second at 7 pm. when the Satolah, Georgia, volunteer fire department holds its annual benefit, Saturday at the firehouse on Route 28. Food served beginning at 4, with bluegrass and gospel tunes over supper. The firefighters also will raffle off a \$300 cash prize as well as two 30-06 rifles donated to the cause and auction some of the sweetest homemade cakes baked this side of Seneca. The slow-cooked, wood-smoked pork barbecue or grilled chicken with all the trimmings is \$7 per plate for adults, \$4 for children and \$10 for a combo plate. Whole butts (\$35) also can be pre-ordered by calling (828) 371-0722 by Tuesday, March 27. All proceeds this year to benefit fellow firefighter Joe Munger and family. The public is invited to this annual, family-friendly outing.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 6.5-mile loop trail from Betty Creek Gap to Timber Ridge Trail with a side trip to Big Laurel Falls. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin opposite Burger King at 9 a.m. Bring water and lunch. Drive 44 miles round trip. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations.

• **ATTENTION MACON COUNTY REPUBLICANS:** The Macon County Republican Party will hold its 2012 Convention on Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Macon County Community Building, 1288 Georgia Road, Franklin. Registration is \$2 and is from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.. Precinct Meetings are from 11:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.. Light morning foods will be available and complimentary. The Keynote speaker will be Representative Dale R. Folwell, Speaker Pro Tempore, NC House of Representatives. For questions call Chairman Chris Murray at 421-2191.

• At The Bascom. Chicks, It's All Gone to the Birds Exhibition Opening Reception. 5 – 7 pm.

• Barn Dance at The Bascom celebrating police, fire & rescue and EMS. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 but free to police, fire & rescue and EMS.

• At The Bascom. The Artist Talks, Gallery Talk, Susan Taylor Glasgow, artist. 6 pm. A native of Duluth, Minnesota, Susan Taylor Glasgow migrated south with the geese one fall and studied Design at the University of

Iowa. Now a resident of Columbia, Missouri, her studio is a wonderful old 1930's house in downtown Columbia that she and her husband rescued from demolition.

• At The Bascom. Friends Around the Globe. 1 – 3pm. What in the world is going on? Explore world cultures through these fun, creative and entertaining activities. Art projects are specific to a variety of countries and cultures. This program is presented in partnership with the International Friendship Center. No pre-registration required. Ages 8-12. Tuition: \$5 per class. At The Bascom. Discovering the Image. 10am – 4pm. Whether you are a veteran painter or have always wanted to hold a brush in your hand and make a mark on the canvas, this class can benefit you. Diane's approach to painting is one of pure visual discovery from the first mark to the last! These one-day workshops can open your eye to discovering the image as you work, take your past habits and formulas, and set out on a journey of discovering your own way with the image. Instructor: Diane McPhail. Levels: I, II & III. Tuition: \$75 member/\$110 non-member per class.

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

Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery opens at The Bascom on March 24



Don't miss Emerging Artists: Frank Vickery which opens in the Atrium Gallery at The Bascom on Saturday, March 24 with a reception from 5-7 pm and runs through May 10.

Pictured from left during Frank's Master of Fine Arts thesis defense are Dr. Patrick Taylor; Frank Vickery; Richard Tichich, Director of the School of Art and Design at Western Carolina University (WCU) and Dr. Seth McCormick, Assistant Professor of Art History at WCU.

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.

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- 21 JUMP STREET
- Dr. Suess's THE LORAX
- ACT OF VALOR
- HUNGER GAMES

• HEALTH MATTERS •

The Cholesterol Myth

There's a lot of conventional wisdom, even among doctors, that 'just ain't so.' One big example of wrong information is the idea, now accepted as fact by almost everybody, that fat, cholesterol, or 'bad' cholesterol, causes coronary artery disease. We now have plenty of evidence these ideas are completely false. No matter how high your cholesterol readings, in the absence of inflammation of the artery wall, cholesterol just will not form deposits in the arteries at all. But there is a \$38 billion a year market in statin drugs, a market that depends on your believing you are protecting your heart by lowering your 'bad' cholesterol. The drug companies, and the FDA (which is in bed with them), do not want you, or your doctor, to know the truth.

Cholesterol is absolutely necessary to your health. It is the main difference between animal biology and plant biology.



Kim Bonsteel, L.Ac., IMBT
goinghomeagain@yahoo.com

Cholesterol is a vital component of animal cell walls, and the precursor of a vast array of hormones and neurotransmitters. About a quarter of all the cholesterol in your body is found in your brain and spinal cord, which should tell you something about how important it is. High levels of cholesterol in the blood appear to have a protective effect against dementia in the elderly.

Even the idea that there is such a thing as 'bad' cholesterol is false. All types of cholesterol and their derivatives are needed for health. Your body combines cholesterol with proteins to make vital substances known as 'high density' and 'low density' lipoproteins, or HDL and LDL. Your doctor tells you that HDL is good, and LDL is bad. Current understanding of biochemistry says it's not that simple. There are two types of LDL molecules. The kind of LDL that has smaller, denser molecules is the kind that will stick to your arteries, but only

• See HEALTH MATTERS page 16

LASIK MYTH # 26

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John 7:37b

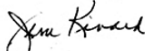
March 10, 2012

Dear Friends,

We will be dedicating our *completed and fully funded* fellowship hall on Sunday, April 1, 2012. We want to thank you for the part you played in bringing this vision into reality. We will be celebrating both Sunday morning at 11:00 am when we will dedicate the building to the service and glory of God, and Sunday evening at 6:00 pm as we fellowship over dinner with all those who made this possible. It would be our honor if you could attend either or both occasions.

To God be the glory, and thank you for your obedience and sacrifice to our Savior as you gave of your finances, time and talent!

Yours in Christ,


Jim Kinard
Pastor



• HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HOSPITAL NEWS •

H-C Hospital welcomes Dr. Patti Wheeler to staff

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital welcomes area family physician Patti Wheeler, MD, to the medical staff at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Her medical staff status includes active, fulltime Family Medicine privileges.

Board Certified in Family Medicine, Dr. Wheeler has been an integral part of the Highlands-Cashiers communities since 1988, when she began her Highlands Medical Associates physician practice immediately after completing residency. For the past 24 years, Dr. Wheeler has provided primary care services to area residents, both local and seasonal, and of all ages from pediatrics to adult. Today, her practice continues to grow as she ac-

cepts new patients on an ongoing basis. "Practicing family medicine in Highlands is a most rewarding experience. I am especially pleased to treat my 'grandpatients' who are third generation children of my first patients," said Dr. Wheeler.

Dr. Wheeler said that she is impressed with the expanded services at the Hospital. "Patients are always my first priority and I believe the Hospital's expanded services will benefit them," said



Dr. Wheeler. "I am excited about the Hospital's updated radiology department and look forward to working with Radiologist Dr. Jerry Mitchell whose training and ability allows for added diagnostic testing and screenings."

"We are fortunate to have such an experienced and well trained physician like Dr. Patti Wheeler treating and caring for our area residents," said hospital President and CEO Craig James. "Dr. Wheeler has a

very loyal following of patients, and her participation on HCH's medical staff will improve the access to the services they need."

Dr. Wheeler earned her medical degree from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine at Chapel Hill, and completed her residency in Family Medicine at the Mountain Area Health Education Center at Mission/St. Joseph's Hospital in Asheville, NC. She is certified by the American Board of Family Practice, and is a member of the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Western Carolina Medical Society.

Her office is located at 1029 Hicks Road, Highlands NC 28741. Her office can be reached at (828) 526-4346.

... HEALTH MATTERS continued from page 15

when there is inflammation of the artery wall. The kind of LDL that has bigger, fluffy molecules actually protects you from the other kind. Yet insurance companies are refusing to pay for cholesterol tests that distinguish between these two kinds of LDL. Two tests that can do this are the VAP test and the LDL S3-GGE test. If your doctor says your 'bad' cholesterol is too high, I would insist on having one of these tests, even if you have to pay for it out of pocket, and I would have that test interpreted by a doctor who knows the difference. Even then, I would not take statin drugs, period, because of the very serious adverse health effects of those drugs, including increased risk of diabetes.

But you don't need to be concerned in the first place about how much cholesterol you have, unless it's too low. You do need to be concerned with triglycerides, in-

flammation, and oxidation. You need to be concerned with eating enough fat.

Fats are very important to your health, but most of what you think you know about good fats and oils is wrong. A hundred and fifty years ago, our ancestors ate much more fat than we are eating now, but our rate of heart disease today is 4,000 percent higher than theirs was. They did not eat industrial vegetable oils, plastic fats, or meat from industrial feedlots.

Animal fat in those days was rich in omega-3 fatty acids, the heart-protective, anti-inflammatory stuff you hear about getting from fish oil supplements, salmon, and other fatty fish. Meat had more of these good omega-3s and less saturated fat in proportion — not that saturated fat is bad; it's not.

It's the balance of different fats that is crucial to prevent inflammation. Too much saturated

fat, or too much omega-6, in proportion to omega-3 and omega-9, causes inflammation. You get too much omega-6 from modern industrial vegetable oils like corn, canola, sunflower, safflower, soybean, cottonseed oil — in other words, the very oils they said were healthy are killing us with inflammation. Don't eat them, and don't eat plastic fats like margarine or Crisco. Instead, have some olive oil, coconut oil, and buy organic, range-fed meat from animals that are not grain-fed.

Sugars and starches also lead to inflammation and high triglycerides, which harm your heart. Read more in our next article.

• Kim Bonsteel, L.Ac, LMBT, owns Center for Acupuncture & Healing Arts in Highlands. www.center-for-acupuncture.com

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Things are not always what they seem

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic
Church
Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor



I have been known to be a bit thrifty – stopping at thrift stores. I was in one recently and I saw something that reminded me of the priest I served under as a seminarian.

Maybe some of you might remember these posters I think it was called Magic Eye. When you first look at it, it seems just like a repeating pattern. But what you're supposed to do is, no kidding, hold the picture right up to your nose. Then, gradually, you move it away, trying not to focus on it. Suddenly what appears is a hidden picture – dolphins jumping out of the water, for example. The scene is three dimensional, no longer just a meaningless pattern.

The first time you do this, it is really remarkable. Maybe even a little difficult. When I first tried it I didn't see what was going on. I had to be encouraged by others to see it, to relax my eyes and try not to focus. Then I could see the hidden picture.

What I remember most, though of that experience was this priest I mentioned. He said something I will not forget. What if the whole world were like this? Here we are, living in our world, thinking we are seeing and understanding all around us. What if something deeper is actually happening that we are not noticing, that we have overlooked?

As scientists have puzzled over a universe expanding at an increasing rate, they have turned their sight to what they cannot see – dark energy and dark matter. Postulating their existence has opened up a whole new way of understanding creation. It may be that the universe is not just mostly empty space but filled with these new kinds of energy and matter. Looking deeper brings new insights.

When Jesus takes three of his disciples, Peter, James and John up the mountain with him, we hear about Jesus being transfigured before them. He is seen by them in a way they have never seen him – dazzlingly white, blinding I suppose. Here they have spent all this time with him, but they have never seen this side of him before. True, Peter does acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior. But to see the Son of God, God himself in his glory, it is blinding, it's more that they can handle. Peter even babbles some nonsense as he sees Moses speaking with Moses and Elijah. "Let's set up three tents, one for each of you."

He hardly knew what to say. What can be said during such an overwhelming experience. There are no words.

There is a hidden dimension to our world which we only see with the eyes of faith. The transfiguration of our Lord beckons us to look more deeply, to see what truth is revealed and to live differently with this new experience.

John 3:16

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

Proverbs 3:5

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Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11
Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

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Sun.: Holy Communion - 9 a.m.; Adult Forum - 10:45 at Buck's
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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
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CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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10:30 am: Middle School; 10:45 am: Children's Program, . Worship

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Wed.: 6pm: CBC University Program

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

Tuesday: 8 a.m. Men's Cursillo Group; Bible Study 10:30 a.m.

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Thursday: 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Chapel)

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

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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

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Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am

Bible Study – 6 pm

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Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sunday: School 9:30 a.m.; Morning Worship 10:45 a.m., Evening
Worship, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.m.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45 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)

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

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Rev. Clifford Willis

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road: Pastor Alfred Sizemore • 526-3212

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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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Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122

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

Out of San Luis Planes, Honduras – Part 1

By Alex Osteen

Do you remember the Twilight Zone episode in which the protagonist wakes up one morning to realize that everyone around him has suddenly begun to speak unintelligible gibberish and that he's the only person in the world who can't understand it? Sometimes my life over the past two years has felt like that, as I questioned my sanity living in an isolated village in the mountains of Honduras. However, joining the Peace Corps was one of the most interesting and ultimately fulfilling things that I have ever done and maybe will ever do.

For more than 50 years now, the Peace Corps has been touching the lives of people around the world. There are more than 500,000 former PCVs in the US who have served in more than 165 countries. The Peace Corps is all about giving people in the Third World the education, skills and self-confidence they need to develop their communities and make a better life for themselves. As a senior in college, I decided I wanted to become a part of that dynamism and figured it would be a great way to get experience combining my economics and Spanish background. Eight months later, I got off the plane in sunny Honduras, the

poorest country in Central America.

After three months of training in the capital city that nobody has ever heard of, Tegucigalpa, we were sent out to our communities. I lived in a beautiful village called San Luis Planes that, in many ways, is a lot like Highlands. About 1,300 people live there year-round, it's at an elevation of 4,500 ft. and the town's economy primarily depends on just a few months of activity in the year. In the case of San Luis Planes, however, it's the coffee harvest that provides income for families and not the tourism industry — at least not yet.

I was a business development volunteer, so I worked with the coffee co-operative in my town, taught at the local school, as well as collaborated with two environmental volunteers on an ecotourism project. Mainly, my work focused on how to diversify the forms of income of my friends and neighbors who on average, make about \$1,500 a year. My co-operative sought help in getting cheaper credit, expanding its production, improving accounting practices, and revising its overall strategy.

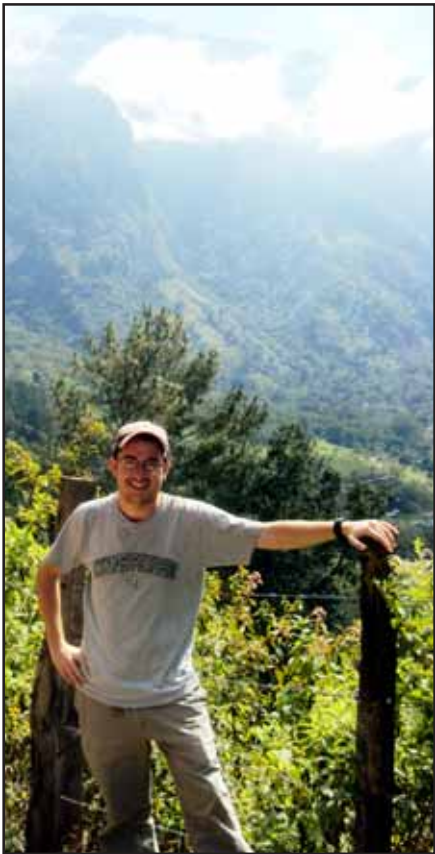
Thankfully, after a combination of efforts and great teamwork, not to mention the excellent corporate responsibility of the Canadian coffee company Van Houtte, my

co-op reported a gain in more than two million lempiras in two years, approximately \$100,000. Keep an eye out for Honduran coffee: it's excellent stuff and is up and coming.

Also, after months of classes and exhausting hikes, which caused me to sweat off 30 pounds, our ecotourism committee now offers tourists guided bird-watching hikes into their cloud forest, which has provided an incentive for them to protect their local environment while giving them a new form of income.

After the fast-paced life of college, giving up my cell phone, the Internet, cable, hot water my car and Dr. Pepper for 24 months was good for me. I learned to enjoy the quieter pleasures of life, like milking cows, drinking gallons of coffee, and kicking a plastic ball up and down a field. I think it was also good for the people in my town to see that not all Americans are like those they see on the MTV shows we happily broadcast around the world.

The more I think about it, the more grateful I am to have grown up in Highlands. I can honestly say that thanks to the opportunities I had here and the support that I received as a kid, I have been able to have cool experiences in my life. I believe we should all strive to give back and make the world a better place because of how blessed we are.



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• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SPORTS •

Lady Highlander softball team wins thriller

By Ryan Potts

The Highlands Lady Highlander softball teams opened their home schedule on Tuesday by hosting the Rosman Lady Tigers at Highlands School field.

The Lady Highlanders and the Lady Tigers battled back and forth, with both teams scoring four runs going into the 7th inning. Paige Moss had two of those RBI's for the Lady Highlanders, and Meagan O'Brien and Desiray Schmitt both added one RBI apiece.

Senior Emily Murphy held the Lady Tigers to just four runs over 7 innings, and the 4-4 tie extended the game into a series of nailbiting extra innings. As Murphy managed to hold Rosman at bay throughout the 8th, 9th and 10th innings, it was not until the bottom of the 10th that the Lady Highlanders finally broke through.

Emily Shuler knocked home Savannah Taylor to give the Lady Highlanders a 5-4 victory in what was their first varsity win since rebooting the program three years ago. Murphy was a part of that original team as a freshman, and after the game she was thrilled with the performance of her team.

"It feels really good," said Murphy, "I'm proud for the win, but I'm also proud of the fact that we have worked hard for several years now and it is great to see all of the practice time and hard work pay off."

The Lady Highlanders will travel to Hiwassee Dam today to face the Lady Eagles in another Smoky Mountain Conference game.

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... CHOWAN continued from page 1

is structurally sound enough to leave open while the other side is repaired.

Tuesday night was supposed to be the last step in securing the Council-Manager form of government. The step involved amending the zoning ordinance as it applies to the relationship between the Zoning/Planning Director and the Town Manager.

The amended ordinance gives hiring and firing authority to the Town Manager rather than to the Town Board – which was the case under the hybrid form of the Council-Manager form the board had previously pursued.

Since all ordinance amendments require a public hearing, one was required to amend the zoning ordinance.

However, what most citizens didn't realize was that the amendment to the zoning ordinance as it applies to the form of government was rolled into the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Public Hearing which was set for Tuesday night.

The 277-page UDO is the comprehensive document that has been worked on for three years and includes five ordinances — zoning, subdivision, erosion & sedimentation, stormwater and flood plain.

So basically, the last step of accepting the boiler-plate version of the Council-Manager form of government involved amending the zoning ordinance which was "hidden" in the UDO.

But, since commissioners didn't get a final copy of the UDO until last Thursday, and hadn't been given time to read through it, the issue of accepting the UDO was tabled until the April 3 Town Board meeting.

The public hearing was held, however, and two citizens spoke: Patrick Taylor and Alan Marsh.

Taylor said he was sure the board was going to pass the amended zoning ordinance since it passed the part to put the Police Chief solely under the Town Manager at the last Town Board meeting with a vote of 3-2 with Commissioners John Dotson and Amy Patterson voting no.

"But I hope you will have a check and balance procedure in place so the Zoning Administrator can speak to the board before he is terminated," he said. "Joe Cooley sat in his car in the parking lot hoping to talk to the board and he was never called in. I hope you give consideration to this in the future."

Marsh said he wanted the town to return to the Mayor-Council-Administrator form of government which worked well for years. He also said he was confused because the agenda packet only talked about the UDO public hearing and not anything about the form of government.

Mayor David Wilkes and Commissioner Gary Drake said this had nothing to do with the form of government but Attorney Bill Coward corrected them.

"A change to the zoning ordinance requires a public hearing and since the ordinance is putting the Zoning Administrator under the Town Manager instead of the Town Board, it's part of the hearing," he said.

So when the mayor gave Marsh permission to speak, Marsh said he understood why the town wanted to change its form of government three years ago, but it's proven to be unnecessary. He also suggested the town has more personnel then years ago and wanted monetary figures.

After the public hearing was closed and the board decided to table the vote on the UDO until next month, Taylor spoke again.

He said despite few concrete problems with the ETJ, after five years the town did away with it, but with numerous problems in the three years the Council-Manager form of government has been in place, the board can't see its way to change the form of government back to the Mayor-Council-Administrator form.

"I love the idea of a town council and I hope you don't lose contact with the electorate by having one person in control – one person who keeps you informed," he said.

Then concerning an added item to the agenda: "Employee Response to Board Decision" the mayor had this to say:

"This board has always been open to discussing everything and listening to employees. There have been a couple of incidents that shouldn't have happened – the harassing of elected officials and unnecessary interactions. This board works for the town of Highlands and for the good of its employees. I won't accept or tolerate the disrespecting of elected officials over decisions this board makes," he said.

Frye said "As employees of the town it's not our place to question decisions of the board. It's our job to carry out its decisions. No employee should address members of the board with disrespect."

Without specifics, the assumption is "the harassing" was about the proposal to stop insuring families of employees 100%. (See story on page 1). To that end, there is a Special Town Board meeting Thursday, March 23 at 4:30 p.m. in the Community Building to discuss the town's insurance policy and to hear from employees.

Taylor suggested the town keep covering employees' families 100% and to look at other ways to increase the bottom line – perhaps by raising the milage rate on property values.

– Kim Lewicki

... RETREAT continued from page 1

who don't even know if they have a water leak or break and suggested the town have its crew drive around, using the radio-read meters system, to check and see if there is a break somewhere – particularly after a weather event.

Sewer rates were discussed because Frye said across North Carolina, sewer rates are one-to-one compared to water usage. Nix said the town uses an 80% scenario because it has added more customers to the sewer system, but Frye said a rate increase is needed.

In that case using less water would mean a lower sewer rate, which commissioners hope will foster conservation.

Along those lines, with electric rates higher than ever before, Mayor David Wilkes wants to hold a presentation to educate homeowners and business owners on conservation techniques.

To save the town money, Frye also suggested doing away with the family-benefit package Highlands' employees now enjoy.

"No one wants to deal with this, but we're reaching the point where we have to do what we have to do to keep our insurance rates in line," said Mayor Wilkes. "Phasing out the family benefit package is the best way to do this. The world is changing, the economy is changing; insurance packages is what broke General Motors and its breaking towns and counties. Fortunately, we have been able to continue longer than other municipalities but now it's time to make that adjustment."

The way Highlands' insurance package works is employees' family members get 100% coverage just like the employee. Currently, the town is paying more for employee family members than it pays for the employees. The total with families is \$522,090.13; the total for employees is \$241,067.52. The savings to the town would be \$281,022.61.

"We have a Cadillac program now," said Wilkes. "There is no incentive for employees to look elsewhere for their family coverage so we will always be paying for their family members."

"I know this isn't popular, particularly

with staff but I can't defend this in a budget when I know what's going on across the state plus it's hard to justify to the public," said Frye.

Getting and keeping good employees due to the employee/family insurance package has always been the mantra over the years, but Frye said 60 people applied for the Police Department Administrative Assistant job so he doesn't anticipate a problem when it comes to keeping or finding new employees.

So, beginning with FY 2012-13 which begins July 1, 2012, the town will consider reducing the family benefit package by 25% and continue the phase-out program over the following three years. Phasing out the family benefit package over the next four years will save the town \$71,000 per year.

However, due to the backlash the news has caused, a Special Town Board meeting has been called for Thursday, March 22 at 4:30 to discuss the phase-out and hear from employees and their families.

• Part 3 to be continued in the March 29 edition.

– Kim Lewicki

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(3/22)

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A full job description and applications are available at the Town Office or on-line at the Town's website: www.highlandscnc.org. Application deadline is Friday, March 30, 2012. The Town of Highlands is an Equal Opportunity Employer. (3/29)

• POLICE & FIRE •

Highlands PD log entries from March 15. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

March 14

• At 7:18 p.m., a stalker was reported at the Rec. Park. It is under investigation.

March 15

• At 6:19 p.m., officers were called about workers at the old Rib Shack working after 6 p.m.

• At 8:10 a.m., officers helped an 18-wheeler turn around on US 64 W.

• At 2 a.m., an abandoned vehicle was found on Cherokee Drive.

March 16

• At 3:20 p.m., extra patrol was requested for the Nick's Restaurant property.

• 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 20

• At 8:50 a.m., a reckless driver was reported on N. 4th. St.

• At 1:45 p.m., officers stood by while the BoAATM was worked on.

• During the week, police officers responded to 6 alarms and issued 8 citations.

Highlands F&R Dept. log entries from March 14.

March 14

• At 3:51 p.m., there was a report of smoke in the vicinity of Dolly Lane. It was due to a controlled burn.

March 15

• At 6:24 a.m., dept. responded to an alarm at on the Verandah Restaurant. It was due to an alarm at the sewer lift station.

March 16

• At 3:51 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hicks Road. The victim was taken to the hospital.

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

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Girl Scouts & Brownies say 'thanks'



Pictured in front of Mountain Fresh are: Brooklyn Houston, Olivia-Cate Chidsey, Chloe Katsikos, Ryan Neil and Kaylee Oakley and Rowen Carnes. Photo by Robin Armstrong-Neil

The Girl Scouts of Troop 30219 of Highlands are winding down their annual cookie sales this month. The girls and their parents sold cookies from local hair salons, behind desks at work, at local hospitals, in school classrooms, at Highlands School sports events and Highlands Recreation Center events, and out of scout mom's vehicles.

Thanks to several local businesses that allowed the troop to set up booths: Macon Bank's Branch Manager Tony Potts, Bryson's Food Store owner, Jim Bryson, and store manager, Terry Watson, Mountain Fresh Grocery owner J.T. Fields, Chestnut Hill Retirement Center staff and residents, and Dr. Jack Talmadge of Summit Charter School for allowing Brownie Troop #30219 to hold popular "Cookie Booths." The girls have been diligent and dedicated, working many days throughout January and February and into March and selling over 2000 boxes of cookies!



Pictured left to right are scouts Camren Dalton, Jessica Campbell and Olivia-Cate Chidsey. Photo by Patricia Campbell

Fontana Regional Library makes changes for NC Cardinal

Fontana Regional Library is migrating to a new automated library system on Thursday, March 29. The new system, NC Cardinal, is shared by a number of libraries across the state. Patrons will be able to conduct transactions with other libraries in the system.

Some changes are coming to your local library to comply with the policies of all NC Cardinal libraries.

Books, audiobooks and mu-

sic will check out for 3 weeks; new books will check out for two weeks; DVDs and videos will check out for one week. One renewal is available for most books, new books, audiobooks and music. DVDs and videos cannot be renewed.

Overdue fees on late items will be \$0.25/day for books and audiobooks, and \$1/day for DVDs and videos. There will be a maximum overdue fee of \$10 per item.

Anyone owing more than \$5

in fines or bills will not be able to check out library materials; this includes library computers.

On March 29, all libraries in the Fontana Regional Library system will be closed in order to ensure that all patron and item activity gets transferred properly to the new system.

Thank you for your patience as Fontana Regional Library works to improve service for patrons in Jackson, Macon and Swain Counties.

... OBITUARIES continued from page 3

Frank Warden Derreberry

Frank Warden Derreberry, age 80, of Highlands, NC, died Thursday, March 15, 2012 at his residence. He was a native of Cherokee County, NC, the son of the late Cross Derreberry and Beulah Mae Byrd Derreberry. He had worked at Rabun Mills and did a lot of landscaping in the Highlands area. He was a US Army Veteran serving during the Korean War, and was of the Baptist faith. He loved to work, hunt and fish. He loved the outdoors.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his wife, Mozelle Webb Derreberry, who passed away in 2010; a daughter, Sandra K. Baines; a sister, Inez Gibby, and two brothers, Cecil Derreberry and Toss Derreberry.

He is survived by two daughters, Deborah Jean Bell, and Audrey Leah Derreberry Keener and husband Michael all of Highlands, NC; a son, Lendal W. Derreberry and wife Judy of Otto, NC; three sisters, Edna Mae Newman and Hattie Deaton both of Shelby, NC and Bertha Kilpatrick of Marble, NC; five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren also survive.

Funeral services were held Saturday, March 17th at 2 pm in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Highlands, with

Rev. Gary McCall officiating. Burial will be in Miller Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Tony Webb, Kenny Talley, Michael Keener and Christian Gray.

Memorials may be made to Four Seasons Hospice, 571 South Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 28731 or to Highlands Emergency Council, PO Box 974, Highlands, NC 28741.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Francis Juanita Burnette



Francis Juanita Burnette, 76, of the Yellow Mountain Community died Saturday, March 17, 2012 in Highlands. She was a native of Macon County; the daughter of the late Eugene and Mary Houston Wood. She was married to C. T. Burnette for over 61 years. She

was a member of Yellow Mountain Baptist Church and was a choir member. Mrs. Burnette was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She loved to bowl, crochet and read. She loved her church family, cooking for family, friends and her church family.

In addition to her husband she is survived by a son, Tommy Burnette and wife Nancy of Glenville, NC; one sister, Jeannie Taylor of Otto, NC; two brothers, Vic Wood and wife Betty of Highlands, NC and Larry Wood and wife Leann of Manassas, VA. Two grandchildren, Jeffery and Kristy Burnette; three great-grandchildren, Jeffery, Bradley and Christopher Burnette, and several nieces and nephews also survive.

Services will be held Saturday, March 24, 2012 at 3 PM at Yellow Mountain Baptist Church with Rev. Keith Ashe, Rev. Johnny Norris and Rev. Ralph Campbell officiating. Burial will be in the Stewart Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to services at the church.

Memorials may be made to the Yellow Mountain Baptist Church, 34 Mill Creek Rd., Cullowhee, NC 28723. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

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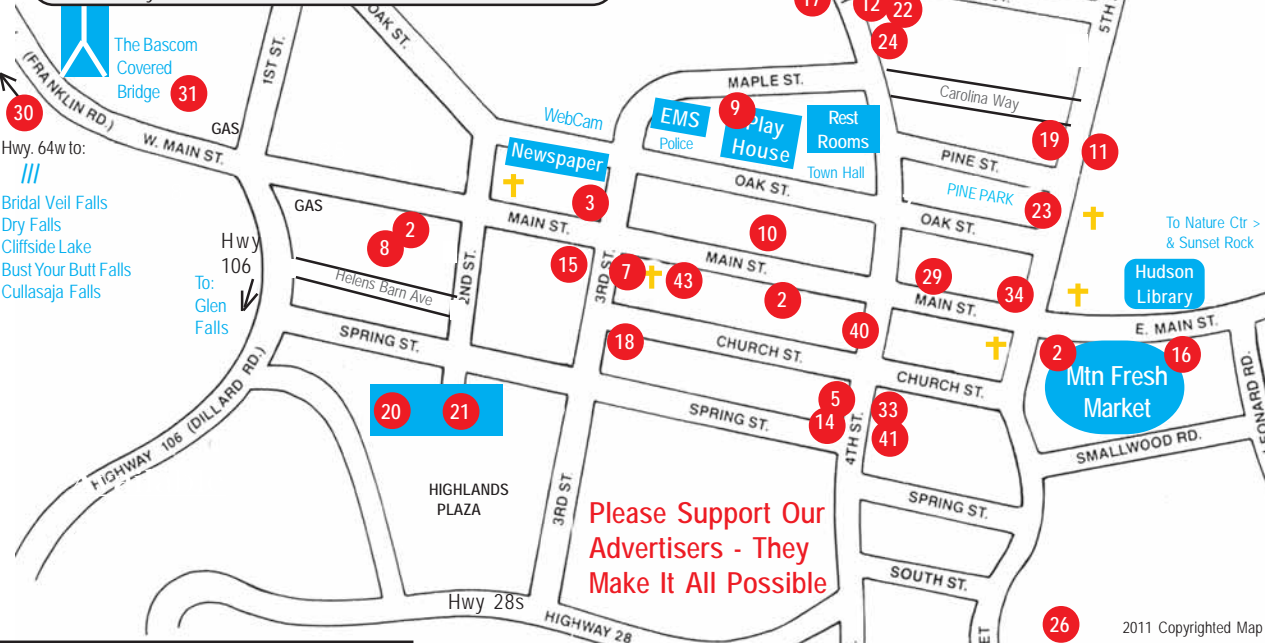
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Thursday, March 22
• Special called Town Board meeting at 4:30 p.m. at the Community Building to discuss the town's insurance plan.
Friday, March 23
• Senior Luncheon 12-2p. Menu: meatloaf, green beans, red skin mashed potatoes, salad, and rolls. Dessert is chocolate or carrot cake.
Sat., March 24
• Operation Medicine Drop off at Highlands Pharmacy and Main Street Pharmacy from 10a to 2 p.
• Father/Daughter Dance at Highlands United Methodist Church, 5-7pm. Admission is free; dress is semi-formal. Refreshments will be served. Everyone is welcome

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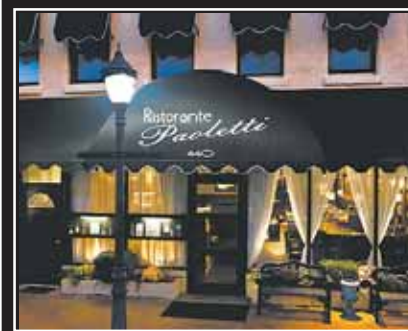
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