

Highlands Newspaper

FREE every Thursday

Volume 10, Number 43

Internet PDF Version at www.HighlandsNewspaperPDF.com

Thursday, Oct. 25, 2012

Through October

• Pumpkins at Highlands United Methodist Church. Call Jennifer Forrester at 526-3376.

Thursday, Oct. 25

• Mountain Fresh Grocery fundraiser for HS 5th grade class. Portion of What's for Dinner sales go toward their trip to Charleston. Dinner for four is meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, and salad. Call Mountain Fresh Grocery at 526-2400.

Friday, Oct. 26

• At Valentine's Photo Studio, an open house with food, refreshments and a drawing for a free portrait session and discounts on holiday portrait promotions. 205 S. 4th Street. 828-787-1078.

Saturdays Oct. 27

• Create your own spooky ceramic work at The Bascom from 10a to 4p. To register call 526-4949.

• Bolivia Mission fundraiser at the Methodist Church. Breakfast, mini-yard sale and bake sale.

• At the Hen House on Main Street, Stonewall Kitchen Demo and Tastings. 10:30a-4:30p.

• HS Class of 2015 is holding a Buckeye Donkey Basketball Show fundraiser at the Rec Park at 6:30p. Dinner at 5p. Chili and baked potatoes. \$5 per plate. Advance tickets at the Rec Park and school, \$6 -- \$8 at the door. Children under five are free.

Sunday, Oct. 28

• The one-act play, The Bright Forever" featuring Shirley Williams at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic church at 4 p.m. It's free. Donations accepted for Stop Hunger Now.

• Pianist Robert Henry performs at the Episcopal Church Sunday at 2p. Free. Suggested donation is \$10.

Wed., Oct. 31

• Free flu vaccines at the hospital, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. You must pre-register by calling (828) 526-1498.

• Downtown Highlands trick or treating, 6-8p. Streets open to foot traffic.

• Hound-o-ween Parade. Meet at Falls on Main at 5:15 p.m. \$15 per dog. Call 678-227-8000 to register.

Planning Board OKs CUD requests

For three hours Monday night, the Planning Board worked hard to do the "right" thing regarding the two Conditional Use District requests but as is often the case not everyone went away happy.

The first case was for Phase 2

of Town Place Condominiums at Chestnut/Hickory and US 64, where three new buildings will house nine townhouse-type units with garages.

Currently approved is the 2006 R-3 Conditional Use plan

where four buildings housing eight units each and one smaller unit housing two units was planned. The changes represent an amendment to the 2006 R3-CUD plan on file.

• See PLANNING BOARD page 22

New donors step up to 'save' Playhouse

By Stuart Ferguson and Kim Lewicki

There's a new development in the Highlands Playhouse winterization project – a project on which the viability of the Playhouse hangs.

When Horace and Margaret Winkler donated \$100,000 this spring, the money was earmarked for winterization under the premise that if the structure was "winterized" the Playhouse could stay open year-round which would help it become financially sound.

If it can stay open year-round, and if the Playhouse board demonstrates that it can feature events all year, either as an associate or the producer, then the town would offer a long-term lease.

The relationship between the town and the Playhouse has been somewhat strained with each side wanting control over the building.

• See PLAYHOUSE page 14

Halloween Highlands style!



Fun reigns on Main Street, Wed., Oct. 31, while the street is closed to traffic from 6-8p. Merchants will dole out candy and citizens young, old and four-legged donned in costumes will rule the night.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

Triple A rewards Highlands

The Town of Highlands was named a Grand Winner in the 2012 North Carolina Outstanding Traffic Safe Community Awards by

AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Police Chief Bill Harrell of the

• See TRIPLE A page 15

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Kuppers and Higdon face off at League Q&A

On Thursday, Oct. 11, the League of Women of held a question and answer forum with Macon County Commission candidates incumbent Democrat Bobby Kuppers and Republican Paul Higdon.

The questions revolved around the question "What is the role of county government?"

This is the second installment – See the Oct. 18 edition for part 1 at www.highlandsnewspaperPDF.com

Question 2: Should the county be involved in promoting development and if so, what is the role of the county in protecting natural assets that impact our quality of life, our health and the health of our environment?

Kuppers

Funny thing happened a few years back. A perfectly good solid advisory board was made out to

• See LEAGUE Q&A page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• FORUM •

Davis' gain – public education's loss

By Ben J. Utley

Macon County Democrat Chair

At the county and state government levels budgets are about choices, and those choices have moral implications, not just economic ones. Since he has participated at both government levels, you would think Sen. Jim Davis would appreciate that principle, but he doesn't.

At a time when Sen. Davis and Republican lawmakers were making dramatic cuts in the state's education budget, they created a tax loophole putting up to \$3,500 into the pockets of wealthy business owners.

Though heralded by Republican leaders as a \$50,000 tax exemption for small business, no cap was placed on the size of business that could claim this benefit. As a result, this loophole now applies to roughly 480,000 corporations and business owners such as lawyers, doctors, and even orthodontist like Davis.

This means that these business owners will be able to avoid paying taxes on their first \$50,000 of income, providing them approximately \$3,500 in savings.

As reported by the Raleigh News and Observer, this tax loophole will ultimately cost the state \$336 million each year. This would roughly equal the salaries and benefits of the 6,400 employees who lost their jobs last year. Approximately nine hundred of these employees were teachers -- even though NC's student population increased by over 10,750.

It makes no sense and it is certainly not good government to provide tax breaks to those who don't need it -- while cutting teachers and increasing class sizes.

However, Sen. Davis and Republican lawmakers have once again required school systems across North Carolina to return to the state a significant percentage of their allocated operational resources, better known as discretionary funds. Since 80% of education dollars are in people, this means that once again our school systems will have to cut teachers, assistant principals and support staff.

This year, Macon County is required to return \$1,064,424 on top of the \$1.25 mil-

• See FORUM page 23

• LETTERS •

Enough is enough

Dear Editor,

My name is Donna Ysland, a new year around resident of Burlingame Country Club in Sapphire, NC. We do enjoy partaking of shopping and cuisine in the Highlands on a regular basis, although we recognize that the area is heavily republican, we were surprised to read Don Swanson's comments in his column in the October 11th edition of the Highlands Newspaper.

After reading and re-reading your piece, we felt we had to respond. Where to start!

First, his comment about the tragedy in Benghazi was clearly taken from FOX talking points, because if he had followed the hear-

ing taking place on the Hill, he would know that it was Tripoli that contacted the State Dept. and requested additional forces at the Embassy, not Benghazi.

Secondly, had he bothered to check facts, he would know that Ambassador Stephens own father called for the GOP to stop politicizing the Benghazi tragedy, and the mother of one of the Marines killed requested that Romney quit using her son as part of his stump speech. IF ANYTHING Governor Romney jumped the gun, as he is now doing, to the detriment of the investigation taking place!

Then, his comment on Obama's daily se-

curity briefings... I suppose he has access to those meetings? I also suppose that he's a constant fixture in the Oval Office, and that he knows minute by minute the Presidents agenda? No, again I suspect he's getting his information from FOX and conservative pundits! Oh, and by the way I'm not hearing any anger from his over the fact that GW Bush ignored requests to follow up on actionable intelligence two months prior to the actual 9/11 attacks, attacks which caused thousands of deaths, two wars and a recession!

He cited Delroy Murdock as the source of your information regarding the PDB and he said "before you get into a lather about this being a racist attack..." well, here is the background of the African American source you quoted:

Born: 1963; Birthplace: Los Angeles, CA; Gender: Male; Race or Ethnicity: Black, Sexual orientation: Gay [1]; Occupation: Columnist; Party Affiliation: Republican; Nationality: United States; Executive summary: Conservative pundit

So please spare me. again he should come back when he actually has credible information to report!

Then he skips to the first debate where he states Romney came in with a campaign and "Obama looked tired, even bored" now I will agree with him, DEMS hammered the President in the aftermath of the debate however, that was before the TRUTH came out that Mr. Romney TOLD 27 MYTHS in 38 minutes. See: <http://www.alternet.org/news-amp-politics/fact-check-romney-told-27-myths-38-minutes-during-debate>

I believe it is abundantly clear that Pres-

• See LETTERS page 3

• NOTE •

Columnist Don Swanson, who writes weekly under the 'Conservative POV' heading didn't submit a column this week because he was disappointed with a typo-misspelling in the column heading which appeared last week. It read, 'Conservation POV'. He will return for the Nov. 1 edition. We regret the error and the column heading has been fixed.

LETTERS-TO-THE EDITOR-POLICY

We reserve the right to reject or edit submissions.

NO ANONYMOUS LETTERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.

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

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... LETTERS continued from page 2

ident Obama was stunned, and quite possibly decided to just get his facts out, which he did, and avoid getting into a food fight with Romney... But, Obama did gather a tremendous amount of ammunition which VP Biden unleashed during his debate with Ryan...

ALSO, during the debate, China was moving ships into the South China Sea, Turkey was lobbing missiles at Syria and it was President Obama's anniversary, as well, perhaps Obama had his mind elsewhere. In my opinion I wouldn't have confronted Romney either, because with Romney you don't know which Romney you're confronting on any giving day!

See: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-19553736> <http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2012/10/06/turkey-deploys-tanks-missiles-to-syrian-border/>

Then Swanson goes on the call Van Jones, "Obama's commie buddy" that's where I had to draw the line and answer his outrageous comments.

If he call someone who is passionate about the middle class, civil rights and fairness a commie, then I know for certain that his head is far up Rush Bo's behind!

See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Van_Jones

Donna Ysland
Toxaway

Wooldridge is my kind of police officer

Dear Editor,

I agree with Fred Wooldridge; this is a brave newspaper. I also agree with Swanson; these two along with the staff of your paper are patriots.

Not only do you give those two informative column writers a voice, your paper generously supports other less conservative views and opinions of letter writers both liberal and conservative.

Wooldridge is my kind of police officer; doing whatever it takes to protect the decent citizens of his city. As a former F.O.P.A. member, I had the opportunity to shoot with and visit law officers from south Florida and regionally.

While I respect and admire officers like Wooldridge, I do not have that high admiration for officers who hide trying to catch speeders. Law officers should be patrolling the streets protecting all the residents of their communities.

If on patrol and they catch speeders, that's all part of their job. To prevent crimes including traffic violations, should in my opinion, be the primary concern of any police department and this can't be

accomplished when department vehicles are parked along the sides of roads.

That being said, I hate to hear grown downtown greedy merchants crying. Numerous others pay fees and taxes to support our town, too. Everything centers around the merchants' wants?

If seems like our Town Board is spending our tax dollars on new vehicles, additional employees and police officers. It would be prudent for our Town Board to consider selling our line department or giving it away with the understanding that the line department employees would have employment with the new owner.

Police duties should be the primary venue of the Macon County Sheriff Department. We don't need the abundance of police officers our town employs. The members of our Town Board are wonderful people, some I have known for many years. The board has staggered the imagination of prudent people over the years.

Examples are the cutting of the stately maples on Main Street, converting our most accessible pavilion at the Rec Park to a dog park, allowing the overflow parking area to become a "no man's land" for contractors large and small and don't forget the street sweeper; "It's good for tourism!"

The worst abuse of my tax dollars in my opinion happened in early summer. A Highlands police officer was directing traffic at the Pine Grove Baptist Church during construction. This is an unincorporated area in Macon County. Don't know if this was a "rent a cop," a church member or what. Here was a Highlands police car with the lights flashing. Why must I pay for this with my tax dollars? Don't mind an officer in

uniform helping, but a police car? That's a lot to ask.

Our police department has got to be one of the best equipped police departments in the world. I have noticed numerous vehicles of several manufacturers, at least one K9 officers, patrolmen on bicycles, and slogans painted on police cars.

I would like to see the town of Highlands make a concerted effort to cut taxes, abolish unneeded expenses and live within its means like so many of its residents must do. The only crime in Highlands is the wasteful way our Town Board is spending our tax dollars.

Philip Powell
Highlands

What's done is done

Dear Editor,

No need to get excited anymore! All the wrongs that were stated by our friend and your columnist Don Swanson, will end in either two ways. Obviously, if Romney wins, the country will be at least 50 years before our nation will even come close to having leaders in the House, Senate, President et al for whom the well being of the entire citizenry really matter. This Citizens United business has pretty much sealed the deal of anyone independent, even remotely, attaining Public Office. Oh!

• See LETTERS page 23

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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Here's a funny not so funny piece of advice

I made it to the Ruby Cinema just in time to catch the flick, "2016," before it changed the next day. In case you've been living on Mars....Climax or Otto, "2016" is about the early life of America's current president. I hate documentaries so I had to force myself to go.

I walked out of that movie house numb and depressed. Why did I pay money to get depressed? I should have never gone. Warning: This is not a comedy or science fiction. I was totally unaware of the events portrayed. Who knew? No one ever did a background check on our current president because America became so mesmerized with wanting a black man in the White House, nothing else mattered. I found the movie "shock-



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

ing." To this date, the documentary has not been refuted.

I'm a guy who likes to consider myself politically savvy. Wow....I missed the boat big time. The movie scared the beejebies out of me and I don't scare easy. Take my advice and don't see this movie 'cause there's nothing you can do about history....except lie and re-write it....which I guess could eventually happen.

And that was the same Thursday I learned our president was whipping Mitt Romney and leading in the polls. (Go Democrats) Doing research, I learned something else interesting. In 1979, at

•See WOOLDRIDGE page 6



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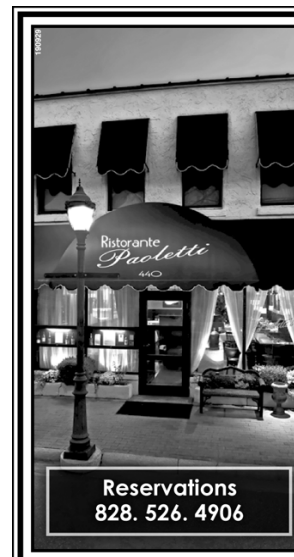


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• THE VIEW FROM HERE •

Beware of what you say

By all accounts, Buck was the most beautiful anyone had ever seen. What was less obvious was that he was also the smartest. It's not that Buck tried to hide brilliance, but his independence prevented him from accepting commands he felt were demeaning.

He had a vocabulary equivalent to a three year old child, but refused to fetch his leash before a walk. If Steve King, his owner had known to ask, Buck would have willingly gone to the closet and brought his red vest or green wind breaker. Buck considered Steve more a partner than an owner. Each contributed to the partnership. Steve provided food and shelter, which Buck believed were convenient but not essential, and Buck provided safety and security. Buck



Dr. Henry Salzarulo

**Feedback is encouraged.
email:**

hsalzarulo@aol.com

rica, Asia, and North America.

possessed a cunning which confirmed his wild ancestry, probably more recent than ancient.

Buck was a Husky, but a giant for the breed, which added to Steve's suspicion that at least one wolf could be found in his recent family tree. The two were inseparable. Steve, a surveyor, brought Buck to the office every day and took him on every job. More than once, Buck had alerted Steve to dangers ranging from skunks to rattle snakes. It was no surprise that Steve asked if he could bring Buck along when invited for a drink by a client and new friend.

When they arrived at Jack's house, Buck was agitated. Jack was a hunter and his walls were adorned with trophies from hunts in Af-

•See SALZARULO page 8



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... WOOLDRIDGE continued from page 4

this point in time, a handsome charmer named Jimmy Carter was leading in the polls by nine points. (Go Democrats, again.) His opponent was a little known grade B movie actor who hung out with chimps. No, no, no, it wasn't Johnny Weissmuller. The guy was Ronald Reagan. Have you heard of him? (Go Republicans)

Then, being a person who is not a dreamer, not a wisher who relies on hope to get through life, not a pretender or a person who puts his head in the sand, I finally came to the realization I may be in deep, deep do-do. American pensions, along with our economy, are about to be dramatically devalued and could become worthless right before our eyes, especially, for policemen, firemen and teachers.

President Obama may still win in November because he's more charming than his opponent, Mitt Romney, who is neither

charismatic nor a charmer. Romney may be competent but who cares about that? Also, our president is a wonderful singer while Romney, a horrible singer, will never be a member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Trust me on this. These things are important.

Then I came to the realization it doesn't matter who wins the election. According to top non-political financiers, this country is headed for a deep, deep, deep (that's three "deeps.") and lasting repression. (Would you believe for about 10 years?) It's already too late to financially survive this mess we're in.

Bush and Obama, a team I call the "Odd couple," can share the blame for this mess. Our currency will eventually be like the old Chinese yen. You'll need a barrel full to buy a loaf of bread....if you can find a loaf of bread. If baby boomer's grandparents were still alive, they could tell us about no food on the shelves....something we cannot conceive of happening. In the short period it took to write this column, America became billions of dollars more in debt....but who cares?

Here's some unpleasant advice. If you're currently a taxpayer, a giver or an earner who is weird and actually pays income tax, get rid of your money immediately (consider giving it to me) and buy everything before it's worthless. (I could use a new car.)

Plunge yourself into deep debt 'cause you'll never have to pay it off. And do it before your bank goes belly up and FDIC can't cover the losses because there is no FDIC.

And what's a guy like me going to do during a deep financial recession? At my age, I can't teach rappelling, not that anyone would have money for such fun. And I'm too old to be a cop so I guess I'm doomed to survive on food stamps and live in government-owned housing. Praise the Lord, because of Obamacare, the government will take care of any surgeries....as long as I can wait in line for eight plus months. Wait....what's this you say....people over 70 aren't eligible for surgery? Oy!

What's a mother to do? (Pondering) I think I've got it. I'll open a school and teach folks how to be criminals and steal from the poor....and beat up liberals and....and fun stuff like that. Maybe you don't know that police academies teach their students how to be good criminals. I would have been a great criminal if I hadn't chosen law enforcement as my career. When the recession finally arrives, there'll be a great need for this type of training. Hmmmm, maybe there is hope and change for me after all.

** If you've got the stomach, you can read Fred's column online all winter. Also, his two books, Deceived and I'm Moving Back to Mars can be purchased as an e-book or ordered from Amazon.

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• COACH'S CORNER •

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In recent years, the game between Florida and Georgia, (now not "officially" known as the World's Largest Outdoor Cocktail Party, but still known as the WLOCP to everyone with a functioning brain) has been a nice match-up, but nothing significant on a national stage. That all changes this year, as the Bulldogs will face a resurgent Florida team in a game that will decide the SEC East and a trip to the SEC Championship game.

While Georgia was supposed to be the dominant team in the SEC East this year, a beatdown at the hands of South Carolina and some listless performances have placed them squarely under the radar at this point in the season. This could be exactly where Dawgs fans want to be, as they are still the most talented and balanced squad in the SEC East. Georgia has an experienced leader at QB in Aaron Murray, a talented backfield tandem of freshman running backs, and a couple of dynamic WR's including Tavaris King. Georgia also has loads of NFL talent on their defense and are due for a breakout performance. Regardless of the opinion of Georgia's season at this point, a win in Jacksonville against Florida puts them in the SEC Championship.

As for the Gators, they are flying high thanks to their performance against a bru-



Ryan Potts
ryanpotts@hotmail.com

tal schedule thus far. This team has taken on the aura of Will Muschamp, and they have been winning games with a destructive defense and the best special teams in the SEC. However, Florida has sputtered on offense all season, relying on turnovers forced by the defense and winning the field position battle thanks to P Kyle Christy (7 punts of 50+ yards against USC). If Georgia's defense can stuff the run, Florida will struggle to move the ball consistently and provide Georgia with plenty of opportunities. This is easier said than done, because Florida is one of the more creative running teams in the country, using QB runs, Mike Gilleslie in the power game, Wildcat formations with Trey Burton and WR's runs with Omarious Hines and Frankie Hammond.

As for predictions, I think that Florida is due for a bit of a letdown and Georgia is due for a breakout game. Florida's lack of offense provides little margin for error on defense, and Georgia is balanced enough to break a couple of big plays to keep the pressure on Florida. I'll take the Dawgs by a FG in this one.

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selves groomed and attractive for those around us. This pride in appearance should extend to our homes. We want to be around people that are happy and handsome.

The same principle applies to homes. The curb appeal of a home is the first impression we give to others. Sometimes prospects refuse to even get out of the car at a showing. I am embarrassed as I have made an appointment, and I then must run in to leave a card. Go outside and pretend that you are a stranger to your home and a potential buyer. Would you want to come inside? A welcoming exterior is a foreshadowing of a warm and attractive interior.

Practice the four "A"s and these same traits will be returned to you!

• Jody Lovell: Broker/Owner of Exurbia Sotheby's International Realty

She and her husband, Wood, have been full-time residents in Highlands for the last thirteen years. They are owners of Exurbia Sotheby's International Realty and are leaders in the sales on the Plateau. They have two offices: one at the gate of Cullasaja Club of Highlands and one in The Old Edwards' Inn complex at 216 South Fourth Street. Call them today for your real estate needs at 828 526 4104.

A book that I read recently said that four important elements of maintaining a good relationship are attention, appreciation, affection and attraction. As I thought about the four "A"s, it occurred to me not only do they apply to relationships with our partners, our children and our friends, but that they also apply to our homes. Here is how:

1. Attention. When another person is speaking to us, it is important to pay attention to make him/her feel important instead of thinking about something else or letting your eyes wander around the room. Concentrate on the moment.

Likewise, with your home, pay attention to what it is communicating. If the refrigerator is louder than normal, have it checked out. If the sink is not draining, have it fixed. Listening to the small issues regarding your home and taking care of them will obviate the need for big fixes in the future.

2. Appreciation. One of the benefits of traveling is to come home and appreciate what we take for granted on a daily basis. Write down the reasons you purchased or built your home, and think about the traits that appealed to you initially.

If you are selling your home, share these with your listing broker as the sunny window seat in the morning might not be

obvious to someone else. Emphasize the positive on a daily basis, and appreciate how fortunate you are to have a beautiful home.

3. Affection. Show your house you care by taking care of it. Deferred maintenance is a major turn-off when showing homes. One can easily tell the homes that have been lovingly cared for and those that have been ignored.

This action will allow you to enjoy your home more, and, when selling, prospective buyers will view your home as a well-maintained residence instead of a place in which you refused to invest.

4. Attraction. We all try to keep our-

... SALZARULO continued from page 5

Buck settled on a Persian carpet in the entry, tried to conceal himself in it's thin pile, and emitted a long, low growl. He laid his ears back, watched the men share a drink, and studied the animals n the wall. Two rhinos, mounted on opposite walls, glared at each other across the room. An American alligator was suspended from the ceiling above his head. A polar bear, frozen in a menacing pose, occupied a corner, while an African lion crouched in a recess in the wall.

Buck clearly understood two things; these things were dead and he was more closely related to them than to humans. His keen ears picked up the sound of ice tinkling in the glasses, and noticed the men spoke more loudly as Jack poured another generous drink for each.

Jack described the patience required to bag a giant kudu, and laughed while relating that, while drunk, he had killed the wart hog when it wandered into camp.

When Steve frowned at the Bengal tiger, and mentioned its endangered status,

Jack laughed and answered, "Yep. I got mine just in time."

Jack pointed with his glass to a white tail deer, one that while it must have been spectacular in life, was dwarfed by its neighbors. "Most beautiful buck I ever saw," he said with a slight, but noticeable slur. "Killed it when I was 11. If I could find another buck that beautiful," he sighed and added wistfully, "It's head would be on my wall."

Buck's mind raced. His ears came forward with the first mention of his name. He pinned them with the second. Terror gripped him. He had heard Jack clearly. "Beautiful buck. Head on my wall." Despite his extensive vocabulary, not unlike a bright child, Buck sometimes missed subtleties and nuances of human conversation.

Jack made his way to the gun case, staggered slightly. He pulled a highly polished rifle from the case. "Is this a beauty, or not," he asked Steve as he pulled the rifle to his shoulder.

If it weren't for the three bourbons he might have been able to defend himself,

but without them it is unlikely he would have swung the barrel toward Buck.

Buck leapt from the rug, landed on hard wood floor, slipped, almost sprawled before regaining his footing. His claws dug into the floor. He sprang. His jaws met Jack's throat.

The deputy surveyed the scene at the London home and muttered, "My God. It looks like a wolf attack." He pressed Steve for details, but Steve could only answer that Buck had never been afraid of guns, that the attack was unprovoked. "We'll track him and if we don't find him, notify us when he comes home. He'll have to be destroyed."

"You won't find him. He's too smart. And he won't come home."

"How can you be so sure. He's a dog. He'll get hungry and come back with his tail between his legs."

"No he won't. You probably won't understand this, but before he left, he said, "Good bye. I'm sorry."

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...LEAGUE Q&A continued from page 1

be a board that was suddenly running the county. Not sure how that happened because nothing ever changed in their charter and nothing ever really changed how they were doing business and I'd like to give a little credit where credit is due here. Chairman Corbin along with the other five commissioners saw that and we took some action to get the Planning Board back on track. I think the Planning Board is where it should be - where it always was - and now we are reviewing and doing the things we need to do. Here's what I think we need to do. We need to not be afraid to talk to each other. We need to not be afraid to have conversations about difficult topics. And we need to not try to kill any new idea that comes along by refusing to talk about it. That's the easiest way to kill an idea. Don't let it draw its first breath. Kill it. Don't talk about it. Don't reason together. Assume you have the right answer, choke the other guy out and then don't have to talk about it anymore.

I'm proud to say your board of commissioners does not do business that way. I'm proud to say that your Planning Board does not do business that way. And if you are going to do one thing with regulation, that's what you need to do. So what would I like to see us do? I'd like to see us do what we are doing right now. The Planning Board, for all the

contention it went through last year, turned out two very important documents that keeps you competitive for North Carolina DOT road money - that would be the comprehensive plan and the comprehensive transportation plan. Without those we'd be at the back of the bus for DOT projects right now. We are not. So it ain't exactly broke. We need to be not afraid to talk to each other. Everybody has to have their viewpoints aired. And at the end of the day, all regulations recommended to board from Planning Board need to be considered in respect to timing and impact. There are some regulations that would be fine on any given day and not good when things aren't going so good. We have to be sensitive to that. And that's the board's responsibility to do that. And I think, if I have my facts right, there hasn't been a regulation added in the four years I've been on the board. Partially, because the timing wasn't there. It wasn't the right time and maybe it wasn't the right regulation. So, that's at the end of the day, let the Planning Board do it's job. We have a system in place. They do a nice job. They bring their recommendations to us and then it falls to the county commissioners to make the decision. And when that decision gets made, don't blame the Planning Board. They made a recommendation. That's their job. Their job is to make recommendations. It's our job to stand up and



Republican Paul Higdon

take a stand and vote it up or down. So if you're going to blame, blame us. We haven't seen fit to do that. We haven't seen a necessity to over regulate an economy that was struggling. Should we? There may come a time. As you implied there is a balance between let's not regulate anything and let's regulate everything. I don't think either one of those approaches are correct. Are we going to sit here in the county I grew up in, the county I love and the county I've represented in four years and tell me there is no middle ground anywhere? There is no compromise that can ever be reached? That's depressing. I hope you're not going to sit out there and tell me it's a one-way street. That it's my way or the highway approach. Not the way I do business; it's not the way the board does business and it



Democrat Bobby Kuppers

won't fix the regulatory problems that the county faces.

Higdon

Planning is hot issue in Macon County. I went to college in Arkansas when I got out of the army. Because I loved environment issues, I got a degree in Environmental Sciences in Biology. I was very interested in environmental regulations and even thought about a career with the EPA. I watched the EPA come in 1973 with the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act - all those things that were fostered in the early '70s. And then, as it progressed - this regulatory nation we have - we got the United Nations involved and in the late '80s early '90s about 180 countries all got together and the UN came up with some guidelines

on planning. The philosophy of the UN and these members was that there is too much individual wealth in the U.S. That's the problem with the U.S.. And the reason there was so much wealth is people own private property. And that wealth was accumulated by those individuals who owned private property. The UN suggested that all property should be under government control. They also expanded that and said we can control that independent wealth by controlling what those individuals could do with their private property so they cannot get any more wealth out of their property. If you think I'm just flapping my gums here, all this stuff is in writing. And five years ago if you mentioned Agenda 21, you had to duck, you were a conspiracy theorist. But the drive behind a lot of this planning is directed by the UN. They developed handbooks, guidebooks on how to regulate private property to where you can't do anything with it. You can't increase your wealth off that private property.

I'm a firm believer in the Constitution. I think the two greatest documents ever penned are the Holy Bible and Constitution of the U.S. I read them both. Some of the directives of the UN were kicked off when Bill Clinton was president. He kicked millions probably by now billions of dollars into this industry - sustainable development programs. They've got handbooks. And what they did is they funded

• See LEAGUE Q&A page 11

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...LEAGUE Q&A continued from page 10

all these NGOs – nongovernmental offices – we've got them right here in North Carolina. These NGOs go to local governments, local planning boards and help them plan. And one way they do this is through a comprehensive plan and you heard Mr. Kupperts mention that. Straight out of the UN handbook are these terms. Comprehensive Plan. Land Use Planning. Smart Growth. Tool kits. These warm fuzzy words.

Being a lover of the Constitution, a lover of individual freedom, a lover of personal property, I don't want anybody that is supporting a UN directive to tell me or have any control over local planning but it's here. Now some states and some counties flat out enacted local legislation, local laws to prevent all this sustainable movement. And being a free enterprise, a private sector person who believes in individual freedom, a lover of personal property rights, I will oppose every attempt as a county commissioner to stop this stuff. Now I'm not opposed to local planning on local issues. Everyday you get up you are planning something. Planning is a vital function of everything we do in life. As long as it's managed on the local level with local input, I'm 100% for it. But just to say we need another ordinance, we need another law – I remember a few years ago when there was a statement made that we were going to have zoning in Macon County. There were 2,000 people who said, 'no we're not.' And it's just a group continually trying to regulate private property and place it under government control and I will happily oppose that until the day I die.

Question 3:

How should funding for education be seen when looking at budget cuts? As one example please explain how you view the county borrowing money to upgrade computer facilities.

Higdon

Like most taxpayers what I know about education is what I read in the paper. I know the county, state and federal government funds education and I trust that they are judiciously using that money to advance education. We've had a couple articles in the paper about a sudden budget crisis – I don't see how it could be sudden because those of us in the private sector started seeing budget cuts in our lives and businesses six years ago and started making adjustments for that so I don't see how it is a sudden budget issue.

Then we get a statement from Interim Superintendent Jim Duncan that our test scores are the lowest in the western part of the state. Macon County has fund-

ed education at great length. Right now the taxpayers of Macon County are in debt \$48-\$49 million dollars for these new school buildings. The principal and interest payment on the debt annually is \$5.3 million dollars. We get some help with that — we got lottery funds of \$413,000 last year to help pay on the school debt and the ABC board helped. I think we got \$47.70 last year. That \$49 million, everyone in this room owns that. That comes out of your property taxes.

We give \$7.8 million to the school fund and the board of commissions coordinate with the board of education and they negotiate. How much money do you need? The money they get was agreed upon by this board and the board of education. The board of commissioners is just a funding agency for the board of education. I don't think the board of commissioners should be in any way involved with the administration and the board of education. It's their duty to make sure that money is used to advance student improvement and education in Macon County. If we have low test scores but the proper amount of funding, that's a board of education issue. As parent and taxpayers we are all concerned about it. We want the best that money can buy. But the sky is not the limit on money. We've agreed on this amount and we funded them. So hopefully the board of education and the administration can improve these test scores.

About borrowing money to upgrade computers, I wasn't privy to discussion about that, had I been I would want to know where every penny of that money is going. Is it exactly \$1.5 million or less. I don't like round numbers. If it improves education, I would have been for it. I was not for the way it was funded, but that's another issue. We've heard ever since these new schools were built – and I was not for big box schools — you talk about the heritage of Macon County, the rural communities, the center of those communities was the schools. I went to Iotla, but now it's history. It's gone. You hear 'This is for the children, for the children.' Like Michael Jackson, 'It's for the children, the children.' For the last 10 years, education scores in Macon County have been going down but spending and funding have been going up. Where is the balance? But it isn't for the for the board of commission to determine, the burden is on the board of education.

Kupperts

First of all I don't have a UN agenda. The comprehensive plan was done by the people of Macon County and cost us absolutely nothing.

Next. The reversions. This is how you get a sudden budget crisis. How many of you would work for a man who said I am going to pay you \$100 for your labor but tomorrow I want \$30 of it back? How do you operate when the people who gave you your budget pass a 1.2% pay increase but 52 of your teachers are paid with county dollars? And oh, yeah, they forgot to send that check from Raleigh. That's \$350,000 of the \$500,000 the schools are short. So I don't think it's impossible to have a sudden budget crisis.

We shouldn't micromanage, but if we shouldn't micromanage, then why are we

standing here at a board of commission debate talking about test scores? We aren't going to micromanage test scores. We are going to provide the facilities and the technology necessary. That's what we are going to do, that's our job. I trust the school board, I trust the teachers of Macon County to get the job done. The problem is if you look at education, look at what's going on at the state level; it's such a moving target. Nobody can keep up with it.

We are running for county commission. I've heard a lot of national stuff being thrown around here today, a lot of scary

• See LEAGUE Q&A page 12



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... LEAGUE Q&A continued from page 11

words like Agenda 21. I don't know what that is except I saw it in an email one time and I guarantee I did not apply any of that to any of the stuff we've been talking about.

Why did we get rid of the community schools? That is such a negative way of talking about that. Why did we choose to improve the schools that we did? Really simply. Overhead. If you want to raise the tax rate so we can afford to run 27 little schools throughout the county, that'd be find but I don't think there are a lot of people who would agree with that. Overhead. And it's not like we made a mega school. We didn't take two 5,000 student schools and make a 10,000 student school. We're got 400 kids in Iotla and it's an amazing school.

I don't ask why all the time, I'd rather ask why not. Why shouldn't our kids go to the best schools, why shouldn't our kids have the best technology? Why shouldn't we do everything we can do to make sure the education in Macon County is as good as it can be? Why not? Why not, instead of asking why do we have to pay for this. That school was built at a cost of \$116 per sq. ft. at an interest rate of 0.49%. It's a \$14 million school built for \$12 million and, yes your taxes went up by a cent and a half. The average Macon County taxpay-

er saw their tax bill go up by \$30 a year; \$2.30 a month, 8 cents a day. Why shouldn't our kids get that and the amount of technology required by the state? Why should we not fund that? Why should we not? And about how that was funded. If you had \$10,000 in your savings account and your car died and you were told 'I can give you that car for 9,000 bucks if you want to pay cash, or you could finance it for 1.44% interest for two years, are you going to wipe out your savings account to buy the car? I don't think you are. I think you are going to do what we are doing and I stand by that decision.

I believe in Macon County schools and there is one thing I am going to say about this never ending doom about how bad the kids are. For 25 years I worked submarines and we used the public school product and it served us well.

Next week:

The last questions were from the three county commissioners who were at the forum, Ronnie Beale, Kevin Corbin, Ron Havens. Sue Erwin, president of the League of Women Voters asked them to ask the candidates questions about any subject they thought important and would be addressed in the coming year. Also, the candidates' closing statements.

BOE finalizes QZAB funding; Highlands Country Club comes through for Highlands School

By Ryan Potts

The Macon County Board of Education met on Monday evening in Franklin for their regularly scheduled business meeting. At the meeting, the BOE discussed the QZAB funds which were to be approved for repair and renovation to Highlands School. Readers may recall earlier discussion of the QZAB funds from previous meetings.

Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs) are a U.S. debt instrument created by Section 226 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 QZABs allow certain qualified schools to borrow at low interest rates (as low as zero percent) for costs incurred in connection with the establishment of special programs in partnership with the private sector. Funds can be used for renovation or rebuilding projects or for equipment purchases, but cannot be used for new construction. Additionally, the school district must obtain matching funds of at least 10% of the project from private donations.

The BOE previously approved the application for QZAB funds using the Town

of Highlands Scholarship Fund as the financier of the matching funds. However, this application was returned on the premise that the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund is technically a municipal fund, although it is funded through private donations and private fundraisers. It was suggested that the BOE find a matching fund source that was not connected in any way to municipal funds in order to meet the requirements for QZAB approval.

On Monday, the BOE approved a proposal that, per DPI and LEA approval, contained matching funds from a "source of matching funds wholly unconnected from any government operation." That source is through Highlands Country Club, who has agreed to provide a 10% fund match for the project in the form of equipment, fertilizer, lime, seed, chemicals and other necessities in order to maintain both the Highlands Athletic Fields as well as to repair any damage done to the grounds at Highlands School by the renovation project.

The pledge from Highlands Country Club is estimated at \$15,000 per year for the 10-year repayment period of the bonds. Highlands Country Club representative Brian Stiehler said that the pledge is consistent with the Mission Statement of Highlands Country Club, which is to be an involved and responsible participant in the Town of Highlands. "We have been proud to help with this in years past and look forward to continuing to do so, as maintaining the sports fields and helping with the school grounds is a great way to be helpful to the young people of our community," he said.

The QZAB funds will be used to renovate Highlands School, particularly the elementary school portion of the school, which is the oldest section of the school as it currently is configured. Anticipated updates include a new HVAC system, new paint, new floors and other modifications designed to improve energy efficiency.

Don't miss the Buckeye Donkey Basketball tournament at the Rec Park Saturday night at 6:30. It's a HS Class of 2015 fundraiser. Tickets are \$6 in advance or \$8 at the door. Children under five are free. Dinner at 5p. Plates are \$5



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• HS SPORTS •



Junior Tyler Munger fighting for the ball during the Wednesday, Oct. 17 home game -- the last season game until state playoffs. Highlands won.

Photo by Lisa Osteen

Highlanders throttle Andrews, set up showdown with Murphy

By Ryan Potts

The Highlands Highlanders continued their revenge tour for 2012 by gaining a measure of payback against the Rabun Gap Eagles. Rabun Gap had defeated the Highlanders 1-0 earlier in the season, but Highlands was up to the task on Friday, taking a 2-0 halftime lead on the strength of goals from Kenan Lewis and Tyler Munger. The Highlanders were able to protect that halftime lead and come out with a 2-1 victory.

On Monday, the Highlanders traveled to Andrews looking for a win that would set up a Smoky Mountain Conference Championship battle with Murphy on Wednesday. The Highlanders struck early and often, ensuring that they were not overlooking the Wildcats as they built an early lead and finished with a dominating 7-0 victory. The Highlanders received 2 goals each from Munger, Lewis and Davis Moore and got a goal from Victor Lopez.

The win sets up a showdown with Murphy on Wednesday for the SMC Championship. Both Highlands and Murphy have one conference loss, and Highlands currently holds a head to head victory over Murphy. A Murphy win would give them an outright conference championship, where a Highlands victory would ensure their 12th straight SMC Championship.

Look for the results and highlights from this exciting match in next week's edition of the Highlands Newspaper.



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... **PLAYHOUSE** continued from page 1

The Playhouse board reasons that over the years it has struggled to repair and maintain an old historic building while operating a seasonal theater. The town says good money has been thrown after bad because the building, which it owns, is in dire need of repairs, including ADA compliance requirements.

Since it's nearly impossible to pay operating expenses on proceeds from a short production season and keep the building up, the Playhouse board was ecstatic with the Winkler family donation.

Likewise, the town was thrilled to have someone else foot the bill but wanted to oversee the project to ensure the money was actually being spent as earmarked.

Coinciding with all this were the terms of the lease.

The town wanted an 18-month lease to see if the Playhouse could come through with promises of a year-long event line-up once the building was winterized.

After 18 months, if the Playhouse had evolved into a year-long facility, then the lease would be extended into a long-term scenario.

nario.

The Town Board finalized the lease, some months ago, but the Playhouse never signed it. Plans to winterize with the Winkler's \$100,000 continued, however, and the town put out bids for the work.

On the eve of accepting the bids, a Special Town Board meeting was called for Wednesday, Oct. 17 to discuss the winterization project, the bids, the scope of the work and the pending lease.

Instead, at the meeting Wednesday night, the Playhouse board announced that anonymous donors had offered to provide all the labor and materials needed to winterize the Highlands Playhouse at no cost to the Playhouse or the town.

This new donation would be in addition to the Winkler's \$100,000.

Wanda Drake, secretary of the Playhouse board of directors, said that this newest gift will allow the Winklers' money to go to other improvements.

Mayor David Wilkes opened Wednesday's meeting by saying that at previous Town Board meetings there had been a general consensus that the Highlands Playhouse board was moving toward year-round programming, and that the Town of Highlands was considering a new lease policy for the Playhouse while understanding that the town policy begun over the course of the year was to oversee all construction in all of the buildings that the town owns and leases.

The Highlands Playhouse needs to know "what the town expects, and we want to be able to help and facilitate them in their efforts," said Wilkes.

In addition, he said the town needed to be sure that the "Playhouse board is a viable entity, that they are putting on productions during the season and that they are continuing to operate as a community venue during the rest of the year."

The mayor said that bids had been requested and three received for winterizing the building based on the Winkler's donation.

One of the Town Board's ostensible purposes for the meeting was discussion of whether or not to accept any of the three bids received for the winterization, ADA and other improvements.

"We've got to resolve something on the lease, but first and foremost we've got to decide what to do about the bids. We are legally and ethically committed to accepting the lowest bid — if we had the money."

The three companies that bid on the project — including its ADA features — were J.T. Turner Construction Co., Inc.; Lupoli Real Estate and Construction Co., Inc.; and Schmitt Building Contractors, Inc.

The presumption is that the latest would-be donor is not one of these three though Lupoli Construction is listed as a corporate donor on the Playhouse's web site and Mayor Wilkes's did say "we had a low bidder; and we had an offer to help the Playhouse out from one of the bidders."

Town Manager Bob Frye confirmed that at least one of the anonymous bidders is a construction company but couldn't say who.

The lowest bid was from JT Turner Construction and included \$28,514.12 for repairs, maintenance and safety upgrades and \$64,581.08 for winterization and ADA upgrades: Project Total: \$93,095.20.

At the meeting, Wilkes confirmed that there was no money in the winterization account, and unless money was put in it, the board could not accept any of the bids.

Initially, the town wanted to hold the Winkler money in a "Playhouse Winterization Account" but the money was never handed over.

In the interim, a portion of the winterization money was used and as it turns out, will continue to be used for operational expenses, upgrades to the sound and lighting system and for minor repairs, according to the Playhouse board president Scott Albee.

Drake said the two anonymous entities who have come forward to "save the day" don't want their names known until and unless the town approves the gift and the terms of a long-term (10-year) lease.

The money offered by the anonymous donors is less than the lowest bid of \$93,094.20 because Drake said they didn't know about the extra money needed to make the Playhouse ADA compliant.

"If it comes down to it, we will pick that up, but I don't know that they won't take care of it, too," she said.

Though the new scenario is confusing and hinges on the town agreeing to a 10-year lease outright rather than waiting to see if the Playhouse can deliver a

• See PLAYHOUSE page 18

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... TRIPLE A continued from page 1



Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell (left) with three of the other four reward recipients all from municipalities with a population under 10,000.

Highlands Police Department accepted the award in the "population under 10,000 category during a ceremony on Oct. 18 at the Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club in Durham.

In all, 16 total North Carolina locations were honored, including three grand winners (Highlands, Holly Springs and Chapel Hill) during the ninth annual awards luncheon hosted by AAA Carolinas' Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Highlands was the Grand Winner in the Under 10,000 Population category. This is the sixth-consecutive year that Highlands has been Grand Winner in this category. Other recipients in that category were: Montreat (Buncombe County), Stoneville (Rockingham County), repeat winner Seaboard (Northampton County) and Biltmore Forest (Buncombe County)

"North Carolina has made great progress over the past few years in making our roads safer," said Tom Crosby, president of AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety. "However, on average more people die on our roadways than most states."

AAA Carolinas' Foundation for Traffic Safety provides awards in an effort to recognize those cities that make a strong effort to make our state's roads safer.

"North Carolina faces three serious statewide traffic safety challenges: unlicensed drivers, the high number of teen driving deaths and a continued increase in pedestrian deaths statewide," Crosby said.

"Through enforcement, education and strong legislation and the examples of these communities, we can continue to save lives in North Carolina," added Crosby.

James Speed and Smedes York, board members of the Foundation for Traffic Safety, honored local law enforcement and community representatives.

The Foundation recognized a total of 16 communities for leadership in traffic safety including in municipalities with a population greater than 30,000; between 10,000 and 30,000; and under 10,000.

Traffic safe communities are selected by looking at crash statistics, number of law enforcement officers per capita, presence of a formal traffic safety program and/or existence of a special traffic division.

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte provided the statistical analysis and the AAA Carolinas Foundation chose winners in each category giving extra emphasis to those communities that are proactive in enhancing traffic safety efforts.

AAA Carolinas' Foundation for Traffic Safety is a non-profit organization founded by AAA Carolinas and funded by AAA Carolinas' member contributions that works to promote traffic safety initiatives in North and South Carolina.



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... PLAYHOUSE from page 14

year-long venue, Town Attorney Bill Coward, said the town has the discretion to do what it needs to do as long as it's transparent in its actions.

Drake said the Playhouse board is still trying to wrap its head around the gift. "I mean it's unbelievable that they want us to be able to use the Winkler money for the sound system and lighting, which we desperately need and have not been able to do.

"They said 'Let us do winterization and you can go out and get your sound, your lighting, your productions. Why use that money? We'll do it for you and not charge you a dime.'"

Albee said "It's hard to turn down that kind of gift"

Commissioner Amy Patterson agreed. "If you reject bids because someone wants to donate the entire project, I'm going to have a hard time rejecting that."

However she wanted to make sure the town hasn't gone around somebody's back and rejected the low bidder in favor of a higher one. "That's the ethics and that's what's important about it," she said.

Town Manager Frye said that in terms of a lease, according to state law, anything more than 10 years requires public hearing and he said it must be clear that if the town breaks the lease for some good reason, the donors don't get their money back.

Both Albee and Drake agreed that a 10-year lease would be ideal.

Because the public did not have sufficient notice of the Oct 17 meeting, no votes were taken Wednesday.

The next night, at the regularly scheduled October 18 Town Board meeting, there was a brief recapitulation of the affair and some more discussion among the Town Board.

Commissioner Amy Patterson said it might be best not to reject the previously solicited bids before the mandatory 90-day deadline was up. (the town has 90 days to accept the bids) as the latest proposed gift was not yet a sure thing.

But Commissioner Gary Drake suggested that by cancelling the already received bids, the anonymous donor would be reassured

that the town supported his gift.

Mayor Wilkes wanted clean the slate by cancelling the bids before the Town and Playhouse progressed farther on the project.

The town board voted unanimously to rescind all the bids The scope of the work needed and terms of the 10-year lease ready for review at the Nov. 15 Town Board meeting.

However, Mayor Wilkes said first the mysterious "entities" must come together with the boards of the town and Playhouse and enact a grand bargain on construction.

"We need to all come together at one time, with the lease, scope of work that the donor is going to do it and sign off on it," he said.

If everything goes ahead, repairs and winterization are expected to take about three months, and most likely would begin after the New Year.

Other Playhouse matters discussed at the Wednesday meeting included yet more gifts promised to the Playhouse, contingent upon at long-term lease agreement with the town.

Drake said "At the moment, we have about another \$90,000 to \$100,000 that has been pledged to us for a screen and a projector. People are willing to back the Buddy Holly Story, which would cost around \$50,000, but they want to make sure their money is going to be there for a while to come.

She said there's even someone who is willing to put in \$70,000 for curtains.

"These people want to know that their name is going to be on this for a long, long while if they're going to donate, and you can't blame them," she said.

For RE Snapshot advertising information, call 526-3228 or email highlandseditor@aol.com

The next RE Snapshots are scheduled for Nov. 8, Nov. 22 and Nov. 29

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Highlands Area Upcoming Events



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.

Mon, Wed, Thurs

YOGA ON MAIN – Mon & Thurs at 10:45a, Wed., at 7:45a. Call 828-482-2128. (9/27)

Mondays

• Mountain View Group of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held in the Faith and Fellowship Center of First Presbyterian Church. Enter via the entrance on 5th St. and proceed a few steps down to the library.

Tuesdays

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

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

Wednesdays

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

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

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

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

Wednesdays & Fridays

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

Thursdays, Fri., Sat., Sun.

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

Thursdays

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

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

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

Second Thursdays

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

Saturdays

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

• Simply Homegrown is a local farmers market in Rabun County, GA. Celebrating its 11th season as the area's original sustainable farm market. Open 9 am to 2 pm at the new location 0.7 mile west of Clayton on Highway 76 West. Look for directional signs on Routes 441 and 76 in Clayton. Our website has detailed directions www.simplyhomegrown.org.

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

• Bascom Community Knitters welcome all knitters, crocheters, smockers and needlepointers to join us on the Terrace at the Bascom. 10 until noon. From now until Thanksgiving! Come and knit or come and watch. mscarolray@yahoo.com

Every Third Saturday

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

Through October

• Pumpkins at Highlands United Meth-

odist Church. Call Jennifer Forrester at 526-3376.

Thursday, Oct. 25

• Free movie at the Cashiers Library The Shining at 7:30pm.

• Mountain Fresh Grocery has teamed up with the Highlands 5th Grade to assist them in raising funds for their educational trip to Charleston, to tour the USS Yorktown and explore the ocean habitat. A portion of the proceeds from the October 25, Thursday Night "What's For Dinner" dinner menu at Mountain Fresh Grocery is being donated for the trip. The dinner for four, consists of In-House Roasted Meatloaf, Yukon mashed potatoes, gravy, and salad. The class is pre-selling the dinners or you can call Mountain Fresh Grocery, at 526-2400.

• Things are going to be scary at the Cashiers' Library on Thursday at 7:30 PM. The Friends of the Library will be showing The Shining and having a Halloween Party. The party will begin with refreshments and a movie discussion, followed by the showing of The Shining. There will be Blood Punch and plenty of treats. The Shining is a horror movie and viewer discretion is strongly advised.

Friday, Oct. 26

• At Valentine's Photo Studio, an open house with food, refreshments and a drawing for a free portrait session and discounts on holiday portrait promotions. 205 S. 4th Street. 828-787-1078.

Saturdays Oct. 27

'Enchanted Forest' Nature Trail at Nature Center

Looking for a fun and educational activity for the whole family? Then come to the Highlands Nature Center and walk the Halloween "Enchanted Forest" Nature Trail scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, October 30.

Nature Center staff and volunteers will lead small groups on a gentle stroll through the Botanical Garden. Bring your flashlights and enjoy early trick-or-treating along the trails where you will encounter a variety of friendly forest creatures, portrayed by students from the



UNC Institute for the Environment Program at the Highlands Biological Station. Learn about nature as each animal you meet shares entertaining and interesting nature facts about themselves!

Group tours will leave the Nature Center every 15 minutes from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Each tour will last approximately one-half hour. This event is not scary and is appropriate for all ages. Admission is only \$1 per person. For more information, please call 526-2623 or visit highlandsbiological.org.

• Create your own spooky ceramic work at The Bascom from 10a to 4p. To register call 526-4949.

• Bolivia Mission fundraiser at the

• See EVENTS page 20

Bolivia Mission fundraiser this Saturday at HUMC



The last fundraiser for the year for the mission will be held at the Highlands United Methodist Church on Saturday, October 27th. This will be a combination breakfast, mini-yard sale and bake sale.

The event will begin at 9 a.m. and continue until noon. Featured in the yard sale will be collector baseball cards in their original packaging and practice golf balls. These items were donated by Dale Wallin.

Bolivian items such as sweaters, hand carved bowls and pens and corkscrews made with tropical Bolivian wood will also be for sale. The breakfast will be a cafeteria style meal with French toast, egg casserole, fruit and other breakfast items.

The money collected will help fund youth to travel to Montero, Bolivia to help with the building projects and work at the foster home in March of 2013. The funds will also help pay for medical equipment and the shipping of fire-fighting gear donated by local fire departments to be used by the first fire brigade in the Montero area.

Our Highlands Fire & Rescue member, Robbie Forrester will instruct the volunteers in Montero on their use and how to set up a first responder unit.

The building project will be a sanitary facility for the locals to have a shower and bathroom facility in an area where about a thousand people live without these amenities.

In addition to all this, the Rotary Clubs in Sylva, Franklin, Cashiers and Highlands have donated 550 wheelchairs that will be distributed in May at the same time the Living Waters mission from the Presbyterian Church will be in Bolivia with their clean water projects in two locations.

A slide show presentation about the mission will be shown at the breakfast and information about joining the mission will be available for those interested in going to Bolivia for a very meaningful trip.

PULL OUT

Highlands Area Upcoming Events

Highlands United Methodist Church. Breakfast, mini-yard sale and bake sale.

• At the Hen House on Main Street,

Stonewall Kitchen Demo and Tastings. 10:30a-4:30p.

• HS Class of 2015 is holding a Buck-

W.E. the movie at Highlands Playhouse Nov. 3

A Harvey Weinstein film Directed by Madonna.

All "British Royal watchers" and Windsor aficionados know about the only voluntary abdication in British history when, on December 10, 1936, the handsome, young, beloved King Edward VIII handed over his 325-day reign to his inexperienced brother who became King George VI, Queen Elizabeth's father.

The famous abdication speech, delivered in a radio address to the nation, contained the memorable words "I cannot undertake the heavy burden of state without the love and support of the woman I love" and became one of the era's most repeated phrases.

Richard Rene Silvin, known as America's foremost Windsor authority and author of *Noblesse Oblige*, *The Duchess of Windsor* as I Knew her, will present Madonna's film about the Duchess of Windsor.

Mr. Silvin ran the widowed Duchess' only charity, the American Hospital of Paris, and became the then-lonely Duchess' young escort to the few events she attended as a widow and before the onset of her long mental decline.

Madonna, by her own admission, was fascinated by Wallis Simpson, later the Duchess of Windsor and embarked on a multi-year research to better understand the enigmatic woman and her unique sense of fashion. In so doing, Madonna created a movie with outstanding costumes and sets.

The film is made in the genre of the 2009 film *Julie and Julia* about Julia Child. In this instance, a modern-day, young woman, "Wally," Abbie Cornish, fantasizes about the Duchess of Windsor, Andrea Riseborough, and sets out on a mission to better understand Time Magazine's first "Person of the Year" who became the most demonized woman of the 20th century. Time justified the controversial decision stating in part: "In the single year 1936 she (Wallis Simpson) became the most-talked-about, written about, headlined and interest-compelling person in the world."

Mr. Silvin owns one of the world's most extensive picture collections of the Windsors, some of which he will share with the audience.

The film will be presented using two screens. On the main screen the audience will see the movie while Silvin's pictures, showing actual people, places, objects and events will be projected onto a parallel screen to illustrate what is taking place, or being discussed, in the movie. One critic referred to the production as "splendid to watch."

The film examines most of the defamatory and scurrilous rumors, which surrounded the legendary lady and which, the Duchess herself, abhorred but never refuted. The Duchess of Windsor Silvin knew -- and will be happy to discuss before and after the movie -- was anything but the detached, cold ruthless, superficial lady history has heretofore portrayed.

Please join us for a fun-filled, informative evening. A "movie event" which is both a novel way of presenting an historic film and an entertaining inauguration of movies in Highlands!

For reservations contact The Center for Life Enrichment at 526-8811 or clehighlands@yahoo.com.

eye Donkey Basketball Show fundraiser at the Rec Park at 6:30p. Four teams will compete in a mini-basketball tournament riding real live donkeys. There is a dinner at 5p which includes chili and baked potatoes with all the fixings for \$5 per plate. Children under 12 can ride the donkeys for \$1. Advance tickets are available at the Rec Park or the school for \$6 per person. They are \$8 at the door. Children under five are admitted free.

Sunday, Oct. 28

• The one-act play, *The Bright Forever* featuring Shirley Williams will be performed at Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic church at 4 p.m. It portrays the life of Fanny Crosby, who though blind authored more than 8,000 Christian hymns. The play is free. Donations will be accepted at the door to benefit Stop Hunger Now, an international hunger relief organization.

• Pianist Robert Henry performs at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in one final concert on this upcoming Sunday at 2p. Concert is free. Suggested donation is \$10.

• At Scaly Mountain Church of God, located at 290 Buck Creek Road in Scaly Mountain, there will be a special guest minister, Bishop Bill Sheeks a former member of the Executive Council of the Church of God.

He is a dynamic preacher from Cleveland, TN. Everyone is invited to attend. If you need more information, please call 828-526-3212.

Tues., Oct 30

• Highlands Dialogue at the Hudson Library from 10-11:30 a.m. "The Bottleneck" by E. O. Wilson. Handout. Coordinator: Don McCormick.

Wed., Oct. 31

• Free flu vaccines at the hospital, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Combination of seasonal and H1N1, on the first floor of the Jane Woodruff Clinic, Suite 103 located on the hospital campus. Vaccines are available on a first come, first serve basis. You must pre-register by calling (828) 526-1498. Pre-registration is required due to limited availability.

Wed., Oct. 31

• At The Bascom, a Halloween Pottery Firing after dark and after Main Street Trick or Treating.

Through Wed., Oct. 31

• Sons of American Revolution Assistant Homeless Veterans Members of the Silas McDowell Chapter, North Carolina Society of Sons of the American Revolution, are collecting items for homeless veterans in the region. The group is working with the Veterans Restoration Quarters (VRQ) in Asheville that

serves over 250 veterans engaged in the Center's residential program that includes housing, education and training programs, career preparation and placement, community service, mentoring, and community reintegration. Items can be dropped in the box at the Sylva Walmart or the Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

Wednesday, Oct. 31

• Downtown Highlands trick or treating, 6-8p. Streets open to foot traffic ONLY. Streets will close 5:30p and reopen 8:30p. Hot dogs and drinks available for donation. Merchants on the hill, Main Street, in Town Square, Oak Square and Wright Square will be handing out candy. Music by DJ Mike.

• Hound-o-ween Parade. Meet at Falls on Main at 5:15 p.m. \$15 per dog, \$20 the eve of the event. All proceeds go to the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society. Call 678-227-8000 to register.

Friday, Nov. 2

• The High Mountain Squares will dance Friday Night at the Macon County Community Building on Route 441 South, from 6:30 to 9p. Hoyle Grose from Asheville will be the caller. It's Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. There will be a Plus Workshop from 6:30 to 7p. For information call 828-340-0905.

Saturday, Nov. 3

• CLE Presents: W.E. the story about Wallis and Edward, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor at 6:30p at the Highlands Playhouse. Tickets are \$15. For reservations contact The Center for Life Enrichment at 526-8811 or clehighlands@yahoo.com.

• The Highlands Plateau Greenway is sponsoring the first fall hike of the recently completed trail system. The hike will include: lunch, guided hike, shuttle and one year individual greenway membership all for \$25. The basic hike will be from Mirror Lake, through the Rec Park, up the Kelsey Trail, over Big Bear Pen, through the Highlands Biological Station, ending on Sunset Rock. To sign up email to Hillrie Quin at hmquin@frontier.com or call 526-2385.

Tues., Nov 6

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

Saturday, Nov. 10

• At Highlands Playhouse, Island Fever wine tasting featuring the Caribbean Cowboys.

Sat. Nov. 17-Sun. Jan. 6

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

Catered, fall hike Nov. 3



The Highlands Plateau Greenway is sponsoring the first fall hike of the recently completed trail system on Saturday, Nov. 3rd, at the Rec Park lower parking lot. The hike will include lunch and a one-year individual greenway membership, all for \$25. The food cost and shuttle gas is covered by a grant from the Cullasaja Women's Outreach. Tickets can be purchased online at www.highlandsgreenway.com, or by email to Hillrie Quin at hmquin@frontier.com or by phone at 828-526-2385.

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Every moment, a new beauty

Rev. Bruce Walker

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

As a pastor, I am engaged in the ministry of healing. Listening to stories of loss or entering areas of conflict among people are the things I do. With so many people for whom to care and difficult situations abounding, being fully present is a challenge. Taking some time off recently, I realized how far I had drifted from my own need for healing. I had to refocus.

As I entered my vacation period, I was saying to myself, "Now I have time to work on my house for sale in Morganton, now I can do some yard work at the home in Highlands. Maybe now I will have time to visit some folks in my former town who are sick or in need of a little attention."

Working in the yard at home and with all the thoughts of what I had to do in my mind, I realized that I was missing out on something else; spending time with me, just being me and learning what that is all about. As I took in my surroundings, I realized I was missing something else – the beauty of nature itself. Now I was saying to myself, "I need to get out more, that is, get outdoors and take in the beauty of nature."

There is something special all around and it is life itself. The restorative power of nature is always present. While spending time in natural settings is no cure all and I would not suggest nature as a replacement for professional therapy, it can be a powerful tool in the healing of self.

"Can nature really make a difference? One study suggests that the benefits are felt almost immediately. Recent results published by Jules Pretty and Jo Barton in the journal Environmental Science and Technology reveal that mood and self-esteem improved after a five-minute dose. Blue-green exercise is even better; a walk in a natural area adjacent to water offered people the most improvement. People of all ages and social backgrounds benefited -- ." Excerpted from The Nature Principle by Richard Louv (©2011)

Other words that caught my attention come from the poem by Rumi, Green Ears Everywhere, The whole world is a form of truth.

When someone does not feel grateful to that, the forms appear to be as he feels.

They mirror his anger, his greed, and his fear. Make peace with the universe. Take joy in it.

It will turn to gold. Resurrection will be now. Every moment, a new beauty.

Do you have a special place to commune with nature, a place of beauty, where you can find your strength renewed and your soul restored? If not, join me in the search where healing awaits and every moment is a new beauty!

John 3:16

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

Proverbs 3:5

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965

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

Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7

Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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Catered dinner - Wed. 6pm

CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY

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Sundays: 10 a.m. – Worship

Holy Communion 1st Sunday of the month

Wednesdays: 9 a.m. Healing and Prayer w/Holy Communion

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011

Worshipping at the facilities of Whiteside Presbyterian Church, Cashiers

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

Cafe, Cashiers

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

Wed.: Men's Bible Study -8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church

Thurs.: Women's Prayer Group - 10 a.m., Whiteside Presbyterian Church;

Healing Service at noon

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

Wednesdays – 7 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC

Senior Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30 am: Adult Sunday School

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

Service. 12:30 pm Student Arts Group, 5 p.m. HS

Wed.: 6pm: CBC University Program

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

526-2968 • Reverend Bruce Walker

Sunday: Education for children & adults and choir rehearsal beginning at

9am. Holy Eucharist Rite I-8a; Holy Eucharist Rite II-10:30am in the Main

Nave of the Church.

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

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

Howard L'Enfant

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Dr. Charles Harris, Pastor • 526-4153

Sun.: Worship 10:45 a.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 a.m., Prayer Meeting – 6:15 p.m., Choir – 5 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dr. Lee Bowman, Pastor • 526-3175

Sun.: Worship – 11 a.m.; Sun. 8:30a communion service June-Labor Day;

School – 9:30

Mondays: 8 a.m. – Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast

Wednesdays – Choir – 7

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Rev. Carson Gibson

Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am

Bible Study – 6 pm

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

Randy Reed, Pastor

828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

Sundays: Worship – 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson

670 N. Fourth Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)

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

Worship, 6:30 p.m.

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 8:30 & 10:50.; Youth Group 5:30 p.

Wed: Supper; 6; 7:15 – children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 – Adult

choir (nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)

Thurs: 12:30 – Women's Bible Study (nursery)

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell

2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741

Sundays: Sunday School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;

Worship/Communion – 10:30

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah

Pastor Roy Lowe, (828) 526-8425

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

Choir – 6 p.m.

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

MOUNTAIN SYNOGUE

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin

828-369-9270 or 828-293-5197

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

Pastor: Clayton Lopez • 828-743-9704

Independent Bible Church

Sundays: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church, 4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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Rev. Dean Cesa, pastor – Parish office: 526-2418

Mass: – Sun: 11 a.m.; Thurs & Fri.: 9 a. Saturday, 4pm

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Dwight Loggins

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

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

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.; Worship – 6 p.m.

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

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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Child Care - 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Religious Education - 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Youth 8th - 12th grades meet the 2nd Sundays 5 - 7:30 p.m

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122

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

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... PLANNING BOARD continued from page 1

Only two buildings housing eight units each have been built and now ready for phase two, instead of duplicating the units in phase one, the new owner — Mountain Heritage Properties, represented by Zack Shamburg — wants to change the design.

Realtor Pat Allen said the new townhouse plan with garages will be easier to sell. "We know now what people want. They don't like the stairs, they don't like units above them and they want garages. People have told me they will buy the townhouse design."

The problem is the neighbors to the project, who opposed it back in February of 2006, still oppose it today and they would like the entire complex to revert to R2.

"The whole neighborhood was against this when it first came up and we're still against it," said Steve Hamm, whose property borders the east edge of the complex.

Due to the downturn in the economy, the project was never finished and represents a failed project in the eyes of Hamm and other neighbors — including George Siek and Beverly Quinn who also border the complex — saying the project has diminished the value of their properties.

Allen and Shamburg agreed that it is a failed project but will be re-established as a winner since they have the money to back their promises, as well as the new townhouse design.

After a 90-minute discussion, the Planning Board voted unanimously to keep the eight original conditions assigned the project but also required the builder to augment the natural 40-foot, vegetative buffer along the east side of the property so neighbors can't see into the project as now, particularly because the third planned building is being moved closer to the neighboring properties than in the original plan.

"I want to protect the neighbors as much as possible," said Chairman Thomas Craig who suggested the additional condition.

In addition, the board required the builder to begin planting the buffer right away, so that by the time the project is finished — estimated to be 18-months — the buffer will be grown.

Shamburg's plan is to build the exterior shell of one townhouse building but to complete only one of the three townhouses in that building. Once it sells, the second one will be built and so on, until all three townhouse buildings are completed housing a total of nine townhomes.

"The first building will look complete on the outside but inside two units will be unfinished," he said.

The second case, which again took 90 minutes to discuss, concerned Old Edwards

Hospitality Group's request to turn another Highlands historic property — the third oldest existing house in Highlands at 594 Main Street — into a wedding/event venue.

OEI president Richard Delaney reiterated what was in the packet overview contending that the current zoning on the property could allow commercial development or a subdivision which would diminish its historical heritage and the relative calm of the location. Therefore OEI would be "saving" the property. However, the case didn't concern the current B3 portion — which can house commercial development — only the R2 portion which as R2 can't house the business OEI plans for the entire parcel.

The property includes two parcels — referred to A and B. Lot A is 2.93 acres and is zoned both B3 and R2 with the zoning line running across the front stoop of the existing house. The majority of the house is in the R2 zone.

Lot B is .72 acres and it too, is zoned R2. The majority of Lot A is B-3 — commercial and will stay that way, meaning numerous things can be developed on that portion of the property.

The B3-CUD request only concerns the R2 portion because since it's part of the tract that will operate as a business, it needs be "conditionally" zoned with a business classification.

Delaney said that Art and Angela Williams love historic properties as evidenced when they bought the Piermont Cottage property on South Street when they learned that due to its commercial zoning it could have become a bank.

In fact, when first approached to purchase 594 Main Street by Bert Mobley with Harry Norman Realty, Delaney told him OEI owned enough real estate and wasn't interested. However, during a subsequent talk with the Williamses, Mobley convinced them otherwise and after a tour of the property they decided it would be a good addition to OEI's holdings.

OEI wants to repurpose the property to be used as a cottage rental where small-scale events could be held. They say the events would be for 30-40 people and most of the attendees would be guests at OEI's other venues.

The property borders the Highlands Manor complex and resident Harry MacDonald represented Highlands Manor's 24 property owners at the meeting.

He said though OEI projects are first-class, Highlands Manor residents believe the new venue will disrupt their quality

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Bel Canto funds augment HS music program

By Luke Osteen

Highlands School Music Teacher Marcia Reid's challenge to introduce her students to the joy of music got a little easier thanks to the generosity of Bel Canto.

This nationally-recognized recital series, which is celebrating its 20th season, has awarded the school's music program \$11,500.

"This money is being used to revive the vocal music program by purchasing lots of chorus music -- I do not know what they have used in the past, but I could not find any choral octavos at the school other than single copies in a book," says Ms. Reid. "We're also using it to buy a more portable 88 key digital stage piano, vocal solo microphones and vocal ensemble microphones; also a

new portable sound system to support those mics and piano."

Bel Canto's gift is extending throughout Highlands School. Elementary students have been able to begin a new curriculum and upper elementary has received recorders that they can now play.

"The band will use the money to maintain instruments, buy supplies, and for the purchase of two new euphoniums and three more snare drums and orchestra bells," adds Ms. Reid.

Bel Canto's mission over the years has been to offer breathtaking vocal performances to the community and return the proceeds through hefty grants to vital local needs. This year, it's funded the Highlands Child Development Center's music program and helped to buy a breathtaking horse sculpture

to commemorate Crane Stables, which stood where The Bascom is now located.

But the gift to Highlands School has special significance.

"I am overwhelmed by Bel Canto's generosity -- for the first time in all of my 20-plus years of teaching, I actually can get the things that I need to do a good job and that is priceless" says Ms. Reid. "All teachers get so much criticism these days, but they never have all of the things they need. Bel Canto has given us more this year, to maintain the music program, than I have received in the last 15 years total! Highlands School is so blessed to have their support. The real winners, of course, are the music students."

That's sweet music to the entire town.

...LETTERS continued from page 2

There will be small victories, but not much. Everyone of any import will be bought and paid.

Now! If Obama wins, in spite of his faults, there is hope the common good, the lowly, the poor, the disenfranchised, the downtrodden, and all others for whom a dry place to sleep and food to eat will be considered a great victory will have some chance of improving themselves. I know all this sounds old fashioned and worn. However, this life is so short, and eternity so unimaginably long.

The least we can accomplish is to try to find some peace for ourselves in nature, reading, music, flowers, and family. Sometimes the family part is not what it is supposed to be. So here we stand.

I doubt if I will write anymore after this upcoming Election. Either way the die will have been cast. At my age the next years should be at peace. I will try to make it so. Carrying the weight of the world's problems around on our shoulders and on our minds is not conducive to pro-

ductive activity. Those coming after us will have to fight the good fight. Will have to recapture the Lost Dream.

"We stand one way or another on 'the edge of forever.'"

I do know for myself when the moment comes when I am asked what I did for the least among us, I will be able to answer positively.

I wish you and yours all the best. I firmly believe your intention is to print value in your paper. God Bless! As the old Indian once stated "Let us consider what kind of future we can build for our children?"

**Allen Johnson & Joe Mathes
Otto, NC**

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... FORUM continued from page 2

lion sent back to Raleigh last year. Jackson County must return \$875,734 and Clay County \$322,195. These are the very funds that assist in paying for teachers, state/federal mandated programs, supplies, equipment and student transportation.

If it had not been for the Obama stimulus package and the wise judgment of county commissioners and school boards to place funds into reserve, last year the impact of these cuts would have been dramatic. But the stimulus money and the reserve funds have been depleted, and this year even more cuts of classroom teachers will have to be made.

Budgets ARE about choices, and those choices have moral as well as economic implications. In our selection of who will represent us in the State Senate next year, it is important that we select one who truly understands and acknowledges that principle with every vote they cast. Regretfully, Jim Davis doesn't.

Free flu vaccines at hospital

The hospital will conduct its annual community influenza clinic providing free flu vaccines, combination of seasonal and H1N1, on Wednesday, October 31st from 11 am – 1 pm on the first floor of the Jane Woodruff Clinic, Suite 103 located on the hospital campus. Vaccines are available on a first come, first serve basis. You must pre-register by calling (828) 526-1498. Pre-registration is required due to limited availability.

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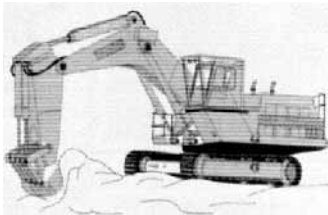


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• POLICE/FIRE DEPT. REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from Sept. 30
Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Sept. 30

• At 4:15 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Main Street.

Oct. 4

• At 11:28 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident Hudson Road.

Oct. 6

• At 3:05 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on S. 4th Street.

• At 10:18 a.m., officers responded to a vandalism call at a residence on Laurelwood Lane where purses, handbags, wallets, jewelry and precious metals was reported to be damaged.

Oct. 8

• At 10:30 a.m., officers responded to a burglary at Brick Oven Pizza where \$100 in small bills was reported missing.

Oct. 11

• A little past midnight, officers responded to a simple, non-physical assault at the Lost Hiker on Carolina Way.

Oct. 12

• At 1:06 p.m., food was reported stolen from Dominicks in Wright Square totalling \$40.28.

• During this timeframe, officers issued

5 citations (warnings, ordinance violations, and citations)

Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Oct. 16.

Oct. 16

• 8:08 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Dog Mountain Road.

Oct. 17

• 10:54 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Edwards Creek Road.

Oct. 21

• At 3:16 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Main Street.

• At 7:28 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Clubhouse Trail.

• At 9:51 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Cook Road.

Oct. 22

• At 11:14 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Main Street.

• At 12:29 p.m., the dept. responded to a motorcycle accident on NC 106.

• At 2:30 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to Cowee Ridge Road.

Oct. 23

• At 8:02 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers-Glenville Fire Dept. with a possible structure fire. The call was cancelled en route.

• MILESTONE •

Gabbard qualifies for golf match at Pinehurst



Emily Gabbard is on the Highlands School Girls Golf Team and has been competing since its inception three years ago- when she was a freshman.

Emily has been playing golf since the age of 2 -- seriously playing since the 8th grade. Her father, Keven Gabbard is a Golf Pro at Wildcat Cliffs Country Club where Emily practices as much as possible.

Wildcat Cliffs donates its facility to both the boys and girls golf teams. Barbara Reese is the coach of the Girls Golf team - Keven Gabbard is there to assist the Girls team with swing development/course play/club selection. Keven is also the coach for the Boys Golf Team. Emily qualified to go to the State Tourment with a score of 103. The NC Highschool State Tournament moves to various locations each year. This year it is at Pinehurst, NC, a historically great course where the US Open is periodically held. The state match is October 28-30.

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •



Pour le Pink 5k raises \$13,000 ... Hospital says 'thank you'

With the second Annual Pour le Pink 5k a success, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital wants to sincerely thank the numerous volunteers, sponsors and race participants for making it all possible! Both the Highlands and Cashiers communities truly came together to support a deserving cause. The generosity of donations, time and hard work not only benefited the Hospital but fostered awareness of women's health and wellness. The 5k walk/run held on Saturday, October 6, raised nearly \$13,000 in support of breast health and women's services provided at HCH. One hundred and thirteen runners/walkers, forty-five event sponsors, and nearly twenty-five volunteers undoubtedly show the commitment to keep our community members healthy.

It is impossible to host an event such as this without the help of individuals and businesses. It is such a wonderful statement about the heart of our residents and to these sponsors who responded to help. Many thanks to Highlands Road Runners' Club, Skip Taylor, Morris Williams, Helen Tankersley, Demitra Passmore, Lindsay Gearhart, Beautiful Demise Screen Printing, Town of Highlands, Highlands Fire Department, Macon County Sheriff's Department, Macon County EMS, The Laurel Magazine, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Auxiliary and Gift Shop, Animal Wellness Hospital of Highlands, August Produce, The Bells (Glenda & Griffin), Candy O'Gara, Cashiers Printing, Center for Plastic Surgery- Dr. Robert Buchanan, The

Chattooga Club, The Cline's (Janie and Harry), Coca-Cola, Crossroads Chronicle, Deborah Berlin, Donohue Technology, Double Springs Church of God, Dr. Julie A. Farrow, The Dry Sink, Eagle Eye Home Inspections, Edwards Electrical Service, Finishing Touches Unlimited, Freeman Gas, The Highlander, Highlands Country Club, Highlands Dermatology, Highlands Inn, Highlands Newspaper, Highlands Office Supply, Highlands-Cashiers Board of Realtors, Ingles of Cashiers, The Kitchen Carry Away and Catering, Koenig Homebuilders, Macon Bank, McCulley's Scottish Cashmere Store, Heather Mangum, Meadow Storage, Mirror Lake Photography, Mountain Heritage, Northland Communications, OEI Ladies Book Club, The Quick's (Linda and Mark), Scaly Mountain Women's Club, The Summer House, T.A. Anderson Goldsmith, Victoria's Closet and VC for Men, Vivianne Metzger Antiques, Wells Fargo, WHLC FM 104.5, and Wits' End Shop

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

**Cullasaja Women's Outreach donates \$90,850 to
Highlands-Cashiers nonprofits in 2012**

Through direct grants totaling \$62,000 and individual member-directed donations of \$28,850, the women's group raised \$90,850 this past season.



Cullasaja Women's Outreach (CWO) today announced the results of its 2012 efforts to raise funds for charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the Highlands and Cashiers communities.

Through a combination of direct grants totaling \$62,000 and individual member-directed donations of \$28,850, the women's group raised \$90,850 this past season. Since its inception in 2006, Cullasaja Women's Outreach has invested well over \$500,000 to the Highlands and Cashiers area not-for-profits — a phenomenal amount for a grassroots organization made up of about 80 women from the Cullasaja Club community.

The highlight of this year's fundraising was a progressive dining fundraiser along the homes of the Lake Villas Way in the Cullasaja Club.

The community event brought CWO members and their families into the spirit of giving. The fundraiser was attended by 140 generous donors from the Cullasaja Club. Funds from the event were awarded to 19 area organizations in CWO grants totaling \$62,000.

Individual awards ranged from \$500 to \$5,000, following a thoughtful grants process headed up by CWO Grant Co-chairs Joy Abney and Stevie Hinel. This year's grant recipients included: the Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic, Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society, Community Care Clinic of Highlands-Cashiers, Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry, Girls on the Run of Western NC, Highlands Biological Station, Highlands-Cashiers Community Child Development Center, Highlands Emergency Council, Highlands Historical Society, Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, Highlands Plateau/Greenway, the Hudson Library, International Friendship Center, IFC/Food Pantry, Literacy Council of Highlands, the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center's Youth Program, The Peggy Crosby Center and The Bascom.

Working with the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, CWO established a CFWNC-CWO Charities fund. This special fund allows members to designate the recipients of their donations directly, or to make donations to the CWO Charities General Fund, which are disbursed each fall when the organization completes its annual grant process.

"The outpouring of love and generosity for the broader Highlands-Cashier community by our members has been phenomenal," noted 2012 President Gail Hughes. "We are an independent grassroots organization—about 80 women strong—who share a mission of reaching-out to each other and to the community through philanthropy, volunteerism and friendship. The fact that we raised over \$500,000 for the Highlands-Cashiers community in six years is truly an accomplishment! We are determined to build a legacy of love and sharing that grows stronger each year."

... PLANNING BOARD from page 22

of life, fearing a noise issue. "We like the quiet so much we don't even allow air conditioners because we don't want to hear the compressors and that means our windows are open," he said. "Often something with the best intentions today becomes something else and this could become a snake down the road for Highlands."

Furthermore, with 30-40 people proposed at any one time he questioned the need for 30' x 30' (900 sq. ft.) open-air covered pavilion, which is planned for the site. "Something that big isn't needed for a small retreat," he said.

He said the only way Highlands Manor would be for the project is if no live music was allowed after 7 p.m.

Delaney said after wedding ceremonies under the pavilion, patrons would move to the front of the other lot – the lot zoned B3 – for receptions.

That notion concerned Dixie Barton who lives directly across the street from that portion of the property. She said the other commercial properties around her close their doors at 5 p.m. so it's quiet "like living in the country."

"Is Piermont Cottage overbooked and now you need another venue?" she asked. "Highlands should have great respect for what is has and think carefully before we have this

•See PLANNING BOARD page 27

... PLANNING BOARD from page 26

commercial entity take over our town," she said.

Alice Nelson agreed saying "people's plans change. We need to look down the road."

Furthermore, she said the logic of a converting residential property to commercial property is upside down thinking.

"OEI says it is saving the property when actually it is opening it up to commercial use for all time. Instead of zoning it B3, zone it R2. That would truly preserve the property and protect it for the future," she said.

But Mobley said the seller wouldn't want all the property to be zoned R2 because it's worth more money zoned B3.

"Mr. Delaney is trying to soft-sell to you what they want, which is OEI's strategy, and it has gotten them a lot in the town," said Nelson.

She said for Delaney to act like this is good for the neighborhood is disingenuous.

"It's an evasion of this quite neighborhood. This is a residential side of town; it has the least traffic of all the other ingresses and egresses in town. This is a toe in the door, a thin edge of the wedge creeping incrementally.

"You say Mr. and Mrs. Williams love historic homes? Four historic homes have been lost to OEI. Patterns have been established. Don't trust their plans. Your intent is business not historic preservation. OEI has mushroomed and gotten bigger and bigger in all directions. Saying it is preserving the property is an upside down way of getting it their way. OEI is a money making institution. It isn't doing this for charity," said Nelson.

She said other than putting all the power in the hands of a Town Manager, she thinks creating conditional zoning is the most dangerous thing the town has done.

Delaney was quick to ask if he could speak saying, "I'm the one taking the knives out of my back."

He went on to say that it cost the Williams \$2 million to transform Piermont Cottage. "There isn't a lot of money to be made with this. When renovating a historic place there is a lot of concern that goes beyond the wallet. It takes a long time to see a return. There are a lot of easier ways to make money," he said.

Tom Corcoran, a neighbor to the east of the property who is building a home, said he's not totally opposed to the project

•See PLANNING BOARD page 30

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Proud 7-year-old wins grill at Reeves Hardware raffle

Last week, Weyerhaeuser, a lumber distributor for Reeves Hardware, sponsored a customer appreciation day at the store complete with hotdogs and a raffle for a Weber Q grill.

Seven-year-old Lucas, pictured right, who is the grandson of Gary Holland, was the only child to enter the raffle.

Just before the raffle ticket was drawn, Lucas called the store and said "I want to know who won." He was told to hold on a minute and they would tell him, as they were just about to draw the ticket.

The ticket was drawn and Lucas was the winner!

When he heard the news he yelled, "Pappa, we won!" He hung up the phone, but then called his grandmother and said "Nana, we won the stove!"

When he came into the store to claim his prize and get his picture taken, he talked his grandfather into buying the gas and a stand for the grill.



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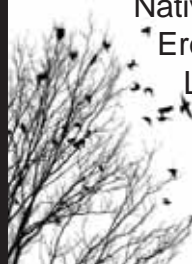


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...PLANNING BOARD from 27

because he knows OEI will do a high quality, high-class project, but like the Highlands Manor residents, he is concerned about noise.

“I would like to stipulate that there be no amplified music, no multiple piece musical groups, no more than 35 people at an event, everything over by 10 p.m. and no more than 12 overnight guests at one time in the five bedroom house.”

He also requested that the treetop walkway on the property be taken down because it has no value and he doesn't want people peering into his property, he doesn't want the existing buffer removed or anything other than the pavilion built on the property.

Chairman Craig reminded the board that its charge isn't to facilitate the sale of the property or to facilitate the expansion of OEI – simply to consider the conditional use district that has been proposed.

In the end, other than adding that all renovations be in character with the property and the neighborhood and that up to 40 people be allowed at an event, that the buffer along the Main Street be kept intact and limiting bands to four instruments, the board voted unanimously to Corcoran's requests.

There was some discussion about allowing Planning Board member Patrick Leonard, OEI's human resource manager, to vote on the issue.

Town Planner David Clabo said since the Planning Board isn't a quasi-judicial board and since Leonard doesn't stand to gain anything financially he didn't have to recuse himself.

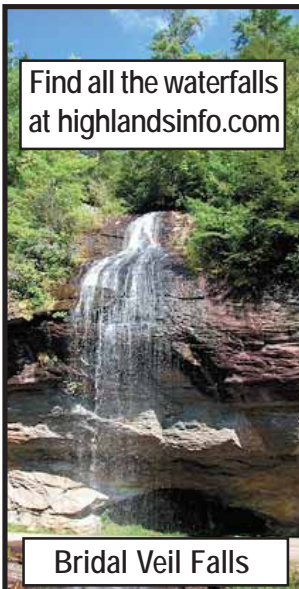
He also reiterated that the B-3 portion of the parcel already exists and does not change. Any new business use of that property in the existing B3 portion would simply require a review by the Appearance Commission and a Special Use Permit from the Zoning Board. None of the conditions placed on the old R2 portion (new B3 CUD portion) apply to the B3 portion.

“The current request to change the R-2 portion to B3-CUD allows any user/owner to use the existing house in a commercial manner, such as the hotel/small event operations,” he said.

The Town Board will consider the Planning Board's recommendations at the Nov. 15 meeting at 7 p.m. in the Community Building.

– Kim Lewicki

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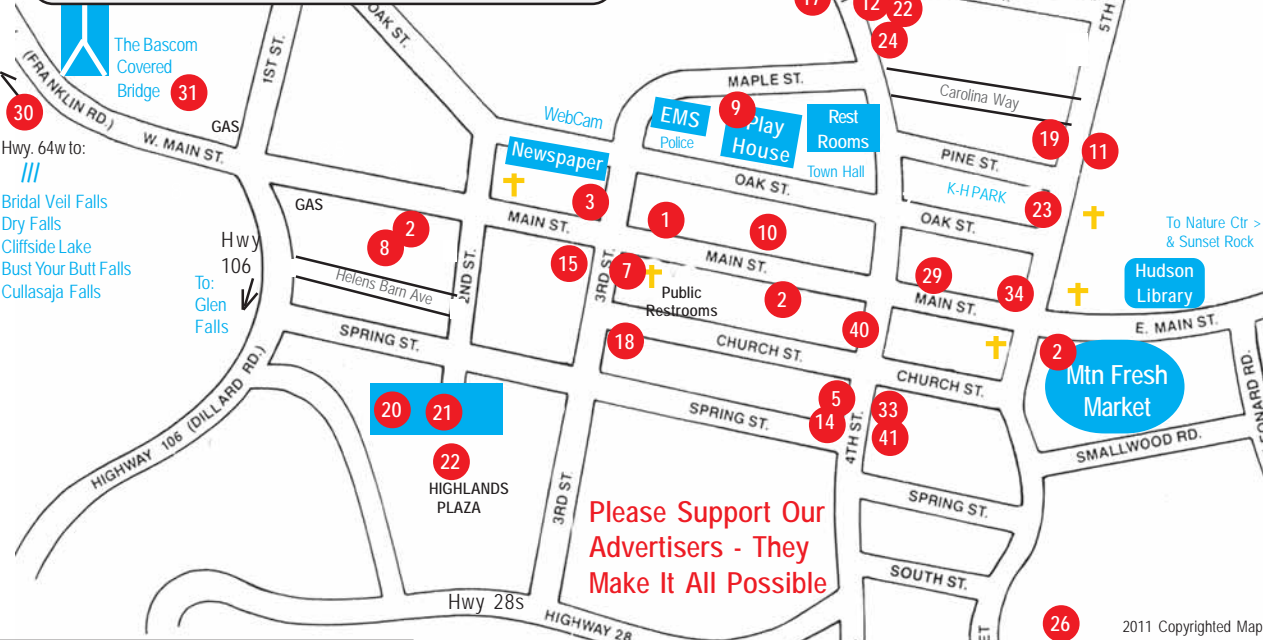
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Thursday, Oct. 25
• Mountain Fresh Grocery fundraiser for HS 5th grade class. Portion of What's for Dinner sales go toward their trip to Charleston. Call Mountain Fresh Grocery at 526-2400.
Friday, Oct. 26
• At Valentine's Photo Studio, an open house with food, refreshments and a drawing for a free portrait session and discounts on holiday portrait promotions. 205 S. 4th Street. 828-787-1078.
Saturday, Oct. 27
• HS Class of 2015 is holding a Buckeye Donkey Basketball Show fundraiser at the Rec Park at 6:30p. Dinner at 5p. \$5 per plate. Advance tickets at the Rec Park and school, \$6 - \$8 at the door.



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Main Street will
be open for foot
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Street will close
at 5:30p and re-
open at 8:30p.
Hot dogs and
drinks will be
available for do-
nations and
candy will be
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