

# Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 11, Number 49

Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com

Thursday, Dec. 5, 2013

Thurs., Dec. 5

- The Highlands Emergency Council Christmas Gift Program for Children final signups are from 10: a.m. to 6: p.m. at the highlands Emergency Council Building located at 71 Poplar Street. Signs ups must be in person. Please, no phone calls.

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

Sat., Dec. 7

- Town of Highlands Christmas Parade at 11 a.m.

- Santa in Town Square to hear Christmas wishes after the Parade.

- Highlands Nature Center special afternoon of winter natural history fun and learning. This free event will have activities for all ages from 1-3:30pm followed by a lecture for mature audiences at 4 pm by James Moore on Darwin's 'Sacred Cause.'

- Annual carol-sing at First Presbyterian Church after the parade at 2 p.m. The church is on the corner of Main and 5th streets.

Tues., Dec. 10

- Student Research Presentations at the Highlands Biological Station, 2-5pm in the Coker Laboratory at Highlands Biological Station, 265 North Sixth Street. The event is free. Hear students present their semester research on topics relevant to the southern Appalachians. These research projects are the result of collaborations between the Station and other conservation organizations.

## Coalition to begin work on K-H Park

By Skip Taylor

A half dozen local community organizations are coming together to make the tract now known as Kelsey-Hutchinson Park into...well, a real park.

The third of an acre tract

at the corner of Fifth and Pine Streets, initially known as Pine Street Park, has been used for isolated events over the last eight years, but aside from a temporary pavilion, and most recently a new sign, it lacks any facilities.

The park, which was purchased in 2006 for nearly \$760,000, much of it raised through donations, is owned by The Town of Highlands.

•See K-H Park page 6

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## The Olde Mountain Christmas Parade is Sat.



Highlands' annual parade will be held rain or shine on Main Street beginning at 11 a.m. There are 52 entries including floats, vehicles, "walkers" and lots of entertainment.

Photo by Jim Lewicki

## Franklin native to be youngest county manager in county's history

By Brittany Burns

As soon as long-time Macon County Manager Jack Horton announced his retirement in July, the Macon County Board of Commissioners got to work searching for his replacement.

The interviewing process, which took three months to narrow down and involved sifting

through 38 applications, ended last Tuesday when commissioners unanimously voted to hire Franklin native Derek Roland as the next county manager.

At 28 years old, Derek Roland is the youngest manager in the county's history.

According to Interim County Manager Mike Decker, the man-

ager next closest in age would be Mike Carpenter who would have been 34 years old when he was selected as county manager in June of 1995.

"Being selected as county manager is truly a blessing and like all blessings I give thanks to

•See COUNTY MANAGER page 8

## Student safety on BOE's mind

By Brittany Burns

Members of the Board of Education met at Nantahala School Monday night for their December meeting.

Concerned with student safety, board of education staff attorney John Henning Sr., brought a policy regarding the use of school owned All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) by students to the attention of the board.

Recently, Buncombe County Schools adopted a policy completely prohibiting the use of ATVs by students after a student driver accidentally struck and killed another student on campus. Henning Sr. informed school board members that in order to make sure students are safe, a policy needs to be developed either prohibiting the use of student vehicles, or limiting the use based on rules set forth by the board.

ATVs, or more commonly

•See SAFETY page 7

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • FORUM •

### NC website brings political campaigns back to the community

*Restore NC aims to create existing support networks for citizens to step into local races*

RALEIGH, NC In today's post CitizensUnited political world, with money flying into elections from every corporation, super PAC and activist organization, it's easy to forget a simple fact: elections are won by people.

Restore NC, a political site launched by a group of local political activists, aims to put the power to run and campaign back in the hands of local political advocates and candidates. The site allows visitors to sign up to volunteer to support candidates in their districts and helps potential candidates to jump into races with an already existing foundation for a campaign.

The site was launched earlier in this year in response to the national discussion about North Carolina's perceived extreme Tea Party representation and the anticipation of millions of dollars from super PAC money that would be funneled in for the 2014 elections.

"Our goal is to make it easier for people to decide that they want to be an active part of their local elections, and then allow candidates to actually utilize their support," said Jerimee Richir, principal at online engagement firm Richir Outreach and one of the creators of Restore NC. "Funding is important, but it doesn't replace the actual manpower needed to run a successful campaign."

Anyone living in any of North Carolina's 50 Senate districts or 120 House districts can sign up to stay up to date about district race information, or pledge to help out any challenger that decides to throw their hat in the ring. The list of volunteers that will be created helps give people considering a run for state office a clearer idea of where their campaign base would come from.

Candidates, particularly those running for the more obscure seats in the North Carolina General

• See FORUM page 3

## • LETTERS •

### Socialism or caring for the poor, the marginalized or the alien?

Dear Editor,

Father Jim Murphy wrote in his Spiritually Speaking article in the Nov 14 issue of your newspaper, "In light of the decidedly socialistic trajectory being imposed on our nation...I was persuaded that Jesus would find the idea of imposed socialism repugnant." He cited several verses from Matthew and John to support his conclusion.

I remember only two times that Jesus addressed political government: Matthew 17:24-27 and Matthew 22:17-22. In both instances, Jesus advocated paying taxes to the government, and offered no criticism of the ruling authorities.

On the other hand, the four gospels

report a number of instances when Jesus criticized the religious authorities and leaders of his day; usually for failing to follow God's will of just actions and care for the poor. His clear instructions to his followers, on numerous occasions, were to care for the poor, the marginalized, and the alien and to work for justice.

Most biblical scholars believe that Acts was written by the author of Luke, probably within 60 years of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Acts 5:32-35 reports: "The whole body of believers was united in heart and soul. Not a man of them claimed any of his possessions as his own, but everything was held in common...They were all held

in high esteem: for they had never a needy person among them, because all who had property in land or houses sold it, brought the proceeds of the sale, and laid the money at the feet of the apostles; it was then distributed to any who stood in need." (New English Bible)

These followers of Christ were not parsing scripture that was written thousands of years before; they were living the way that they believed Christ called them to live as they remembered his words, or as his words had been reported to them by family members and/or trusted friends.

Webster's defines socialism as: "A social system in which the means of producing and distributing goods are owned collectively and political power is exercised by the whole community." That sounds, to me, a good deal like what the early Christians were practicing. I agree with Father Murphy that this way of living was not imposed by any government — it was freely chosen by the followers.

However, I live in a country that was founded on democratic principles, which means that I, as a voter, need to be conscious of my profession as a follower of Christ, of how the activities of my government reflects or denies the principles of Christianity. Or, if I separate my faith from any of my interests and activities am I not practicing hypocrisy? I wonder how many professing Christians would be living like the early Christians if we truly believed, as they did, that Jesus was returning SOON?

I can understand an atheist or agnostic advocating separation of Christian principles from government policy and practice, but it is surprising to me for an Anglican Cleric to do so.

Gayle Byrne  
Dillard, GA

### About Democrats standing behind their man

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to Fred Wooldridge's letter in the Nov. 27 edition.

Not to worry — the majority of Democrats have not abandoned our President. Those few defectors you may have heard about are in the "swing" section and not true Democrats. You probably have a few of those in your own party

• See LETTERS page 3

## 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

who refused to stand with George Bush in his final years in office. So, think nothing of it— most of us are going “down with the ship,” as you suggest, or, along with our President, up to a different level of consciousness— whichever you prefer.

**Betty Holt**  
Highlands, NC

## It's time to rethink the landfill business

Dear Editor,

I read with much interest the article in the 11/27 edition of the Highlands Newspaper concerning the county landfill.

Starting last spring we seriously began recycling and quickly noticed how much our volume of actual garbage decreased. Although we get two garbage collections a week, we now find it only necessary to take the garbage can to the street once a week, and sometimes, every two weeks.

Since many of our friends and neighbors still live or have lived in other places, we inquired of them as to the number of garbage pickups they enjoyed elsewhere. Almost all only had one pickup per week, which they considered adequate.

Now I have several questions.

1. Could we do more to encourage folks to recycle? If so,
2. Are our current recycling efforts profitable and helpful to the county's garbage disposal efforts?
3. Do we really need two garbage

pickups each week?

4. Have there been any thoughts given to harvesting the methane gas produced in our existing landfill and using it to incinerate the garbage? A number of cities do this and even use the heat generated by the burning garbage to produce electricity.

If the future cost estimates for whichever disposal scheme selected are accurate, I can only imagine what our garbage fees and county taxes will be in a few years.

I urge our Town and County Officials to explore the latest garbage disposal technology before we are knee deep in garbage like some third world country.

**Charles Wolf**  
Highlands

## ...FORUM continued from page 2

Assembly, often have trouble finding national and state party support. Though political parties are raising more money than ever, more and more of those funds are being funneled to the handful of high-profile, competitive races that garner a disproportionate share of media attention. Smaller races, particularly those that seem like a lost cause, are often sidelined.

Restore NC is an attempt to allow grassroots support to begin building up in areas that have the potential to be tossup races, but aren't seen as vital enough to get the critical support needed from party officials.

“Ultimately, we're giving people the

tools to say, ‘Hey, this race matters to me, and I'm either going to run or I'm going to help out whoever runs,’” said Richir. “We're bringing campaigns home.”

• RestoreNC is a political website dedicated to create networks of volunteers and building information for challengers. For more information, visit [www.restorenc.org](http://www.restorenc.org) or email [50and120@gmail.com](mailto:50and120@gmail.com).

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## • OBITUARY •

### Elizabeth “Beth” Wright Buck

Elizabeth “Beth” Wright Buck, age 58, of Highlands, NC, died Tuesday, November 26, 2013. She was born in Dade County, FL the daughter of the late George Walker Wright, Jr. and Eugenia Elizabeth Gaillard Wright. She was married to David John Buck, who died in 2010. She was a member of First Presbyterian Church of Highlands.



McDonald and Amanda Wright; two grandchildren, Allison Walker Buck and Jonathan David Carpenter.

Funeral services were held Sunday, December 1st at 3pm at First Presbyterian Church of Highlands with Rev. Dr. Lee W. Bowman officiating.

Burial was in Highlands Memorial Park Cemetery. Memorials may be made to First Presbyterian Church of Highlands, 471 Main Street, Highlands, NC

28741.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).

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# • BUSINESS/ORG. NEWS •

## Physician Practices to Change Office Locations within the Jane Woodruff Clinic at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.

Effective December 9th, the offices of Board Certified Physicians, Dr. Julie A. Farrow, Gynecologist and Dr. Bayard Miller, Neurologist will relocate from the second to the third level of the Jane Woodruff

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Clinic, practicing in Suite 304. The office of Board Certified Primary Care Physician, Dr. J. Scott Baker, will relocate from the third to the second level of the Jane Woodruff Clinic, practicing in Suite 203. These practices will retain their same telephone numbers, office hours and offered services.

"This office move is designed to enhance our patients' experiences through added convenience and improved service," said Victoria Weingart, HCH's Physician Practice Administrator. "The move will enable us to use a consolidated, cross trained model for the office staff, allowing quicker access for patients, efficient scheduling for physician appointments, as well as accommodating the growth and technology needs of the practices." For more information please call HCH's Physician Services at (828) 526-1DOC (526-1362).

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## Town of Highlands Notice of Public Hearing

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held by the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners at the Highlands Community Building, 71 Poplar Street, on the 12th day of December, 2013 beginning at 7:00pm, for proposed amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance regarding sign standards.

All interested residents/citizens are encouraged to attend. Copies of the proposed amendment are on file in the Town Clerk's office at Town Hall, 210 N. 4th Street for inspection by all between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm Monday through Friday.

Rebecca R. Shuler, CMC, NCCMC  
Town Clerk



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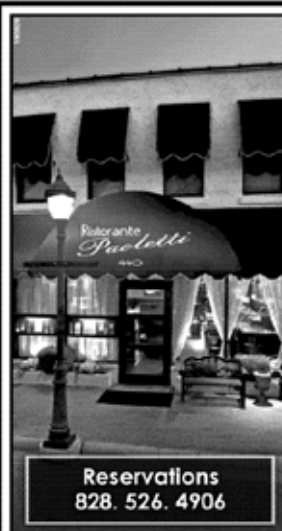


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## ...K-H PARK continued from page 1

“The park could be so much more than it is right now if we will come together as a community and make it a place that people want to use day in and day out -- to have picnics, to play with their kids, or just to sit and relax during the lunch hour,” said Nick Bazan, who is heading up what’s being called the Founders Park Coalition. “We want to make Kelsey-Hutchinson Park a place that people will really want to use.”

Initially, the coalition is made up of both local Rotary Clubs, the Laurel Garden Club, the Mountain Garden Club, the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, the Highlands Plateau Greenway, and the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society. “We hope that other groups will join in the effort,” Bazan added. “We are looking not only for fundraising from these groups, but also for volunteer labor. We plan on organizing work days and completing those items that volunteers can handle.”

The group hopes to follow a design developed by local landscape architect Hank Ross, of Ross Landscape Architecture of Highlands, in conjunction with what was formerly known as the Pine Street Park Committee. While that latest plan has previously been approved by various town entities, although to what extent is unclear, Bazan says the group intends to ask the town to re-approve the plan as it currently exists. “It’s a good plan that creates a park which will allow for a wide variety of uses. A lot of work has gone into this plan by a number of people over nearly eight years, especially by Hank who donated all of his time,” he said. “We think it’s a very good starting point and we should move forward with it.”

The group met with the town’s Recreation Committee Wednesday morning to introduce itself and re-familiarize committee members with the latest design.

In addition to picnic tables, walkways, a new larger pavilion, benches, a monument to the town’s founders Samuel T. Kelsey and Clinton Carter Hutchinson, the latest plan calls for public restrooms to serve that end of town and also raising Pine Street up to the level of the grassed area of the park. Rough projections suggest it would cost around \$350,000 to complete the park. However, Bazan pointed out that that estimate is based on contracting for all of the work to be done.

“We hope to complete most of the park through contributions and volunteer labor from the community,” he added. “We realize that this is most likely going



# ...SAFETY continued from page 1

known as Gators, are used at various schools in the district for a number of activities. The Franklin High School band allows students to drive the Gator to haul band equipment for practices and performances and Macon Middle School allows Franklin High School students to drive the Gator during baseball season to haul equipment. While FHS Band Director Buddy Huckabee has established a policy restricting who can drive the ATV, the district as a whole lacks a policy.

Board of Education Chairman Jim Breedlove and Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin spoke to the importance of protecting students and suggested the board move to prohibit student use of the vehicles entirely.

Board member Stephanie McCall expressed concern about the educational and life experience students gain through operating the ATVs. "I just hate to let one incident dictate an entire policy and decision that would affect other students," said McCall. "I think a lot of students get a lot of experience and really enjoy the opportunity to be able to operate the vehicles."

Agreeing with McCall, Dr. Baldwin but added that the overall safety of the students needed to be considered. "We

have to remember that schools like Franklin High School are unique and there is a road that runs through the campus that generates a lot of traffic," he said. "I think safety should remain our focus."

Baldwin and Breedlove suggested the board direct Henning Sr. to develop a policy similar to that of Buncombe County. Buncombe County's policy states, "Students are prohibited from driving board owned vehicles/motorized equipment unless the student's operation of the vehicle/motorized equipment is identified within a course curriculum approved by the State. A pre-requisite component of the curriculum prior to operation will consist of instruction in the safe operation of the vehicle/motorized equipment by the student. Board owned vehicles/motorized equipment that are not associated with a State approved curriculum are to be operated solely by Buncombe County School employees or system approved adult volunteers. Operation is contingent upon the employee or adult volunteer possessing the correct license per State law."

McCall agreed with the decision to prohibit the student operation of ATVs entirely and the board unanimously agreed

• See SAFETY page 9



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**A Variety of  
Fresh Salads!**



### House Specialties *Calzone & Lasagna*



**Last Tuesday, Franklin native Derek Roland was hired as the next Macon County Manager. He is pictured with commissioners Ron Haven, Ronnie Beale, Kevin Corbin, Jim Tate and Paul Higdon.**  
Photo by Brittany Burns

God and acknowledge without him none of this would have been possible," said Roland. "I am honored to work alongside the best employees anywhere in the state of North Carolina, who have shown me what it means to be a public servant. Furthermore, I am honored to serve at the direction of a commission which I know beyond the shadow of a doubt has Macon County's best interests at heart."

Each commissioner took time during the continuation meeting to explain their decision in hiring Roland, most of which involved recognizing Roland's knowledge of Macon County and its citizens.

"Having known Derek for a long time, I am proud of the man he has become and the county manager he will become," said Commissioner Ronnie Beale.

A native of Franklin, after graduating from Franklin High School in 2003, Roland attended Western Carolina University, where he graduated in 2007 with a B.S. degree in Business Administration and Law. Later this month Roland is set to graduate from WCU with 4.0 GPA and a Masters degree in Public Administration.

Roland began his professional career with Unique Properties where he worked as a licensed North Carolina Real Estate Broker. From March 2009-March 2012, Roland worked for Macon County as the County Planner, and since April of 2012, Roland has served as the Land Use Administrator for the Town of Franklin.

Commissioners cited Roland's dual experience in both county and town government as being invaluable resources as the county's next leader.

Grateful and humbled by the opportu-

nity to serve Macon County, Roland hopes to make a difference in the community he grew up in. "More than anything, county manager allows me to give something back to the people of Macon County who have given me so much," said Roland.

While Roland's general knowledge of county and town government were considered pros for commissioners while deciding on the next manager, Roland's lack of familiarity with the direct post as manager was concerning. Grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow in the position as county manager, Roland plans to tackle the commissioners' concern.

"I have already spoke to Jack [Horton] and he told me that he would be happy to work with me as sort of a mentor during this journey," said Roland. "I am blessed to be joining a team of individuals that are very knowledgeable and understand this organization inside and out. These are the people that I want to 'be in the foxhole with' as I know they will have my back no matter what. I will always go to bat for them, and it is my main objective to prove to them that they can rely on me. Together, we will be faced with many tough issues, I hope the respect and confidence I place in these individuals will illustrate more than anything the trust I have for them. In return, all I can ask for is this trust to be reciprocated. This trust will only come with time, and again it will be this earned trust that will allow me to lead this organization effectively."

Macon County Commissioner Jimmy Tate cited concern with Roland being able to handle the pressure brought on by the

• See COUNTY MANAGER page 9



## ...SAFETY continued from page 7

for Henning Sr. to develop a policy to be reviewed next month.

### Concussion Policy

Henning Sr. also brought a new Concussion Policy before the board for consideration. While Breedlove informed the board the district is already adhering to the items in the policy; in order to be in compliance with state law, a formal policy needed to be adopted.

The concussion policy, which was adopted under first reading Monday night, requires all parents, coaches and student

athletes to be given a concussion information form before being allowed to participate in school sports. The policy also states that the district as a whole be required to develop a record keeping system for such injuries, documenting any suspected case. In the event a student is suspected of experiencing a concussion, the policy mandates the student must be taken out of play until appropriate evaluations can be made.

Citing the importance of swift treatment in the event of a concussion, the policy states the district should create an Emergency Action plan. "Each principal or designee shall develop a venue-specific emergency action plan to respond to se-

rious medical injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the injured student may deteriorate rapidly. All such plans must include a delineation of roles, methods of communication, available emergency equipment, and a plan for emergency transport. The plans must be (1) in writing, (2) reviewed by an athletic trainer who is licensed in North Carolina, (3) approved by the principal if developed by a designee, (4) distributed, posted, reviewed, and rehearsed in accordance with G.S. 115C-12(23), and (5) compliant with any other requirements of state law and State Board policy."

With minor corrections and clarifications being suggested Monday night, the

board is expected to fully adopt the policy next month.

### QZAB BONDS

Dr. Baldwin also informed the board Monday night that QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds) funds were available in the state that could be used for renovation projects in the district.

QZAB is a pocket of state monies that are designated for school maintenance and renovations to be paid back at little or no interest. Historically, the county has utilized these funds when making needed renovations to East Franklin Elementary and most recently used the \$1.5 million to renovate and improve the Highlands

• See SAFETY page 16

## ...COUNTY MANAGER from 8

budget process each year. Agreeing that he doesn't have the experience Horton had, Roland doesn't plan to let it stop him.

"Undoubtedly there will be a learning curve, and I will work day in and day out to get on top of it. I will view the budget with objectivity, as this is what holds each department within the organization accountable to the governing board as well as the citizens of Macon County. At the end of the day I will ensure that the budget I present to the board is representative of a government that is functioning efficiently and effectively, providing citizens with the services they expect at the best price tag possible," he said.

While commissioners expressed concern regarding Roland's lack of experience as manager, Roland views his greatest challenge as proving himself to the community.

"I feel that my greatest challenge will be proving myself to the citizens and employees of Macon County," said Roland. "This will take hard work and that is something I have never been scared of. My work ethic and dedication to the citizens of Macon County will allow me to overcome this challenge. County Manager for Macon County is not a stepping stone for me in my career. It is my final destination. In order to continue to serve in this position, I understand that I must prove myself day in and day out. I am committed 110 percent to doing this."

With a beginning salary of \$100,000 as well as a \$500 a month travel allowance, Roland is set to take on the role of

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# HIGHLANDS AREA UPCOMING EVENTS •

## Thurs., Fri., Sat., Sun. through Dec. 22

• The movie *Hunger Games: Catching Fire* at The Highlands Playhouse. Showings are Thurs.-Sun., 4 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$8. Call 828-526-2695 for advance tickets.

### Mon/Thurs.

• Hatha Yoga. 10:45a at the Episcopal Church. 828-482-2128. RYT, YA

### Wed.

• Hatha Daybreak Yoga. 7:45a. Coleman Hall in the First Presbyterian Church. 828-482-

2128. RYT, YA.

### Thurs., Dec. 5

• The Highlands Emergency Council Christmas Gift Program for Children final signups will be December 4 from 10: a.m. to 6 p.m. and December 5 from 10: a.m. to 6: p.m. at the Highlands Emergency Council Building located at 71 Poplar Street. Signs ups must be in person. Please, no phone calls.

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

### Friday, Dec. 6

• The Nichols Center brings

a Celtic Christmas to Rabun on Friday at 7 pm. Get in the spirit of the season with The Caledonia Swing Band and Friends. They will perform traditional and contemporary holiday music from Ireland and Scotland. The Nichols Center is behind Blue Ridge Music at 629 Duggan Hill Drive in Clayton, GA. Admission is \$10. For more information contact Blue Ridge Music at 706/782-9852. A portion of the profit from these performances is donated to the Southern Highland Music Foundation.

## Saturdays, Dec. 6 & 13

• The Franklin Chamber of Commerce will host Franklin's 1st Annual Gingerbread House Competition. The competition will be an added feature of Franklin's Winter Wonderland Celebration December 6 and 13 from 5pm until 9 pm. The gingerbread creations will be located in the Board Room at Franklin's Town Hall (lower level) on Main Street.

### Sat., Dec. 7

• Town of Highlands Christmas Parade at 11 a.m.

• Santa in Town Square to hear Christmas wishes after the Parade.

• Highlands Nature Center will open for a special afternoon of winter natural history fun and learning. This free event will have activities for all ages from 1-3:30pm followed by a lecture for mature audiences at 4 pm by James Moore on Darwin's 'Sacred Cause.'

• Annual carol-sing at First Presbyterian Church after the parade at 2 p.m. The church is on the corner of Main and 5th

## Mountain Garden Club is ready for the parade



**Mountain Garden Club dancers in the 2009 Olde Mountain Christmas Parade. Photo by Bob Williard.**

Keeping with tradition, Mountain Garden Club members have created a new dance routine and costumes for the Highlands Olde Mountain Christmas Parade on December 7.

This will be the 16th year the club has participated in the parade.

"We're dedicating our dance this year to Linda Shearon," said Dr. Becky Schilling. "Linda has been one of our main choreographers for years. She's

the one who choreographed our iconic 'Feliz Navidad' dance in 2009. We look forward to having her dance with us again when she recovers from knee surgery."

Lead choreographer for this year's dance was Mary Lou Bilbro, assisted by Schilling. In addition, Bilbro provided the costume concept and collaborated with Barbara Werder, Midge Rothermel and several club members to create costumes for the 30-plus members participating in the parade.

Ginny Dunwody created props for this year's theme, which remains a closely-guarded secret.

"It's going to be a really big show!" said Bilbro.

The club plans to perform at four locations on Main Street—near the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, Highlands Inn, Scudder's, and Main Street Inn.

The Mountain Garden Club wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and the happiest of holidays.

## HCP's annual free Christmas reading is Thurs., Dec., 12



**Vangie Rich and Wayne Coleman rehearse the new song written by Highlands resident Betty Holt that they will sing in HCP's Holiday Program, Thursday evening, December 12, 7:30 p.m., at the Highlands PAC, 507 Chestnut Street.**

It's become a Highlands holiday tradition. Many say it's the perfect way to get into the holiday spirit—the Highlands Cashiers Community Players annual program of readings and music, now in its 18th year. This event, "Christmas Around the World," coordinated by Vangie Rich, is scheduled for Thursday evening, December 12, at the Highlands Performing Arts Center, beginning at 7:30, with cookies and punch served after the performance.

This year the participants will present first-hand accounts of experiencing Christmas in Australia, Brazil, China, Germany, Latvia, Mexico, and Viet Nam. The history of Santa Claus and our own tradition of decorating for Christmas with poinsettias will be included.

Readers include Mary Ann Ray, Vangie Rich, Luke Osteen, Samantha Moore, John Gaston, Michelle Hott, Virginia Talbot, Dean Zuch, and Barbara Werder

As usual, the stories will be interspersed with music. Malinda Womack will provide a violin prelude. Les Scott, accompanying himself on guitar, will give the history of "Silent Night," and the original version sung in German. A new composition, "Merry Christmas to the World" by Betty Holt will be sung by Vangie Rich and Wayne Coleman.

Everyone is invited to attend this evening of stories and music. No tickets are necessary. The Holiday Program is the Highlands Cashiers Players Christmas gift to the community.



# HIGHLANDS AREA UPCOMING EVENTS •

streets.

• **Affordable Care Act Workshop** at the Macon County Library on Siler Road from 10-11a in the meeting Room. Presented by Cynthia Solesbee a certified health care navigator.

## **Sunday, Dec. 8**

• The High Mountain Squares will host their "Annual Toys for the Tots Dance" this Sunday at the Macon County Community Building, GA Road (441 South), Franklin NC from 2-5 PM. Admission is one new unwrapped toy P/P. Everyone is welcome. The Marines will be by to collect the toys. Jim Duncan from Otto, NC will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. For information call 828-371-4946.

## **Tues., Dec. 10**

• **Student Research Presentations** at the Highlands Biological Station, 2-5pm in the Coker Laboratory at Highlands Biological Station, 265 North Sixth Street. The event is free. The public is invited to hear students at the Highlands Biological Station present their semester research on topics relevant to the southern Appalachians. These research projects are the result of collaborations between the Station and other local conservation organizations.

• At the upcoming Ladies Night Out Program, the topic will be Stress and Depression. Guest speaker will be Cindy Miles, Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher. Stress causes many illnesses in today's world. This program will be held two times this date in the cafeteria at AMC. One will be at 4p.m. and one will be at 6:30 p.m., so you can choose which one you want to attend. The same presentation will be given at both meetings. All women are invited to attend one of these meetings and are asked to encourage all the women in their life, who are over the age of 13 years, to attend with them. For more info, call Dawn Wilde Burgess at

(828)349-2426.

## **Thurs., Dec. 12**

• **Town Board meeting** at 7 p.m. in the Community Building. New Mayor Pat Taylor and new commissioners Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway will be sworn in during New Business.

• **HCP's annual FREE Holiday Reading "Christmas From Around the World"** at 7:30p at the Performing Arts Center. Directed by Vangie Rich. Wonderful reading and music followed by a cookie and punch reception.

## **Sat. & Sun., Dec. 14-15**

• The Community Christian Choral Concert will be held at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation, corner of 5th. & Main Streets on Saturday and Sunday. Both performances will be held at 5 p.m. Classical, Christmas carols, plus a sing-a-long! A reception will follow the Sunday performance.

## **Now Showing at The Highlands Playhouse 'Hunger Games: Catching Fire'**



## **Thur.-Sun., Dec. 5-8**

At Highlands Playhouse: Hunger Games starring Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth. Showtimes are 4 & 7:30pm. Thursdays through Sundays. For tickets in advance call 828-526-2695. Hunger Games will show each week Thurs.-Sun through Dec. 22.

## **Annual Christmas Day Dinner in the works**

As Christmas Day approaches, the organizers and volunteers are gearing up for what they hope will be the best dinner ever. The goals are simple. Serve the very best Christmas buffet dinner possible, and raise a ton of money for this community.

Each year as the event has grown in size and attendance, last year serving over 400 guests, so has the level of sponsorship. Groups and individuals of Highlands partnered with the organizers through sponsorships to the tune of around \$20,000 allowing the organizers to distribute \$31,000 to local nonprofits that serve the needs of the Highlands community.

Join in the joy, join in the giving. Be a sponsor for what could be the last Christmas Din-

ner produced by current organizers. Be represented on the Donor Recognition Board as a Candle for a contribution of \$100, an Ornament for \$250, a Present for \$500, or you can be a Star for \$1,000. Or go really big, and be a "Superstar" which represents a contribution of \$2,000 or greater. Although we have already received several "Stars" and "Superstars" we are also looking for many candles to light up a lot of lives.

The buffet dinner, prepared by Marty Rosenfield of The Lakeside Restaurant with the help of Holly Roberts of The Kitchen, will feature turkey, ham, tenderloin, and all the sides including Donna Woods' now famous dressing.

The desserts will be the creations of Martha Porter, and she

will be helped by one of the original Christmas Day folks, Jan Zehr. All this and a glass of wine or other beverage for \$35 for adults, \$15 for children under 12, and kids 5 and under eat free.

The Dinner will be served on Christmas Day at the Hudson House of the Highlands Country Club. We will begin serving at 11am and serve until 5pm. This will be by reservation only. To reserve your place at the table to join friends and family and to become a sponsor or make a donation, call 526-9419.

Join us and help us make this Christmas the best Christmas ever, and help us help others who may not share the same

## **First Presbyterian Church to hold Annual Carol Sing after Parade**



There will be a Christmas Carol Sing at First Presbyterian Church at 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 7, after the parade. If you enjoy singing familiar Christmas Carols, you won't want to miss this! Stell Huie will be the song leader with Angie Jenkins at the piano. Make this a part of your Christmas tradition! The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicap entrances are located on Fifth Street and on Church Street.



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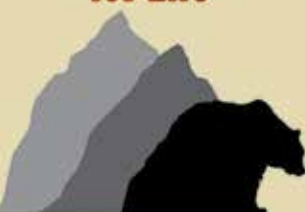
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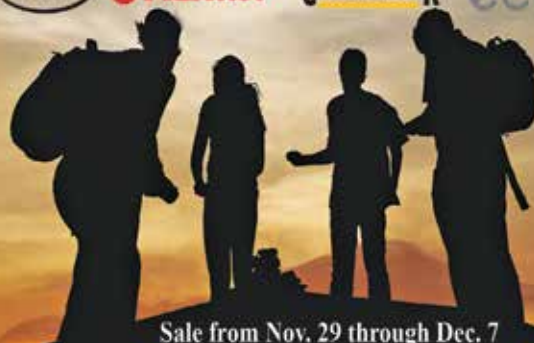
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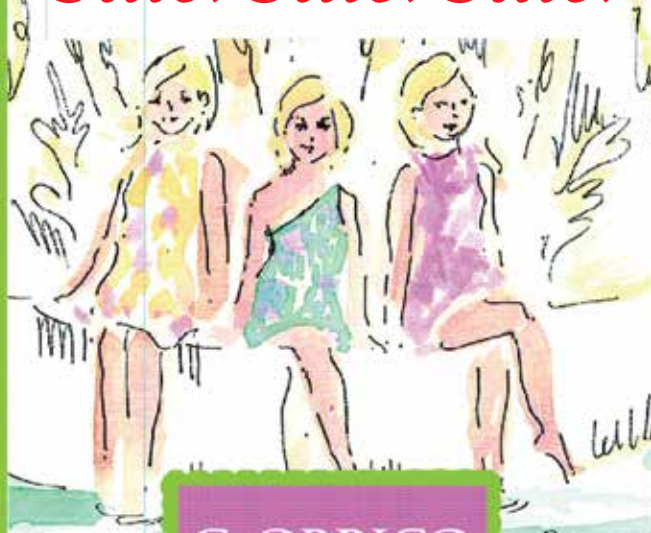
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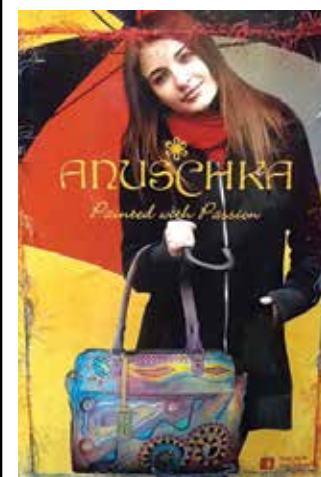
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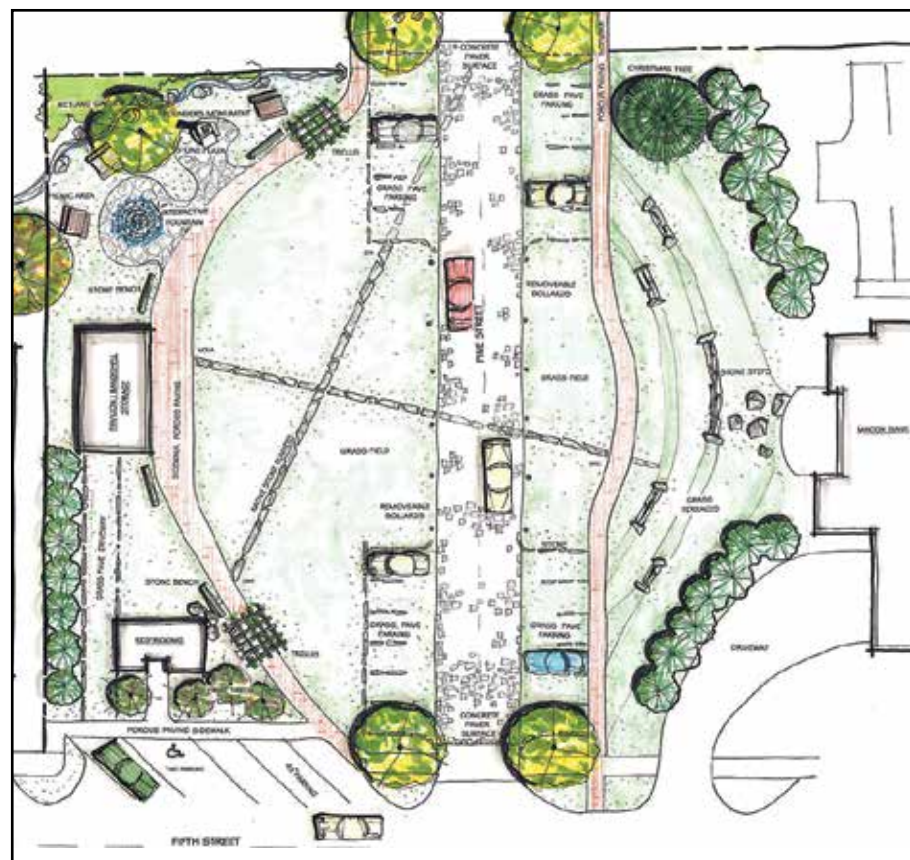
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Kelsey-Hutchinson Park Master Plan by Landscape Architect Hank Ross.

to take several years. It may take as long as three years, but if it happens much sooner then all the better."

The coalition already has pledged from members for nearly \$15,000 in funds and donated labor during the first year, but has not tried to raise money publicly. "We don't want to go public until the town gives its okay to what we are trying to do," he said. "The town owns the park, so everything we do has to be done in close collaboration with the town board. We want to partner with the town on this."

Bazan said the group understands the park has been through a number of controversies in the past, but that the coalition is only interested in moving forward, not resurrecting past issues.

"We understand that a number of people initially felt the park was too small and cost too much. Regardless of whether one was for or against the park back then, it's there now. It's not going away, so we should come together to make it something the entire community can be proud of," he said.

The group also believes that the latest plan addresses some of the past controversies, such as a proposal several years ago to close Pine Street.

"The current plan for the park would

not close the street to everyday traffic. That's a dead issue," he added.

The town already allows the street to be closed during special events, and Bazan said plans to raise the street to the level of the crosswalk would not affect traffic flow or eliminate parking on the street. It would, however, make the park function as if it were more than twice as large.

All infrastructure would comply with the surface water treatment project installed by the town in 2009, and is designed to allow multiple uses of the park. The current plan would NOT close Pine Street to everyday traffic, nor affect parking in the area, except when special events are held (which is the town's current policy).

While the park functions now as an event venue, there is virtually no infrastructure in place for day use by individuals or families, which was the primary aim of the initial park committee

Once it obtains town approval, the group hopes to begin soliciting donations for completing the park. The coalition hopes to begin actual construction in early spring, mostly likely starting with walkways, benches and picnic areas, as well as appropriate native landscaping around those areas.





*Presents their annual*

## Holiday Reading

Thursday December 12th

7:30 PM at PAC

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*Contact information, hours and services will remain the same.*

**J. Scott Baker, MD**

Primary Care

PRACTICE INFORMATION  
Highlands-Cashiers Hospital  
Jane Woodruff Clinic, *Suite 203*

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(828) 526-1700

**Julie A. Farrow, MD**

Gynecology

PRACTICE INFORMATION  
Highlands-Cashiers Hospital  
Jane Woodruff Clinic, *Suite 304*

LEVEL 3

209 Hospital Drive  
Highlands, NC 28741  
(828) 526-5045

**Bayard D. Miller, MD**

Neurology

PRACTICE INFORMATION  
Highlands-Cashiers Hospital  
Jane Woodruff Clinic, *Suite 304*

LEVEL 3

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Highlands, NC 28741  
(828) 526-5045



**Highlands-Cashiers  
HOSPITAL**  
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Open:

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210 S. 3rd Street

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 behind the Methodist Church)



## ...SAFETY from page 9

School.

According to Dr. Baldwin, the monies could be used to make needed improvements to Franklin High School, Union Academy and Macon Middle School. With a joint facilities review committee scheduled for today (Thursday) with county commissioners, the school board plans to discuss the possibility of applying for the QZAB monies. More discussion will likely follow at the Tuesday, Dec. 10 County Commission meeting.

## • REAL ESTATE SNAPSHOTS •

### PHASE 2



9 Custom Built Townhomes - Short Walk to Town - Old Edwards Club Membership

Walk to downtown Highlands.  
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 Broker Associate  
 828-200-6165

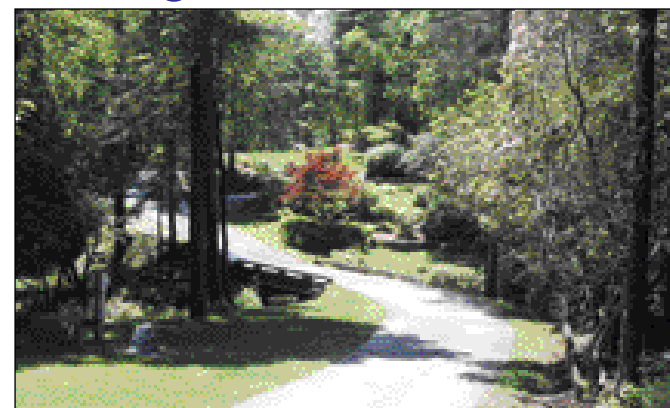


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 REALTY GROUP  
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 For more information email [Pat.Allen@gmail.com](mailto:Pat.Allen@gmail.com)  
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Pat Allen, SFR, CLJMS  
 Broker-in-Charge

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**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.

**Welcome...Come Visit!**

From Main St., take Hwy. 106 (The Dillard Road) 1.8 miles just past the Glen Falls sign, turn right on Mt. Laurel Dr., go 3 tenths of a mile turn left on Moonlight. The entrance is on the right.

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Contact (onsite owner) or your broker for plats,  
 prices & a guided tour.  
 828-508-9952.

## Next Real Estate Snapshots

Last for 2013:

Real Estate Transactions for 2013: – Dec. 26

To reserve space, call

828-526-3228 or email

[highlandseditor@aol.com](mailto:highlandseditor@aol.com)



# • INVESTING AT 4.118 Ft. •

## HOMES for the HOLIDAYS

The holidays are here and what a wonderful Thanksgiving we had in Highlands and Cashiers! The streets were filled with shoppers and restaurants filled with families sharing a bountiful feast. Now with Christmas fast approaching sellers often wonder if they should keep their properties on the market or take them off? Or if they haven't listed their homes yet, should they wait until after the first of the year or hold off until spring? My broker opinion and answer has changed over the years.

Conventional wisdom used to be that you shouldn't even try to sell your home during the "off season" or winter in Highlands or Cashiers. It used to be that potential homebuyers were too preoccupied with attending parties, entertaining, buying presents, or planning travel. With all of that going on, there just wasn't time to ride around with a real estate agent or it was simply too cold to expect buyers to come and look. But here's the BIG change due to our full-blown techy world. With the Internet, smartphones, tablets and our always-on lifestyle, that conventional wisdom isn't relevant anymore. The reality is, the home buying season is now year-round.

Today, serious buyers are always looking — and the holidays are no exception. They may check out the latest listings on-line at sites like Trulia, Zillow, Realtor.com and numerous others before bedtime or while watching television at the day's end.

The days of storefront offices with flyers taped on the windows are a thing of the past for serious buyers. They do their "home" work and contact an agent before they arrive. I sold a farm to a buyer last year who told me he had watched it on-line for a year waiting for the price to go down. When he finally contacted me we closed in 30 days! Many sellers still believe buyers can't be bothered to look for a home between, say, from Christmas until May. At the same time, sellers who've had their homes on the market often take them off during the winter. Therefore you aren't seen in the market place.



The net effect is that the inventory for good homes often tightens this time of year. So there's less competition for sellers, at a time when motivated buyers are out there looking — and no doubt wishing there were more properties to see.

If you've been considering selling, are motivated, are flexible on timing and have a home that truly sparkles, consider listing right now so buyers can find you! There's still a window of several weeks to get buyers into your home before the end of the year. And those buyers flipping through listings will be delighted to see something new and awesome hit the market — especially if there's a lack of good inventory in our area. These buyers will be motivated to see your home, regardless of what the calendar says.

If your property has been on the market for months, this is the time to consider lowering the price. If it was there during the "season" and agents see it as overpriced they will not be as likely to show it in that case. It's time to take action, and the year-end holidays can be a great opportunity to shift course. Reducing the price obstacle that's been preventing the sale might be what's needed to sell your home. This is a good time to show the market you're listening and are serious about selling. The motivated buyers, desperate for good inventory, will notice you and take a look. That means if you're ready to sell, you'll have an even more "captive" audience during the winter.

My advice is to keep your heat on 55 to allow showings BUT also to protect your hardwood floors from buckling due to humidity here in Highlands and Cashiers. Even if you winterize you should still protect your floors and furniture with heat! This also eliminates that musty, mildew smell that is a big turnoff to buyers.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and welcome the opportunity to work for you in selling your home or negotiating the right home purchase for you.

• To contact Pat Allen, Broker-in-Charge of Pat Allen Realty Group, call 828-526-8784 or 828-200-9179. To visit the website go to [www.patallenrealtygroup.com](http://www.patallenrealtygroup.com)

# • REAL ESTATE SNAPSHOTS •

## Cottage Tucked in the Woods



Charming cabin with locust log external walls, on a lush lot in the Mirror Lake area. Pine floors, knotty white pine paneling, stone wood-burning fireplace, breakfast bar, tray ceiling & spacious, screened front porch. Easy access off Cullasaja Dr., with extra parking off Mirror Lake Road. Renovated from 2011-13 with many touches that make this a stellar, year-round, mountain getaway! Some furnishings negotiable. Offered at \$379,000. MLS #77945.

## Elegant and Perfect for Entertaining



On a gentle lot with gorgeous landscaping (winter mountain view), this 3BR/2.5BA beauty features stone and rustic elements at the entrance; soaring ceilings and a stone, wood burning fireplace; expansive kitchen w/granite counter tops, island, and dining area; wet bar; elegant living room which opens to a screened porch & open deck; formal dining area, office and master suite on the main level. Perfect for entertaining & the best of mountain living! Great in-town neighborhood! Offered at \$899,900. MLS #77266.



Susie deVille,  
Broker-in-Charge  
[susie@WhiteOakRG.com](mailto:susie@WhiteOakRG.com)

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Lovingly maintained; immaculate, pristine, ideal Mirror Lake area cottage just steps from the lake. Gorgeous wooded lot with secret garden. At once cozy and elegant, this 3BR/2BA cottage features an expansive kitchen, sun room, hardwood flooring, fireplace and bay window in the living room, covered porch, and garage. Light and bright with all the touches of fine mountain living. Some furnishings negotiable. Offered at \$425,000. MLS # 77904.

## Breathtaking Long-Range Views!



Expansive mountain views that will take your breath away! This 3BD/3BA home has hardwood floors throughout the main level, dry stack stone fireplace in the living room, cathedral ceilings with loft, granite counters and more. The master suite is on the main level with deck facing the views. The lower level has a living space, two guest bedrooms and a covered deck with views. Located near Trillium Links and Lake Club, but no membership required. Offered at \$549,000, MLS #77765.

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at

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# • SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

## Go to a high place where you can see clearly



By Lee W. Bowman  
First Presbyterian Church of  
Highlands

Six centuries before Jesus was born on this earth, the last of God's chosen people, who lived in the kingdom of Judah, lost their home. It happened when they were defeated by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, but it didn't happen all at once. There was a long siege, and finally the walls of the capital city of Jerusalem were breached. All that goes with war came next—the looting, the killing and the separation of family members from one another. And then, because the Babylonians had studied the history and tradition of the Judeans, they made a special point of destroying the centerpiece of the Hebrew faith—the temple of Solomon.

The last indignity was the deportation of the Judean leaders from their homeland to Babylon—present day Iraq—where they were held for 70 years. We know this time as the Exile, and it is a bitter moment in Judah's memory when one whole generation died and another came of age in a foreign land. The Judeans sang the old songs of their tradition while they were in exile, trying to keep the flame of their faith alive. Because there was the very real fear for this ancient people that in the deportation, they had lost their God—or worse yet, that God had lost them.

One of our best Biblical scholars, Walter Brueggemann, has drawn a compelling comparison between the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Jewish exiles and our contemporary culture. Both groups, he says, have experienced the loss of commonly held assumptions. Both find themselves questioning old certainties. "Exile," Brueggemann writes, "is more than geographical. Exile is when old securities are gone, and that is where we are living these days."

But we don't need a Biblical scholar to tell us that. Whether we've been exiled by hurricane or flood or drought, bankruptcy or death, whether we're exiled by divorce or depression or disease or terrorism or what the poet calls "the slow, smokeless burning of decay," we know about exile.

It is also on the darkened stage of our exile that hope is born. Words like 'wait' and 'hope' increase in number and in depth in such troubled times. But when we talk of Christian hope, we're not all of a sudden wheeling God in from the outer part of the stage as the celestial trouble-shooter who will get us out of a jam. The hope that we share as Christians—born in the darkness of our suffering or illness or frustration or defeat and mirroring the darkness of the cross—is not a guaranteed happy ending that we will avoid further suffering if only we tow the line of righteous living.

Christian hope doesn't emerge from present circumstances—it springs out of what we believe, and

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

## Proverbs 3:5

## • PLACES TO WORSHIP • John 3:16

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Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11  
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Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

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

**CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH**  
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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

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Tue. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

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Wednesdays -- 7 p.m.

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Senior Pastor Gary Hewins  
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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**  
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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**  
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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**  
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Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am

**HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD**  
Randy Reed, Pastor  
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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)

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Worship/Communion – 10:30

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

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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p.m.

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

**SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH**  
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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**  
Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers  
Sunday School – 10 am, Worship Service – 11 am



# • FIRE REPORTS •

## The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from Nov. 25

**Nov. 25**

• At 5:12 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call on Main Street. EMS transported to the hospital.

• At 5:39 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Cullasja Club Crive. EMS transported to the hospital.

**Nov. 26**

• At 10:11 p.m., the dept. was called to a residence on Valentine Lane to check the CO<sup>2</sup> level in the house. All was OK.

**Nov. 27**

• At 7:54 a.m., the dept. was called to

a residence on Cole Mountain Circle for a medical call. The call was cancelled en route.

• At 9:45 p.m., the dept. was called to a residence on Buck Creek Road to assist a motorist who was slipping on ice. The vehicle was removed from the road.

**Nov. 30**

• At 8:24 a.m., the dept performed a control burn of an old home on Buck Creek Road.

**Dec. 1**

• At 9:15 a.m., the dept was asked to secure the landing pad for MAMA helicopter at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.

• At 3:02 p.m., the dept. was called to Yellow Mountain Trail to search for a lost hiker. The call was cancelled en route.

## ...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 18

therefore, it has roots and substance. So if faith is the description of our relationship to God in the here and now, an utter dependence upon and surrender to God and God's will of love now; then hope is utter dependence upon and surrender to God and God's will of love for the future. This is why for the Christian, hope is not simply wishful thinking, as in the TV Western, that everything will turn out all right for the 'good guys' in the end.

No—hope does not magically lift us out of trouble. It pours us back into the struggle. One of the most profound and poignant illustrations of this was captured in the film *Life Is Beautiful*—which, if you remember, won the best foreign-language film award in 1999. The story is about Guido, an Italian Jew, who has been warehoused along with his son in a Nazi concentration camp. Guido daily sees trucks and boxcars hauling away camp prisoners to be exterminated. He knows that death is near, but he convinces his little boy that the whole scenario is really an elaborate game, a contest that—if they play it well—will reward them with the grand prize, an army tank of their own. Even as he walks off to his own execution, Guido stays focused on modeling hope and joy for his son. He plays the game out for only one reason—to keep his little boy's tender hope from being crushed.

The renowned psychiatrist Victor Frankl survived the horrors of those same extermination camps. As he wrote about that experience some time after the Second World War, he said that one of his most notable memories from the camps was of the men with whom he was

imprisoned. Though they were starving, they gave others who were also near death their last crusts of bread. At first Frankl couldn't understand how or why they did that. But he came to realize that these men were exercising their one unconquerable freedom—the freedom to choose which attitude to hold, regardless of circumstances. They chose to practice faith, hope and love—to adopt a noble stance in the midst of dire conditions—regardless of the outcome.

The hardest thing for us to understand in life is that it is the becoming—those incremental times of struggle and learning to say yes to God—that counts, not the achievements or the roles in which we appear as the star. Becoming is the greatest task for we are giving ourselves over to be sculpted by God. This is why the prophet said to his compatriots in the midst of what had to feel like endless years of exile, Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings. Get to a place where you can see clearly so that you can see the Lord beckoning to you to come out of your exile.

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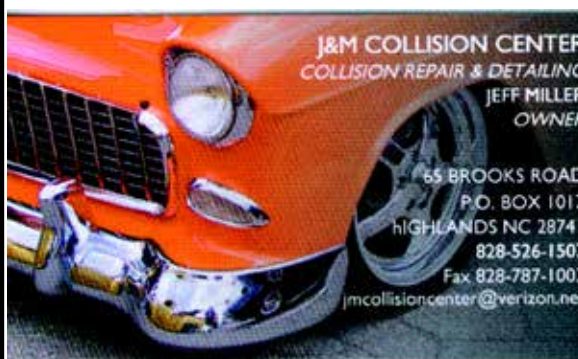
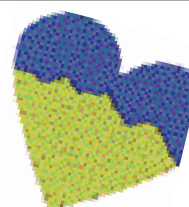
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# • BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

## Representative Mark Meadows supports landmark agriculture and open space conservation

Congressman Mark Meadows has signed on as a sponsor of the Conservation Easement Incentive Act, H.R. 2807, a bill that is critical for the protection of millions of acres of the nation's rural lands, including farm and ranchland and natural areas that support the econ-

omy, health and cultural fabric of our community. H.R. 2807 makes permanent an incentive that is due to expire at the end of this year that allows modest-income landowners to receive significant tax deductions for donating conservation easements that permanently protect important natural or historic resources on their lands.

"LTLT is pleased that Congressman Meadows is stepping up for Western North Carolina to make this important conservation tool permanent," said Paul Carlson, LTLT Executive Director. "The incentive has had a dramatic impact in helping landowners protect water quality and permanently conserve working forests, farmlands, and wildlife habitat in LTLT's project area."

When donating a conservation easement, landowners maintain ownership and management of their land and can pass the land on to their heirs, but forego their rights to develop the land in the future. This bill allows farmers, ranchers and other landowners of modest means to deduct a larger share of their income over a longer period of time, which will make it possible for more families to afford to conserve their land. A survey shows that this incentive boosts the land saved by conservation easements by a third – to over one million acres per year.

A remarkable 149 representatives and 15 senators with strong representation from both parties have already lent their support to this bill. A broad coalition of sportsmen, outdoors enthusiasts, farmers, ranchers and national conservation groups are working together to make this incentive permanent in the 113th Congress.

Land Trust Alliance President Rand Wentworth praised the work of Congressman Meadows. "In this era of partisanship and discord, it is encouraging to see leaders join together and push to enact a bill that a majority of Congress already supports." He added: "Their efforts to make this important conservation tool permanent are welcomed by the nation's 1,700 land trusts, their two million supporters, and the countless local communities seeking to protect the clean air and water, scenic landscapes, recreational places, and wildlife habitat that are central to their lives."

The enhanced tax incentive allows working family farmers, ranchers and forest owners, to deduct up to 100% of their income for as many as 16 years in order to deduct the full value of their generous gift. First passed in 2006 and extended three times, this incentive is set to expire on December 31, 2013. The Conservation Easement Incentive Act will make this valuable conservation tool permanent.

• LTLT is a community-based nonprofit dedicated to conserving the waters, forests, farms, and heritage of the Upper Little Tennessee and Hiwassee River Valleys, including the Valley, Tuckasegee and Cheoah Rivers. LTLT works in the six far-western counties of North Carolina and northern Rabun County, Georgia. Since 1999, LTLT has been a key agent in the protection of more than 22,000 acres, including riverfront lands along 36 miles of the free-

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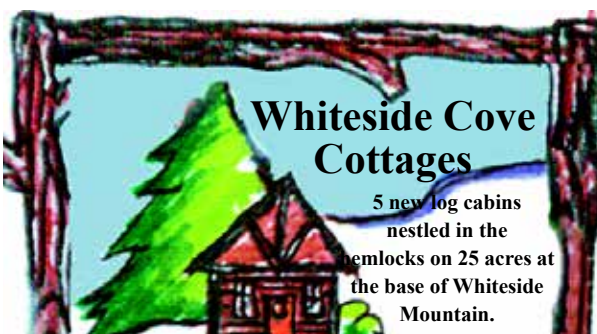
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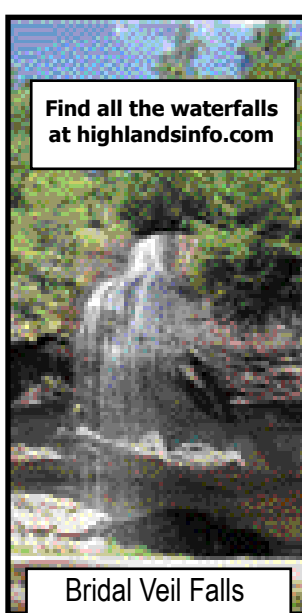
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