

Highlands Newspaper

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

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Thursday, Dec. 19, 2013

Zoning Board OKs SUP for new restaurant

Board hears NCGS changes to voting/variance procedures as per HB 276

A new Asian restaurant is coming to town.

At the Dec. 11 Zoning Board meeting, the board unanimously approved a Special Use

Permit (SUP) for the Asian House which will be located in Helen's Barn.

Though the restaurant doesn't represent a change in use,

since all the square footage in Helen's Barn will be used for the restaurant and not just the part used by Fressers Eatery in the past, a SUP was required.

The current SUP was approved for a restaurant within a portion of the building and three

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Highlands new pool on track

Disposal of demolished concrete point of discussion

By Brittany Burns

In a partnership between Macon County and the Town of Highlands, the Highlands pool renovations are on track and to be completed in time for a Memorial Day opening.

Last week, Macon County commissioner Jimmy Tate informed the board that the project manager for the pool was looking for a disposal method for the concrete generated by demolition of the old pool.

With an estimate of 16 tandem loads of concrete, Tate asked fellow commissioners if it would be possible for the waste to be dumped in the county's landfill with the understanding that tipping fees be waived. Commissioners noted that the county would likely consider the option, which would make the tipping

•See POOL page 9



At the Thursday, Dec. 12 Town Board meeting, Macon County Clerk of Court Vic Perry swore in Commissioners Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway and Mayor Patrick Taylor.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

New members take their seats at the table

The changing of the guard took place at the Thursday, Dec. 12 Town Board meeting.

Outgoing Mayor David Wilkes thanked those who voted for him four years ago, all board members past and present and current town staff and employees.

"I have grown to appreciate all they do and respect their professionalism," he said. "I also want to thank my family for its support. I leave here with a sense of pride for being part of all the

accomplishments of this board and staff."

He also thanked outgoing Commissioner Gary Drake for his service and presented him with a plaque.

Drake said it had been a privilege to serve and wishes the new board success.

Town Manager Bob Frye presented Wilkes with his gavel attached to a plaque saying it is tradition for outgoing mayors to take their gavel with them.

Incoming Mayor Patrick Taylor thanked the community for its support and gave his sincere thanks to Mayor Wilkes and Commissioner Gary Drake as well as the entire staff for their help during the transition. He said he quickly learned that the job takes a lot of time preparing and attending other events and meetings and that it goes well beyond just Town Board meetings.

•See SEATS page 3

PB suggests changes to HB 276 verbiage

At the Monday, Dec. 16 Planning Board meeting, state mandated changes as per HB 276 regarding Zoning Board of Adjustment voting and variances procedure were discussed, in addition to the rezoning of Town of Highlands properties

Though the HB 276 changes don't involve the Planning Board, the board must discuss and make recommendations concerning any changes to the Highlands Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), which now must be changed to reflect the state's amendments.

According to Interim Planner Josh Ward, the changes to the zoning board procedures reflect the state's effort "to loosen the reins a little" when issuing Special Use Permits (SUP) and granting variances.

In a nutshell, as of Oct. 1, 2013, the granting of a SUP now requires a simple majority vote rather than a 4/5 majority; findings of fact concerning the granting of a variance have been streamlined. Applicants wishing to appeal the zoning administrator's or a Zoning Board of Adjustment ruling now have 30 days rather than 10 days; and

•See CHANGES page 7

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• LETTERS •

Shining a Light on God

Dear Editor,

Just maybe the time has come for science and religion to find some common ground and work together to solve problems facing humanity. Religion has always stumbled when faced with reality and that need not be. Galileo was persecuted for discovering the earth was not the center of the universe, Bruno was burned at the stake for suggesting there might be other planets and stars out there.

In recent years, as science has made more and more startling discoveries about the world and universe around us, religion seems to have taken a more hardened position. We have the Creationists who try

to pound a square peg into a round hole, the anti-evolution people who tell God how long one of His days were, all of which chase our young away from all religion.

The reality is the God we have now was first imagined by tribesmen sitting by a fire at night while their camels rested and who, in their small world, could only imagine a God that looked like them and had the same faults they had.

Since those days we are rapidly gaining knowledge of not only the universe around us but how we came to be in the first place. We already know were it not for exploding stars (Supernovae) we wouldn't be here because they provided all the materials our bodies are made of. We know the universe is some 14 billion years old and our genes contain DNA from two other extinct human species. The elusive so-called God Particle, the Higgs Boson, and the source of Dark Energy have all been revealed and

will eventually lead us to more and more startling discoveries. Unfortunately, all our discoveries contradict current religious belief systems.

Religion provides comfort to people and provides a moral compass humanity needs; so religion is still a valuable part of humanity. If it is to survive it must somehow reach out to reality and come to terms with science. Some Liberal groups and certainly Marxist groups are trying to stamp out religion, as was done in the old Communist Soviet Union. Religion must meet the challenge and change if it is to survive. In the Liberal and Marxist world, a totalitarian government replaces religion. In an odd twist, Liberals and Socialists are anti-science in their own belief system and just as bad as religious theology.

Liberals continue to look for a utopian system but basic science tells us a utopian society cannot exist.... nor does it exist

anywhere in the universe. Science tells us evolution requires humans to struggle and if we don't, we regress and become dependent.... something Liberals ignore. In the end, attempts to establish utopian societies always ended up with a political elite overseeing what they felt were dependent inferior humans.

It's time for religion and science to start a conversation and find some common ground if religion wishes to continue into the future.

**Bob Wilson
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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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AAA Carolinas names Highlands a 2013 NC Outstanding traffic safe community



Highlands police officer Jonathan Phillips accepts award for the department at an award ceremony on Dec. 11 in Durham.

The Town of Highlands was named an Outstanding Traffic Safe Community for its population in the 2013 North Carolina Traffic Safe Community Awards by the AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety.

Officer Jonathan Phillips accepted the award during a ceremony on Dec. 11 at the Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club in Durham.

In all, 14 total North Carolina lo-
• See AAA CAROLINAS page 3

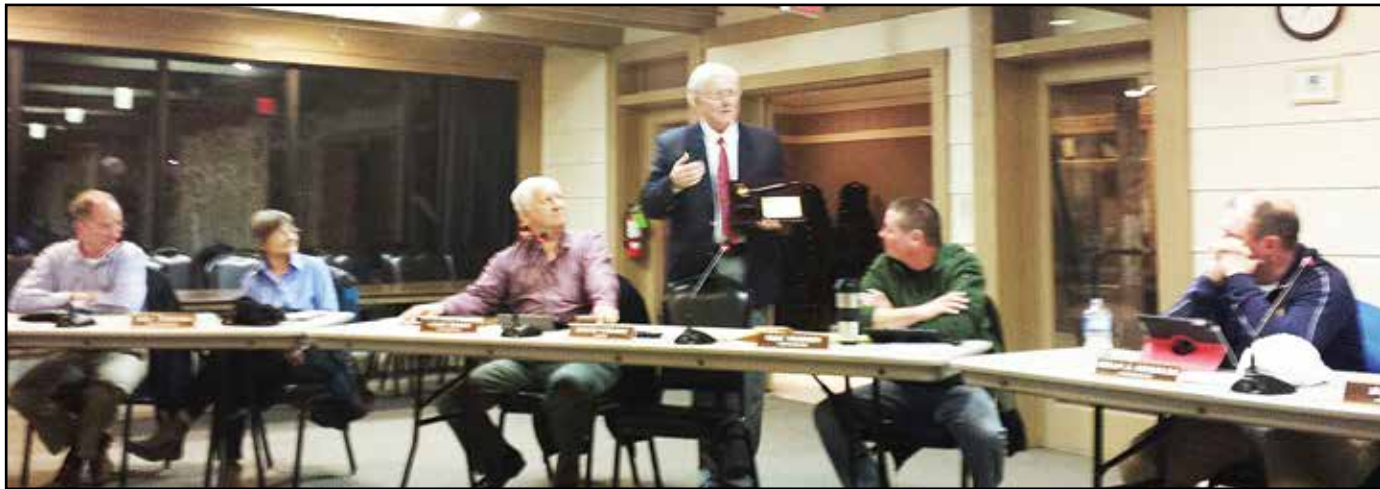


...SEATS continued from page 1

He thanked his supporters in the journey he is undertaking and all his well wishers.

He wanted to ensure everybody in town that as mayor he intends to represent everybody in the community. "I promise the citizens I will be available for their input anytime and will work with this new board to make the best decisions for all concerned," he said. "I realize the mayor doesn't have power, but does have the ability to work with the people and help come to a consensus to make the best decisions for Highlands."

• See SEAT page 4

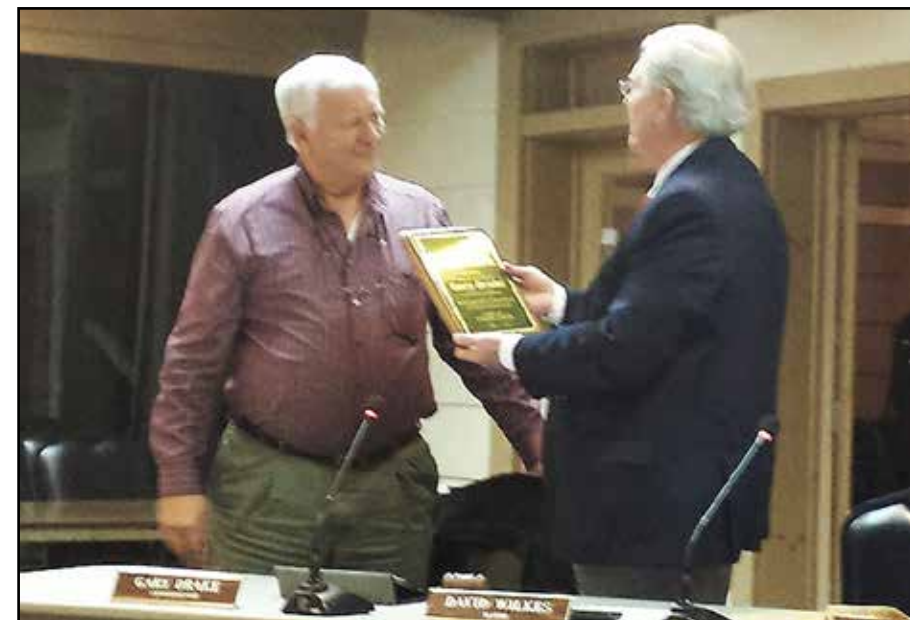


Mayor Wilkes said goodbye and thank you.

Photos by Kim Lewicki

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Outgoing Mayor David Wilkes presents outgoing commissioner Gary Drake with a plaque of appreciation for his service over the last four years.

...AAA CAROLINAS continued from page 2

cations were honored, including three Grand Winners (Topsail Beach, Laurinburg and Chapel Hill) during the 10th annual awards luncheon hosted by the AAA Carolinas' Foundation for Traffic Safety.

"The AAA Carolinas Foundation for Traffic Safety continues to tackle the deadly practice of texting while driving, especially among teen drivers, a group who has grown up continuously connected to cell phones and computers," said Angela Vogel Daley, president of AAA Carolinas Traffic Safety Foundation. "AAA Carolinas' goal is to create a culture change among teens concerning texting while driving."



The annual Traffic Safe Community Awards are presented in an effort to recognize those cities and towns offering programs and initiatives that make roads safer in the Carolinas.

Major Patricia Poole from the North Carolina State Highway Patrol and Bob Stevens from the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program honored local law enforcement and community representatives.

Traffic safe communities are selected by looking at crash statistics, number of law enforcement officers per capita and presence of formal traffic safety programs. 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.

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

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...SEATS continued from page 3

He also thanked Commissioner Brian Stiehler, who also ran for mayor, for reaching out to him after the campaign and said he looks forward to working with Brian over the next four years.

Finally, he thanked his father-in-law, Buck Trott who served as mayor for eight years.

"He is my mentor and said the mayor always has to think about what is best for the community and the common good of Highlands," he said.

He also thanked his wife Sallie for joining him in this journey and for all her love and support.

Clerk of Court Vic Perry who travelled to Highlands to swear in the new board members, said having worked with Pat Taylor in his capacity as Highlands Magistrate for more than 10 years, "the community couldn't have elected a more competent person in the role of mayor."

Before turning to new business, he asked Commissioner Donnie Calloway for comments.

Commissioner Calloway thanked his wife for her support as well as the Highlands Town staff for its support during the transition.

"After a 19 year hiatus I look forward to being a part of this board," he said.

As first note of new business, Mayor Patrick Taylor called for a vote to elect Mayor Pro Tem.

On a motion from Commissioner Amy Patterson, the board voted unanimously to elect Donnie Calloway.

Other Town Board News

Old business took place before the new board was seated.

Amendments to the Sign Ordinance were discussed during the Public Hearing.

Citizen Cynthia Strain went on record opposing the fact that the ordinance would not be amended to allow off-premise temporary event signs – an issue the board voted unanimously on during the November Town Board meeting.

"There are so many venues and so many people coming into town who don't know where to go and it's difficult directing people to an event. Why does this have to be so restrictive?" she asked.

She noted that plenty of other towns, including Cashiers, allow off-premise temporary event signs.

Mayor Wilkes reminded her that without a town government, Cashiers doesn't have any ordinances.

Strain said that's probably why citizens in Cashiers want to keep Cashiers the way it is.

The only changes to the Sign Ordinance

amendments presented were to their "change rate" on video presentations on flat screen TVs in real estate office windows.

Commissioner John Dotson, who owns Preferred Properties, said the video presentations would be a way to eliminate all the photos in real estate office windows, but that the rate at which the listings changed should be accelerated, otherwise people wouldn't stick around to watch it.

As per the ordinance, the change rate was to be the same rate as for restaurants – 10 seconds, or six frames per minute.

He reasoned that a restaurant menu offers a lot to read, whereas the real estate listings are basically a photo with minimal verbiage.

"Ten seconds is a long time to stand in front of a screen," he said.

In the end the board voted unanimously to make the real estate presentations six seconds – 10 frames a minute.

Restaurant video presentations, like outside Wolfgang's on Main Street, will stay at 10 second intervals or six frames per minute.

The next Town Board meeting is Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014.

– Kim Lewicki

...ZONING BOARD continued from page 1

retail spaces in the remainder of the building.

Wen Jiang and Qiong Zhi Chen (Chumsi), who will be opening Asian House in March or April of 2014, have been in the restaurant business for 15 years and currently operate the Sakura Japanese Restaurant in Franklin.

Asian House in Helen's Barn will serve Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese and Malaysian food. Some of its popular dishes will be Thai Red Curry Seafood, Peking Duck, General TSO Chicken, Vietnamese Summer Rolls, Chicken Broccoli and Sushi.

With its new configuration, Asian House can seat up to 90 people. Helen's Barn is zoned B-3 and is part of the Wright Memorial Square Development which constitutes a shopping center.

As such, the parking required is one space for each 250 sq. ft. of gross floor space; two spaces per dwelling unit.

The buildings in Wright Square proper equal 32,757 sq. ft. and at one parking space per each 250 sq. ft. require 131 spaces.

The 11 Wright Square apartments at two spaces per unit require 22 spaces.

• See ZONING BOARD page 6

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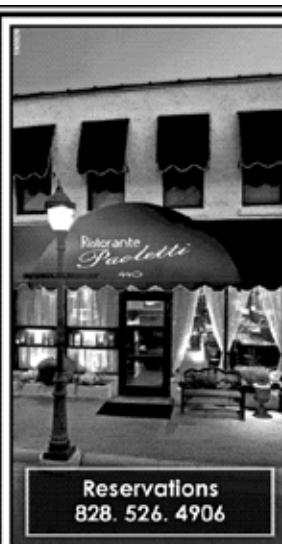
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...ZONING BOARD continued from page 4

There are 173 parking spaces on site with only 153 of them required so all parking requirements will be met, said Interim Town Planner Josh Ward.

Other Zoning Board Business

The board learned that as per NC GS House Bill 276, as of Oct. 1, 2013, votes granting Special Use Permits (SUP) no longer require a 4/5 super majority vote to pass.

Ward informed the board that the ruling took effect Oct. 1, but municipalities weren't notified of the change until Oct. 30, 2013.

Now, only a simple majority is needed to grant an SUP – a 3-2 vote for a five-member board.

However, a 4/5 super majority vote is still required to grant a variance, but there are changes to variance stipulations regarding “hardships” as well.

Instead of having to make three findings, which included five subheadings, to grant a variance, now there are only four provisions which must be proven.

When unnecessary hardships would result from carrying out the strict letter of the ordinance, the Zoning Board of Adjustment shall vary any of the provisions of the ordinance upon a showing of ALL of the following:

1. Unnecessary hardship would result from the strict application of the ordinance. It shall not be necessary to demonstrate that, in the absence of the variance, no reasonable use can be made of the property.

2. The hardship results from conditions that are peculiar to the property, such as location, size or topography. Hardships resulting from personal circumstances, as

well as hardships resulting from conditions that are common to the neighborhood or the general public, may not be the basis for granting a variance.

3. The hardship did not result from actions taken by the applicant or the property owner. The act of purchasing property with knowledge that circumstances exist that may justify the granting of a variance shall not be regarded as a self-created hardship.

4. The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose and intent of the ordinance, such that public safety is secured, and substantial justice is achieved. No change in permitted uses may be authorized by variance. Appropriate conditions may be imposed on any variance, provided that the conditions are reasonably related to the variance.

Though Ward said by their nature variances will continue to be hard to grant, the board seemed to think the changes would make it easier, particularly due to the verbiage in number 3.

Other changes include notification of SUP requestes and variance requests to adjacent property owners and posting of such on the property in question.

Also, previously applicants had 10 days to appeal a decision handed down by the planning departmet; now they have 30 days to appeal.

The Planning Board reviewed the state mandated changes whose recommendations will be sent to the Town Board. Before the town's ordinance is changed a public hearing will be scheduled.

– Kim Lewicki



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...CHANGES continued from page 1

anything going before the Zoning Board – whether an SUP or a variance – requires posting on the property and notification by letter to all adjacent property owners. (See story “Board hears NCGS changes to voting/variance procedures as per HB 276” on page 1)

The only change to the state-mandated verbiage the Planning Board is recom-

mending to the Town Board is under number 4 of the “hardship” clause for granting a variance. The board requested that the words “and the Land Use Plan” be included to read:

The requested variance is consistent with the spirit, purpose and intent of the

• See CHANGES page 15

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Highlands is inspiration for former Highlands commissioner's first novel

Former Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust executive director Mike Cavender has drawn on his Highlands conservation experience in writing his first novel, *Revenge on the Fly*, just published by CreateSpace.

Cavender's novel has drawn praise from Ron Rash, the best selling author of *Serena* and *The Cove*. Rash says, "Revenge on the Fly is a beautiful meditation on the ties that bind us to family and place. Michael Cavender is a gifted writer, an exciting new voice in North Carolina literature."

Cavender started *Revenge on the Fly* when he lived in Highlands and finished it this year in Washington, NC, where he and his wife, Paulette Webb, moved in 2006 to go sailing. They now live in Farrington Village, near Chapel Hill.

The novel's setting is a mountain resort town called Kelsey, which is similar to Highlands in many ways, and is nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

"I drew on many aspects of Highlands, but I wanted the freedom to create a place that suited the story's action," Cavender says. "After all, it's fiction." The novel also draws on his background as a newspaper reporter and fly-fishing guide.

The novel tells the story of dissolute outdoor writer Ben Phelps, who grasps the chance to avenge a life-ruining lie despite the human costs to a friend who holds the means for revenge, and to the woman whose love may reward his boldness.

Cavender elaborates: "Decades ago, Watt Phelps told a lie that drove his younger brother Ben into dark despair and disinheritance from a family fortune. When a pathway opens for overdue vengeance, retribution demands that Ben be willing to send his brother to prison, as well as the new friend who holds a secret that's the key to justice. The



pathway also opens Ben's heart to prove to a suspicious woman he's worthy of her trust and love. These converging challenges might save Ben's unknown legacy, the last old-growth forest in the Blue Ridge Mountains, from Watt's destruction, and restore a life tainted by his brother's duplicity. In *Revenge on the Fly*, Ben learns that his bitter perceptions of success and failure are only part of his life-long delusions, and that loving completely means risking

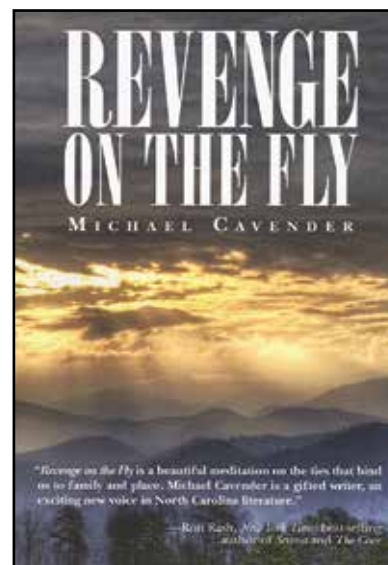
everything."

Cavender recalls, "Originally, I wanted to write a murder mystery about some siblings' conflict over the sale of a family estate. I was inspired by what I went through when our family house in Highlands (the old Farnsworth house on Main Street, now owned by Old Edwards Inn) was sold, although, fortunately, no one was killed. However, as I developed the novel, I became less interested in a murder plot and more interested in what happens to a character whose soul is shattered, and how he reacts when he has a chance for vengeance and redemption. As they say, character is action."

Kelsey is also the setting for his next novel, a crime thriller, which Cavender has just begun. "I hope I'll get this one written faster than my first."

For 18 years, Cavender and Webb ran The Mill Creek Store in Highlands. They sold men and women's sportswear, and had an Orvis dealership. Cavender taught fly fishing and was a fishing guide for many years. He was also a Highlands Town Board Commissioner.

Revenge on the Fly is available at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble.com.



...POOL continued from page 1

fees come out of the landfill's enterprise funds, but were concerned with the cost of transferring the load from Highlands to the Franklin landfill and suggested alternative options be considered first.

"We have made arrangements with the MC Landfill to take the debris," explained Highlands Mayor Patrick Taylor. "If the contractor wants to he can go somewhere else. As long as it is a legal site, they can do anything they want with it. It just needs to be an appropriate site according to regulations for the disposal of such things."

Commissioner Tate explained that after meeting with the project manager, the cost to haul the waste to Franklin was too great and a private option in Highlands seemed to be the more cost effective route.

Connor Construction, the company who was awarded the bid for the pool project, is subcontracting out the demolition of the pool.

Despite the setback on the removal of the concrete, Lester Norris, Highlands' Recreation Director, said the project is on schedule.

"The pool renovation has been talked about for a couple years now. The existing pool is 38 years old and has been repaired to the point it is no longer repairable," he explained. "The budget for the project was \$589,700 [that has since increased]. The renovations include a new junior Olympic (42 ft x 75ft) pool with depth from 3 1/2 ft to 8ft, a zero entry which also serves as a kiddie or wading pool. The bath house will get an electrical upgrade including wiring and lighting."

According to Norris, in addition to the upgrades to the pool, the facilities

infrastructure is also getting renovated. "Plumbing upgrades that will bring the pool house up to ADA [handicap] standards," said Norris. "The interior of the pool house will be painted. The pool offers outdoor recreation activity that is not available publicly to the citizens of Highlands. With the advancement of energy efficiency the new equipment: including pumps, heater, chlorine systems will offer money savings in the operation of the pool. The pool will be larger on surface but will no longer have the 12 ft. depth of the existing pool. Weather permitting, the pool is expected to be complete and ready for operation Memorial Day weekend 2014."

The opening of the Highlands pool is slated for one year after the Franklin pool opened after undergoing renovations. Macon County Commissioners voted to contribute \$225,000, which was originally half of the proposed budget. Currently, the pool project stands to cost \$785,000, resulting in an additional \$175,000 being appropriated from the town of Highlands' undesignated fund balance.

**Advertising in
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and on Highlandsinfo.com
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**For information, call
828-526-3228 or email
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CHRISTMAS {eve} service

CANDLE LIGHTING • CONGREGATIONAL SING
SPECIAL MESSAGE BY PASTOR GARY

Tues, Dec 24 @ 5 pm



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MON

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FOUR CHICKEN ENCHILADAS, REFRIED
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LETTUCE, TOMATOES, SOUR CREAM**

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APPLE AND BACON BAKED BEANS, AND
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HS BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL - 2013-'14

DAVIS MOORE, REMY ADRIAN, COLIN WELLER, TYLER MUNGER,
CHRIS BENTON, COLE DRUMMONDS, CADE BORDNER,
BRENT AMUNDRUD, JOHN MURPHY, PHILIP MURPHY, KENAN LEWIS
Coaches; Brad Bergman: Greg Steely, Andy Mille

Photos by Lisa Osteen

• EVENTS •

Ongoing

• They can't read or write... but they can multiply! Get your dog or cat fixed – the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society can help. CHHS offers low-cost spay/neuter for pets through our mobile medical/rescue vehicle, the H.E.A.R.T. of North Carolina. For more information, call 828-743-5752.

Mon/Wed/Fri

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at the Rec Park at 8 a.m. \$5 per class or monthly rate.
• Zumba at the Rec Park 9:05-10:05. \$5 per class or monthly rate.

Tues/Thurs

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers at 5:30.

Thurs., Dec. 19

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

Fr., Dec. 20

• The High Mountain Squares will host their Christmas Dance this Friday night at the Macon County Community Building, GA Road (441 South), Franklin NC from 6:30 to 9 PM. Richard Smith from Gainesville, GA will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-371-4946, 828-342-1560, 828-332-0001

Sat., Dec. 21

• Santa in Town Square to hear Christmas wishes from 11a to 3p.

Sun., Dec. 22

• Christmas Cantata at the 10:50 worship service at the Highlands United Methodist Church. All are welcome.

• A Coweeta Baptist Church, a Christmas Cantata by Tony Wood and Russell Mauldin. 7 p.m. 780 Coweeta Church Road.

Mon., Dec. 23

• Red Cross Blood Drive at Lowe's, 0717 Franklin Blood Drive (Georgia Highway); Franklin, NC, 11 am – 3:30 pm. Please call Stacy Lawson (828) 349-4654 for further information or to schedule an appointment.

Saturday, Dec. 28

• Red Cross Blood Drive at the Otto Community Blood Drive at the Otto Community Center - Meeting Room (Highway 441 South; Otto, NC) 8 am – 12:30 pm. Please call Phyllis Castle at (828) 524-3473 for further information or to schedule an appointment.

Wed., Dec. 25

• Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner is at the Hudson House at Highlands Country Club from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. by reservation only. The buffet dinner will feature turkey, ham, tenderloin, and all the sides including Donna Woods' now famous dressing and a dessert buffet is included. The cost is \$35 for adults and \$15 for children under 12. Kids under 5 are free. For reservations call 526-9419.



At Highlands School Homecoming game held at Blue Ridge School last week: Clockwise: Brent Amundrud, Remy Adrian and Kenan Lewis. Highlands won 61 to 40.

Photos by Lisa Osteen

Upcoming Games Thursday, Dec. 19

MS BASKETBALL AT SCOTTS CREEK
4PM

HS BASKETBALL HOME VS ANDREWS
6PM

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Sun 11-4, Closed Thanksgiving Day

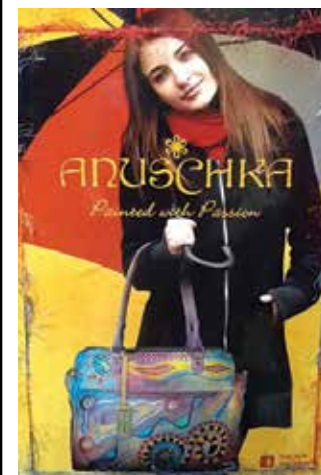
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HS VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL 2013'14

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REBEKAH PARKS.
EMILY SHULER,
APRIL MOSS,
ASHLEE MAITLAND,
KIRSTYN LAMB,
ANN MARIE CROWE,
JESSICA TILSON,
WHITNEY BILLINGSLEY,
COURTNEY HENRY,
EMILY CROWE,
BETHANY SHULER,
AMBER REESE,
EMILY MATHIS,
DANIELLE MATHIS,
BLAKELY MOORE

Coaches Brett Lamb,
Jeremy Dooley, Jerry Sullivan



HS CHEERLEADERS 2013-'14

VERONICA GARCIA,
GRACE BRASSARD,
SHANNON WELCH,
RACHEL FOSTER,
ADISON SCHANDOLPH,
ELIZABETH HOUSTON,
MCKINLEY MOSLEY,
ALEXA REESE,
MONTANA MCELROY,
CARRIE MCCLURE,
TASHA THURMOND,
ERICA BARNES,
KIM GRIFFIN

Coaches Andrea Chalker,
Stephanie Brassard

Photos by Lisa Osteen



At the Highlands School Homecoming game at Blue Ridge last week: Clockwise: Ann Marie Crowe, Kirsten Lamb, and Ashlee Maitland. Highlands won 52 to 29.

Photos by Lisa Osteen

Upcoming Games

Thursday, Dec. 19

MS BASKETBALL AT SCOTTS CREEK: 4PM

HS BASKETBALL HOME VS ANDREWS: 6PM

...CHANGES continued from page 7

Ordinance and the Land Use Plan, such that public safety is secured, and substantial justice is achieved. No change in permitted uses may be authorized by variance. Appropriate conditions may be imposed on any variance, provided that the conditions are reasonably related to the variance.”

The addition of the Land Use Plan verbiage was suggested by Planning Board Chairman Thomas Craig since the Land Use Plan is the foundation of many of the town’s ordinances and as such should be considered when issuing a variance, he said.

Ward said he will find out if the state’s verbiage can be altered and if so, the recommendation will be forwarded to the Town Board which will then set a public hearing to amend the UDO, as required.

The board also voted unanimously to rezone 19 town-owned properties to Governmental/Institutional (GI).

Most of the properties are very small and situated around the water plant, water tanks and tower sites and are zoned residential – R1 or R2.

Also included is the Highlands cemetery, the Greenway Trail entrance on Oak Lane, the Highlands Visitor Center and Chamber of Commerce and the Kelsey-Hutchinson Park.

Ward said this is a “house-keeping” projected that had been neglected.

Member Glenda Bell said as long as adjacent property owners do not mind she was for the rezoning. The board concurred.

Ward said that since this represented a rezoning, all the property would be posted and all adjacent property owners would be notified in advance so they would have time to respond.

– Kim Lewicki

Rotary 'gifts' HS teachers



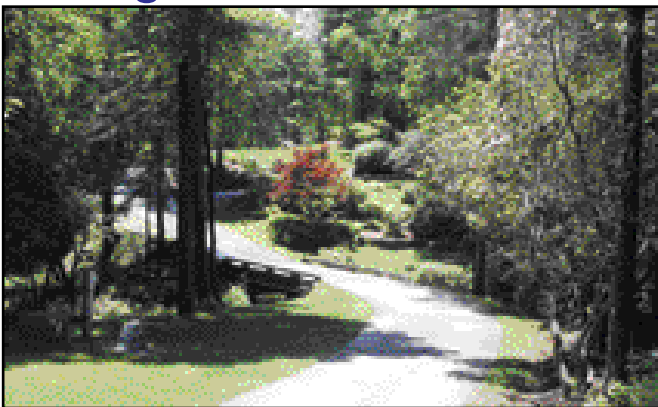
On December 11, the Rotary Club of Highlands presented \$100 to each teacher at Highlands School. The money can be used for classroom materials not furnished by the school or for any purpose that helps the teachers enrich the education of the students. Pictured are Rotary President Rick Reid (second from left) with several teachers and Rotary Club members Hank Ross, Cynthia Dendy and Dave Jellison.

Laurel Garden Club installs new officers for 2014

At its regular meeting on December 2nd, 2014 Laurel Garden Club members congratulated their new officers: (left to right) Jane Webb La Cagnina, 1st VP/Program Co-Chair; Minnie Bob Campbell, Recording Secretary; Lila Howland, President; Margo Franklin, Treasurer; Brenda Manning, 2nd VP/Membership; Jane Tracy, Corresponding Secretary; and Mary Guy Gunn, 1st VP/Program Co-Chair. These officers will assume their roles January 1, 2014.

The purpose of Laurel Garden Club is to aid in the protection and conservation of our natural resources, encourage civic beauty and roadside beautification, stimulate the fine art of gardening and enable cooperation with other organizations furthering the interest of horticulture and conservation. With the funds raised from our kitchen tour we donate money in response to grant requests made twice a year: By June 30th and by January 31st. We are always happy to return the money to the many deserving non profits in our Highlands community.

Falling Waters is a 52-acre community



A peaceful sanctuary tucked in the mountains just 2.8 miles from Main Street, Highlands, NC. Secluded but not remote. Well forested with mature hardwoods, Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel and wild flowers that take turns showing off through the seasons; two waterfalls & several creeks. Gentle land, easy building sites, and a great place to take a walk.

Falling Waters is protected by the North Carolina Planned Community Act and our own covenants designed to enhance your enjoyment and future property values. Owner financing available.

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HS BOYS MIDDLE SCHOOL BASKETBALL

DREW CHALKER,
JOSE JEMINEZ
KYLE DORSEY,
ETHAN CRISP,
CARSON TALBERT,
MATTSO GATES,
DESTIN GEARHART,
TREY GERRELS,
SAMUEL HAWKINS,
JAKE BILLINGSLEY

Coaches:
Bryan Dearth
Ryan Gearhart



HS MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL

MADISON LLOYD,
TAYLOR WELCH,
BRITTANY CHASTAIN,
KIM FERIA,
ABBY OLVERA,
HANNAH HOLT, GRACE
CROWE,
DAWN DEARTH,
TRISTAN CASTRO,
KATIE MCCALL
Coach:
Michelle Munger



• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Blue Christmas



Chaplain Margaret Howell
Holy Family Lutheran Church

OK. Anyone who has experienced stress, fatigue and sadness during the Christmas season, raise your hand. Uh-HUH! I'm betting most of us raised our hand, if not this year, at some time in the past.

Sometimes, it is difficult to find the baby Jesus under all the wrappings and trappings of the "holiday" season, pounded relentlessly into our psyche from the day after Halloween until Christmas.

If you've been around the block a time or two, Christmas can be a bittersweet time. We count our blessings and are thankful for what we have, but we also think back to times and people, gone by.

I remember when we were first married, my husband Jon had a hard time with Christmas as he was still mourning the death of his dad and brother who had passed away just a few years before.

Even if your Christmases past resemble the Griswolds more than the Norman Rockwell type, it is that gathering of family, warts and all, that have a permanent place in our hearts. We can't help but remember. That is a blessing and a source of melancholy. How appropriate that the liturgical color for Advent is blue.

We are presently beginning the final week of Advent. For those who don't know, it is the period after the season of Pentecost but before Christmas. It is meant to be a time of anticipating not only the coming birth of Jesus, the babe in the manger, but also the coming of Christ, the King, at the end of the world.

Advent is a time of secrets and mystery. A poor girl-child in a remote country says "Yes" to the invitation brought by angel from God to have the holy child. The next nine months weren't easy for her or her betrothed, Joseph. Probably a lot of snickering and finger-pointing went on behind their backs yet, both were faithful in carrying out the task set before them.

The first Advent was undoubtedly a time of anticipation, and worry. To add insult to injury, the young couple realized that they would have to make a long journey right at the time Mary was due to give birth. (Try riding a bony-backed donkey while nine months pregnant and see how cheerful you are at the end of the trip!)

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 21

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP • John 3:16

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
828-269-3546
Rev. Jamie Passmore, Pastor
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS
Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship
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Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm
Catered dinner - Wed. 6pm

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

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH
Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011
464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers
Sun.: Chirstian Education, 9 a.m.(Bucks in Cashiers) Family
Worship with music and Communion, 10:30 a.m.
Mon.: Bible Study & Supper at homes - 6 p.m.
Wed.: Men's Bible Study -8:30 a.m., First Baptist Church

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS
Pastor Steve Kerhoulas
Sun.10:45am, S.S 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.
Tue. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

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.: 9:30am: Sunday School
10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Children's Program.

10: 45am: Worship Service
Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC University

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION
Rev. Bruce Walker • 526-2968
Sundays: Holy Eucharist Rite I (chapel), 8 am, Education and
choir rehearsal, 9 am, Holy Eucharist Rite II, (sanctuary), 10:30
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist, (chapel), 10 am

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Dr. Mark Ford, 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.; 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

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. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)
Sunday: Morning Worship 10:45 a., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.
Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Pastor Paul Christy 526-3376
Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 9:09 & 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.
Wed: Supper; 6; 7:15 – children, youth, & adults studies; 6:15 –
Adult choir (nursery provided for Wed. p.m. activities)
Thurs:12:30 – Women's Bible Study (nursery)

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

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

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

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

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

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH
743-2583
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.

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS CATHOLIC CHURCH
Parish office: 526-2418
Mass: – Sun: 10:30 a.m.; Thurs & Fri: 9 a.; Sat., 4p

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

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP
85 Sierra Drive • 828-524-6777
Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.
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5 pm a Family-Friendly Service

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11pm a Candlelight Service

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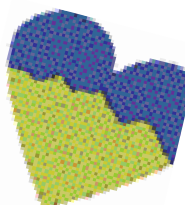


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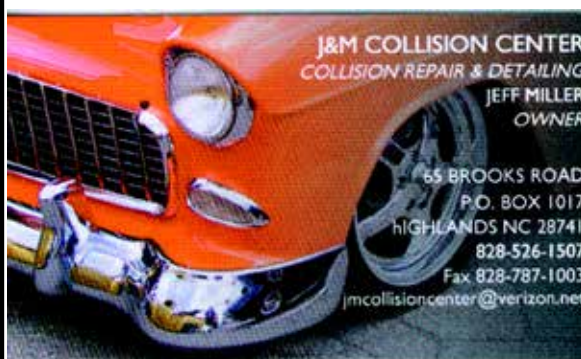
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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands PD log entries from Nov. 29. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.

Nov. 29

• At 7 a.m., Chanel Massagee, 35, of Franklin, was arrested on Main Street for possession of 0.5 grams of meth and for possessing drug paraphernalia. She was issued a \$1,000 secured bond. Her trial date was Dec. 12, 2013.

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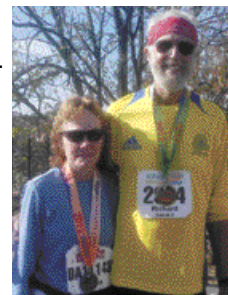
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• At 10:55 a.m., officers were called to Main Street concerning someone selling puppies.

Dec. 2

• At 11:53 p.m., Mary Alice Bynum, 56, of Highlands, was arrested for DWI when she was pulled over on NC 106 for driving left of center. She was issued a written promise to appear in court on Jan. 15, 2014.

Dec. 3

• At 10:23 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Lower Lake Road.

• At 11:06 p.m., Kristof Leon Roulf, 41, of Highlands, was arrested for DWI and resisting arrest and reckless driving when he was pulled over on N. 6th Street and Lower Lake Road. He was issued a \$3,000 secured bond. His trial date is Jan. 15, 2014.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Dec. 12

Dec. 12

• At 1:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falls Drive west. It was false.

Dec. 13

• At 8:13 p.m., the dept made a service call to a residence on Holly Berry Lane where hot ashes had been put in a flower bed. All was OK.

Dec. 14

• At 5:54 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Hickory Hill Road. The residents had forgotten to open the damper in the fireplace prior to starting a fire.

Dec. 16

• At 6:48 p.m., the dept. responded to a one-vehicle accident on US 64 east. The driver drove into a fence. There were no injuries.

Dec. 17

• 8 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Ravenel Ridge Road. EMS transported to the hospital.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 18

The final straw was to get the Bethlehem and have the innkeeper tell you. "Sorry, we are full up. Even God himself couldn't get a room tonight!" Nothing seemed to be going right for Mary and Joseph.

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So, my dear ones, if you are having a blue Christmas, remember how much trouble the Holy Couple faced at their first Christmas, and how they saw the promise of joy fulfilled before their very eyes. May the anticipation of the coming of Christ bring you a Merry Christmas, indeed.

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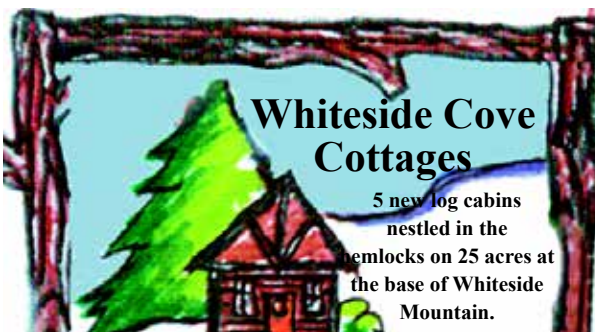
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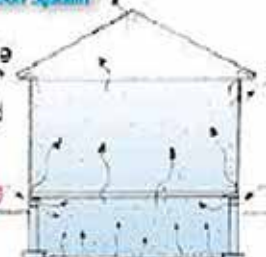
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