

# Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., March 27, 2014

## Parking ordinance stays for now; enforcement is key

Merchants and business owners turned out en masse last Thursday night in support of the town's current parking ordinance that prohibits merchants, employees and building owners from parking in the business district April 15 through December

31.

Concern about perpetuating the ordinance surfaced following the town's February retreat where commissioners and town staff frustrated with enforcement and compliance aspects of the ordinance suggested doing away with

it all together.

At the Thursday, March 20 Town Board meeting, the mayor assured the crowd that only "ideas" concerning the ordinance were discussed at the retreat; that nothing had changed concern-

ing the ordinance nor would it change Thursday night.

"The ordinance is still in place but the Town Board wants to strengthen and improve it in the area of enforcement and con-

•See PARKING page 19

## An insider's view of Crimea, Ukraine and Russia's Putin

- Part 2 -

*This series is with Ukrainian Alexander Kravets who discusses the Ukraine dilemma from his point of view – that of a 29-year-old who now lives, works in the area and is married to American citizen, Kimberly Barber Kravets. Her family owns Dry Crawl Space. Alex offers keen insight while discussing Ukraine's past and its future. In three weeks, many of his suggestions have come to pass.*

By Kim Lewicki

For most of us, the Ukraine dilemma is murky, but for Ukrainian Alexander Kravets who now lives and works in Highlands and Cashiers, the situation is crystal clear. We pick up where we left off last week **About Putin...**

To see Part 1 go to [www.highlandsinfo.com](http://www.highlandsinfo.com) click on local news and the March 20 edition.

### About Putin

Kravets is adamant about Putin's intentions.

"President Putin is a nationalist who wants to restore the Soviet Union's power. There used to be two super powers in the world, the U.S. and the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union fell apart, Russia became nothing so now the one super power militarily and financially is the U.S. He is trying to restore it to

its former glory," said Kravets.

And he's afraid Putin does have a chance.

"Back in 2008 during the Georgian war he took two parts of Georgia that are now part of Russia. Before that there were the Chechen wars in 1995 and then in 2000. It is a Muslim country and didn't want to be part of Russia. But he took all his forces and made them Russia," he said. "And there are others."

Kravets said Putin is trying to grow his boundaries back. "He is very smart, very strategic and he used to be head of KGB, so that tells you everything. But he doesn't care about money. Russia is very rich with money and natural resources. He doesn't care about people only power. He has so much money he can buy whatever he wants. He is trying to restore the Russian image of military power. What he is trying to do is what used to be done in the 19th century – expanding his borders militarily. That is what he is doing right now but that's not how you do business in the 21st century. So it is important to see what happens next."

**Military force or sanc-**

•See UKRAINE page 6

## Mayor awards students for artwork



Extolling the importance of art in education, at the March 20 Town Board meeting, past art teacher Mayor Patrick Taylor awarded Brandon Moss and Anna Stiehler with certificates and gifts for their work in a recent Newspaper in Education project where they drew ads for the Town of Highlands. He said the ability to draw is a very important communication skill, as is the ability to be visually literate.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

## B of Education looking to digitize the classroom

By Brittany Burns

In the past five years, Macon County has seen a 76 percent reduction in funding from the state for text books. Classrooms throughout the county are either using text books that haven't been replaced in 10 years or are not using any books at all.

According to Macon County Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin, the lack of funds from the state for text books is forcing

teachers to find resources online or other ways of getting materials to students. Textbook funding is only expected to decrease in the coming years due to the state moving toward a digital learning format. Instead of money to purchase traditional textbooks for students, new funds are being introduced to purchase digital learning tools such as books available on tablets.

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## Town Board is next to consider use of copper

Since the Planning Board thinks the use of copper on the exterior side of buildings should be OK, it is suggesting changes to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to make its use legal.

A request by owner of Cyprus International Restaurant Nick Figel to use copper on the exterior wall facing the deck to be built on top of Xtreme Threads precipitated the discussion.

At its February meeting, Planning Board members discussed verbiage changes to the "Commercial Building Materials List" and at its March meeting this week, the changes were accepted.

The amended list now goes to the Town Board. Since the new list will require amending the UDO, if approved by the Town Board, a public hearing will be held prior to Town Board's final approval.

This process could take another 60 days but would allow copper on 30% of the façade facing the deck of the new restaurant.

The new verbiage allows for uncoated sheet copper, on 30% of any one façade. Though all

•See COPPER page 15

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • LETTERS •

### The Academic Foundation needs your help

Dear Editor,

The Macon County Academic Foundation is a volunteer organization dedicated to raising and distributing funds for special projects and field trips to teachers of Macon County. Members of MCAF include teachers, county administrators, and private-sector workers of Macon County. Thousands of dollars in grants are awarded each month to teachers seeking help with classroom activities. Several classes at Highlands School have benefitted from MCAF grants: middle school science classes purchased a digital weather station; high school civics classes travel to historical destinations each year with the help from the Foundation; elementary students at Highlands now have games that help make learning math fun. The list goes on and on for all classes across Macon County.

The Foundation's 27th annual fundraiser, known as the Academic Auction, will take place Saturday April 5th, 5 p.m. at Cartoogechaye School in Franklin. The fundraiser consists of a silent auction, donated food sales, and literally hundreds of raffles, all taking place at the same time. Before the action starts, several groups present their talents for the audience. This year's lineup will include a 70 member chorus from South Macon Elementary, the Joe Pye bluegrass band, and a martial arts exhibition by Danny Antoine's Karate Academy. As you can imagine, it is an exciting event from start to finish.

The success of the Academic Auction depends on donated goods from businesses around the county and state. If you are a business owner, please consider donating any extra stock, gift certificates, or services to this year's Academic Auction. The name of your business will be prominently advertised next to each donated item, and you will be receipted with the Foundation's tax I.D. number for a full write-off. I or an associate will be visiting Highlands businesses in the coming week to pick up any donations you may have.

I appreciate your time and consideration, please do not hesitate to contact me anytime regarding the Academic Foundation.

**Brian Aulisio**  
President, MC Academic Fdn

### Party-line politics is detrimental

Dear Editor

Don Swanson's letter in the March 20 edition entitled "Right vs. Left in MC's Republican Party," which was about the internal dynamics of the Macon County Republican Party, contained a brief passage that highlights the deep and seemingly unbridgeable divide in our national, state and even local political systems.

He said, "I became a registered Republican in 1956 and have voted Republican in every election, national and local, since." This, of course, is Mr. Swanson's right and if nothing else he is to be applauded for participating in the process every chance he gets. However, I don't understand, and never have, the notion that one political party has, in every instance, put forth the best candidate, whether for the county commission or President of the United States. And, to blindly support one party's candidate, regardless of any other consideration, makes one wonder if any critical thinking at all goes into the decision.

Membership in one party or another

has traditionally been an integral part of the American political system. But no thinking voter can properly assert that at no time in 58 years and probably 29 election cycles, in Mr. Swanson's case, has the other party put forth a more qualified or otherwise attractive candidate. Blindly voting straight party line has the effect of reducing the American political process to that of team sport, and as we all know, no one team is always has the best players.

When my wife and I moved to Highlands and became full time residents, we immediately registered to vote and both chose a No Party Affiliation (NPA) status. This decision was not made lightly, but we both recognized that the currently established two-party system, previously so essential to our nation's democratic process, has become a detriment to the effective implementation of sound public policy. Serving and governing has become secondary. Winning elections and blocking the opposition has become the norm and this why America's economy and our standing on the world stage has suffered so in recent years.

Good people on all levels have either left public office or have chosen not to stand for reelection because they quickly learned that

behaving in a statesmanlike manner in pursuit of sound public policy objectives for the benefit of all Americans will only result in getting you a primary election opponent who appeals more to the most extreme elements of political thought. And it is the extremes in our political system that vote in greater numbers in primaries. This eliminates the element of consensus and compromise so essential to meaningful legislation that benefits the wide majority of American citizens. People are so attached to one party or the other that they often vote against their own interest. Einstein would consider this line of thought another demonstration of insanity, like doing the same thing over and over and somehow expecting a different result.

In my lifetime, the two most effective presidents have been Dwight Eisenhower and Bill Clinton. Both were men with flaws, but they led from the middle of the political spectrum and both presided over long periods of peace and prosperity even while working with divided congresses. It can be done, but when winning is more important than governing, when party is more important than candidate, the result is often thoughtless and divisive representation, and when this happens, everyone stands to lose.

Unless and until thoughtless straight party voting, as Mr. Swanson so proudly trumpets, takes a backseat to individual evaluation of candidates, clear discussion of important issues, and respect for the aspirations of the American people instead of simply one's own favorite team, America's education, healthcare, commerce, defense, infrastructure and social needs are not going to be addressed.

**Bud Katz**  
Highlands

### Reasons for early retirement

Dear Editor,

After months of angry ABC Board meetings with nothing getting accomplished, I felt it was time for me to retire as meetings were getting more unbearable each and every month.

To set the record straight, the ABC store isn't being investigated by the State of North Carolina nor is it \$30,000 dollars in the hole. We have actually given disbursements this year in the amount of \$76,733.

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# • OBITUARIES •

## Mary Virginia Dunkin Alford



chelle (Shelli) Alford (Matthew) Williams of Sacramento, CA and former daughter-in-law, Becky Stanley Valle.

Surviving grandchildren include Stephanie McCall, Stephen McCall, Hannah Alford, Katherine Alford, Nicholas (Julie) Alford, Rachel Alford, Christen Williams, Elias Williams, Sam

Williams and step grandson, Jamie Rhymes.

She is also survived by great grandchildren Maddie Alford, Sophia Alford-Corsetti, Trysten Stanley, Oryon (Big Jake) Stanley and Ayden Stanley.

Memorials may be made to the Mt. Moriah Cemetery Fund, c/o Mary Owens, 21 Pinecone Drive, Franklin, NC 28734.

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

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## • MILESTONE •

### Worley is moving on



Mary Lou Worley is retiring after serving for over fifteen years as Hudson's librarian, and the Hudson Library Board and staff are having a party for her. On Thursday, March 27th from 4-6 pm at the library's meeting room, there will be an open house for her and all are invited.

As the third longest serving librarian of Hudson, she has seen many changes. Perhaps the biggest was the expansion of the library. It gave her so much more room to house the extensive collection of materials and books, all 21,000 items. But it also made it difficult to maintain the high stan-

• See WORLELY page 4

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## ...WORLEY continued from page 3

dards of service that the Hudson Library has always had.

Bob Trevathan, who was the President of the Hudson Board at that time, says, "I have some fond memories of Mary Lou as she and I endured some tough and exciting times together. That was during the year and a half it took to finish the renovation and upgrade of our Hudson Library. I was in charge of it and she was the one, as head librarian, mainly inconvenienced by all of the changing schedules necessary in a large project like that. She was always there for me, imparting valuable knowledge of the workings of the Hudson, always with a smile on her face to brighten my day. She will be missed, but I'll never forget all she did for me and the Hudson." This is the same sentiment moving all through the community of Highlands. You will be missed Mary Lou, but we all wish you well on your next adventure in life.

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# ...LETTERS continued from page 2

I am retiring after 27 years of service – not quitting or getting fired.

I wish the new ABC Board the best in guiding the store to a successful future as we have had in a successful past.

The ABC Store has a good group of employees. If the board lets the manager do his or her job treats employees fairly all should be well.

**Sandra Baty**  
ABC Store Manager

## The truth about 'Opportunity Scholarships'

Dear Editor,

Recently, I became curious about the N.C. "Opportunity Scholarships" (a new name for vouchers) that are being billed as a way for families in poverty to have more choices for their child's education by allowing them to choose private schools.

I am perplexed as to how these vouchers of \$4,200 a year could possibly benefit families that are truly low-income.

Most private schools charge between \$18,000 to \$20,000 a year. In addition, the private schools do not provide transportation, a serious barrier for most low-income families. Likewise, the private schools charge large fees for after-school care and do not provide subsidized lunches.

These "Opportunity Scholarships" are really designed for middle-class families who have the resources to "bridge the gap" between the \$4,200 voucher and the true costs of a private school education. In 2015, the vouchers will be available to middle-income families.

"Opportunity Scholarships" would not really make a private school education any more accessible for children from low-resource families. The claim that these vouchers are designed to benefit children in poverty just doesn't make sense.

Maybe Senator Davis can explain this.

**Clayton Ramsey**  
**Franklin**

## Humanity is basically good ... or is it?

Dear Editor,

We seem to look upon man as being basically good, the bad or evil part of man comes from his environment and the way he approaches the world that he finds himself in. The psychiatrists, educators, politicians, even some of the clergy have stated this, and many believe this. We're told man's problem is how society is structured and built... and not how man is structured or built.

We all are dismayed when someone destroys life and property, and taking what does not belong to them. But why? Why should we care? Has our behavior evolved to be better than it was in the past? Don't we correct this with some type of therapeutic cure?

We hear society is dysfunctional, disrespectful and inhumane, because of a lack of self esteem or because of some disorder; oftentimes bad choices are labeled as a disease. We hear this from our governmental, educational and penal systems; we all are victims and it's the other person or society's fault.

I'm not saying some of this isn't part of a problem, I am stating that we've taken the personal responsibility out of the equation. We are saying the innate self is basically good, when in fact it is basically evil, in need of being good.

Man's failure began with rebellion which started in early creation. The highest value for the individual comes from our Creator and we should seek out the betterment of all humanity, which also places value on justice, as well. Even when justice is served, within the punishment and correction there is a value put on trying to set things right and there's a payment and price for the wrong that has been done.

These values are set within the human heart and are sought out by all of us. But where does this come from? If we are a product of time, plus matter, plus chance, why don't we seek value in evil or wrong doing instead of good -- oftentimes evil can pay an even bigger and faster dividend.

Shouldn't it be survival of the fittest? Why is this wrong? I see no other cause for this except it is "God's Image" or finger print within the heart of each of us as individuals. (Romans 2:14-15) Where else is there a foundation in the value of life and the search for justice?

We've minimized the fact that evil exists within us, because we've been deceived. We think there is no need for truth, morality, or accountability. At one time this was directed from the heart and mind, but now it's directed by what we feel and what we see; and the imagination has no boundaries.

But all seek and look for value and worth in relationships and the meaning of life. Our written words in song, poems, books, as well as in art, cry out for these values. Our hearts will be forever restless until we can find meaning in all of this. All this can be followed in God's written word, it explains where we have come from and where we going... and everything in between. Keep thinking.

**Deni Shepard**  
**Franklin**



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# ...UKRAINE continued from page 1

## tions?

Kravets understands that Putin is using military force and the division of the people of Crimea and Ukraine to pull Ukraine back into Russia's fold, but he is absolutely against military action on America's part.

"Come on guys, it is the 21st century, there are so many other things you can do. Military intervention by the U.S. is not an option in this age of nuclear war," he said.

He agrees that there are radi-

cals in the Ukraine who just like some people in America, think military intervention from the U.S. and others is the answer but it's not, he says.

"No one wants World War III. No one wants to mess with nuclear power. As far as the military goes, the Ukraine people need to figure that out on their own. But the U.S. and UK could step up the economic sanctions against Russia," he said. "The U.S. can do this by not issuing visas to Russian citizens, by freezing bank

accounts of Russian officials and businessmen who keep their money in banks outside Russia," he said. "No visas would hurt the Russian people, but this is how democracy starts, with people saying 'no, we don't want this anymore.'"

And in fact, that is what President Obama announced two weeks ago.

U.S. and EU sanctions now include the top pro-Russian Crimean secessionist leaders, 10 leading Russian lawmakers who have endorsed the annexation of Crimea and three top Russian military commanders.

The U.S. sanctions list also includes two top advisers to Russian President Vladimir Putin and ex-Ukrainian President Yanukovich, whose February ouster in the face of widespread anti-government protests sparked the current crisis.

In Washington, President Barack Obama warned Moscow: "Further provocations will achieve nothing except to further isolate Russia and diminish its place in the world. The international community will continue to stand together to oppose any violations of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity, and continued Russia military intervention in Ukraine will only deepen Russia's diplomatic isolation and exact a greater toll on the Russia economy," he said.

According to recent reports, the sanctions are working. Russia may be heading toward a recession as sanctions imposed by the U.S., EU and Canada over the country's annexation of Crimea on March 14 have intensified.

A report by Russian state-owned bank VTB Capital, said the country's economy will shrink over the next two quarters as uncertainty hurts domestic spending, hits markets, and puts a damper on foreign investment.

At the US-EU Summit, President Obama said though he has tried, Putin can't drive a wedge between the EU and the U.S. and he clearly underestimated that relationship. He also said sanctions would be escalated further unless Putin takes diplomatic steps to de-escalate.

## Some history

In Kravets' mind, the help promised the Ukraine by the U.S.



Alexander Kravets

and the UK is owed.

"When Ukraine split from the Soviet Union, it was the 3rd nuclear power in the world. We had lots of nukes. In 1994, the U.S., UK and Russia, said 'if you are going to give up the nukes the three of us, the super powers, will guarantee that no one will invade your territory, or try to split you up if you give up your nukes.' So we gave them up to the U.S., the UK and Russia. Now, we have nothing to fight with."

He said Russia's invasion of Ukraine via Crimea is a violation of the agreement signed back in 1994 so someone definitely needs to step in and help.

According to Kravets, ex-President Yanukovich has long been in Putin's pocket and though his campaign platform promised moving toward admittance into the EU, soon after winning office in 2010 he reneged on that promise.

"And that is what started the peaceful revolution in Kiev back in November 2013 that escalated in February of 2014 with beatings and the shooting deaths of 100 Ukrainian citizens by their own president's security forces," said Kravets. "One hundred people were shot by snipers using AK 47 and newer versions. Now Putin is saying it was justified because it was a military coup which it wasn't. It was just people peacefully protesting because the now ex-president went back on his word to take steps to join the EU."

When Yanukovich said he never ordered the shootings that the security forces did it on their own, they realized that Ya-

nukovich threw them to the wolves, he said.

"They said they weren't going to shoot their own people anymore so he lost control, said Kravets. "They said they were clean because they acted on orders. They said they are his enemies now. So he escaped. And no one defended him anymore."

## Dividing issues

Besides dealing with Russia's continued presence in their lives on the road to true independence and admittance into the EU, Kravets says the Ukrainian people have generational and regional issues to come to terms with as a nation.

He says the older generation, those over 45, remember the "good old days" when Ukraine was part of Russia and not an independent nation. They say the government was stable, they had money, and they did, said Kravets, but there weren't any products to buy and nothing to compare their lives to.

"They say 'we had free medicine and our salaries were big,' but what they don't tell is, yes, they had bags of money but there was nothing to buy. There was a deficit of food, furniture, everything. They had money back then but couldn't buy anything. There were no products whatsoever because there was no trade outside the Soviet Union to Europe or the U.S.," he said. "They were brainwashed. Since six-years-old they had to join the junior communist party. They were told America is bad. People in Europe don't live well. We are the strong ones, we have the military and you need to work in fields and factories. People were brainwashed big time."

Even now, Kravets says there are a lot of propaganda channels on Ukrainian TV sponsored by the Russian government – saying "Don't go anywhere."

Kravets, now 29, was born in the Soviet Union – on current Ukraine territory about two hours from Crimea – and was 6 or 7 when the Soviet Union began to break a part. At that time the Soviet Union had closed borders so people couldn't leave to travel anywhere else.

"These days people my age

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## ...UKRAINE continued from page 6

and younger, they go to schools in France, Great Britain, U.S., they come and go, they come back and say we've seen life elsewhere, we've seen opportunity, this is what we need to do in Ukraine to make changes," he said. "The younger generation travels, has social media, Facebook and are very well aware of what's going on in the world. So that's why we say we don't want to be Russian again. The younger generation wants to make changes."

Are the people ready for true independence and acceptance in the EU?

Kravets says maybe not yet. There is still a generation who grew up in the Soviet Union,

and since life is so hard now, getting harder before it gets better is almost too much to fathom. Besides that, he says they have to deal with Russia.

### Going against Russia

Putin is trying to place – or rather keep – a pro-Russian government in all of Ukraine.

"My mom lives in the pro-Russian part, she is a teacher; a government employee and there was a directive to attend a pro-government protest in favor of the ex-president and if people didn't show up they would lose their job. People can't afford to lose their jobs. They are only making a little bit of money. They have high bills and no money. People are afraid to lose what they have; literally worried about the food on the table and just meeting their basic needs of food, shelter and transportation," he said.

Kravets says Ukraine is at war and it started with Russia wanting to and then taking the Crimea peninsula. Crimea was given to the Ukraine territory back in 1954 by then Russian President Nikita Khrushchev who was a Ukrainian national. So as a gift to his country, he said "Now Crimea is part of Ukraine," said Kravets. "So since 1954 the Crimea peninsula was part of the Ukraine territory."

Crimea is made up of about 60% Russian nationals and the Russian Black Fleet is stationed there. Just like the U.S. has military bases all over the world, Russia has one in Crimea.

So now, since conveniently positioned there, Russia is currently using the Russian Black Sea Fleet soldiers against the people of the Ukraine.

"Saying they don't have the Russian insignia on their sleeves is a ruse. They may not have an insignia but they are Russian. They blockaded Ukrainian military bases and say they are trying to prevent any acts of terrorism. It is just a ploy and it is illegal. They had an agreement with Ukraine to only maintain 3,000 troops there; they have 40,000 and not just in Savastopol – the federal city like the U.S.'s Washington D.C. – but all over the borders of Crimea."

### Future of Crimea

At this point, even though its annexation isn't recognized by Ukraine or the civilized world, Kravets fears Ukraine has lost Crimea for good.

"I don't think we have a chance. On March 16 the self-proclaimed government in Crimea said it doesn't recognize the government in Kiev, which is the capital of Ukraine. They called for a referendum to see if they are going to stay in the Ukraine or be part of Russia. They voted they want to join Russia. The legitimate government in Ukraine says Crimea will never be a part of Russia because it is a violation of Ukraine's constitution and international law and such a move would require a national referendum from all of Ukraine. Therefore, theirs is an unlawful referendum," said Kravets. "It's like Highlands saying it doesn't want to be part of North Carolina. You can't do that. But they did and President Putin is trying to convince the international community that it is otherwise. Which is wrong in my opinion."

Meanwhile, the Russian Federation has activated its troops along the Ukraine border – planning an invasion into mainland of Ukraine, says Kravets. Ukraine has 160,000 troops; Russia has 766,000. Ukraine has one million troops in reserve; Russia has 2.5 million troops in reserve.

"At this point I say, 'Let go of Crimea.' The majority of people there want it that way, anyway. But, then again, if we give up Crimea then the eastern part of Ukraine will want to go to Russia and the western part will want to be independent."

### Ukraine division

According to Kravets, over the centuries, Ukraine as always

been divided into east and west.

"That's why Ukraine is so important for the EU and the U.S. and at the same time for Russia," he said. "There is the NATO Conference on the border which is Poland and Hungary and very important, and you have Ukraine in the middle with the Russian Federation next to it. That's why our government was corrupt for so many years because Russia held them in prison by paying them off for not joining the EU and truly living independently like the other countries that finally got out from under Russia's yoke."

The eastern side of Ukraine is influenced by Russia and western Ukraine has a lot of influence from Poland, Hungary and even Germany – so opinions in Ukraine have always been divided.

Kravets said he really doesn't think Putin is going to stop trying to take back Ukraine.

"He really wants to take the east side of the Ukraine because it has major industrial factories and natural resources like natural gas and all that. The reason he wants Crimea is because his Russian fleet is stationed there and that's the only warm water base he has. He has others in the Atlantic but way up north and they are all frozen in the winter; so this is the only warm water with access to the Atlantic Ocean that stays open year-round."

Kravets says there is a chance that Ukraine could end up divided like Germany.

"Remember when Germany was divided with the wall between east and west Berlin? The east lived under Soviet rule but eventually the people were starving to death and escaping. I assume that is exactly what would happen in Ukraine because the Russia's economy isn't stable."

Russia's natural gas

In his opinion, Russia's only real weapon is its natural gas which supplies much of Europe, not its military.

"That's why Europe can't stay as strong in its stance against Russia as the U.S. because they need Russia's natural gas. All the BMW factories that Germany has will literally stop business if Russia cuts the flow of natural gas to them," he said.

He actually thinks natural

gas is a card the U.S. could play against Russia, forever crippling them.

"To free Europe from the stronghold of Russia's natural gas, the U.S. could consider exporting gas to Europe. I know it would mean rethinking its export policy concerning its strategic reserves, but it would free Europe from Russian stranglehold. The only stronghold Russia has is its natural gas. Its military is not its asset. It's outdated. The U.S. could help all of Europe, and Russia would take a tremendous hit sending it back to the ice age."

Though the notion of building a pipeline through the Atlantic Ocean sounds mind-boggling, Kravets says Russia has already done it.

"Russia gets its natural gas from Siberia which is through two oceans so it is achievable," he said. "It would take a lot of money and probably three years to build the pipeline but the U.S. could make its money back."

In fact, at the EU-US Summit President Obama said the U.S. said on a daily basis the U.S. exports natural gas into the international free market – the same amount Europe uses in one day. So those wheels are already turning against Russia.

Future of Ukraine

Meanwhile, Russia has annexed the Crimean peninsula and Kravets is certain Putin intends to invade the Ukraine mainland so Ukraine's future is uncertain for sure.

"We have been under Russian rule, we've done it; we've seen it and we're done. But it's hard to get away from Russia because Russia has its hands all over Ukraine due to its strategic position on the map – Europe on this side and Russia on this side."

He said he just wishes Russia would once and for all let Ukraine – the whole country – go.

"We tried Russia before. Let us try something different. If we don't like being in the European Union, then we can be a neutral country – we can say we have had it both ways. We are going to live the way we want to live."

● See UKRAINE page 11



### 2014 Town of Highlands Non-Profit Grant Application Deadline Fast Approaching

I. Reminder: The Town of Highlands Non-Profit Grant Application Deadline is April 1st. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.

Applications can be accessed at [www.highlandsnpc.org](http://www.highlandsnpc.org) or picked up at Town Hall. For more information, feel free to contact Rebecca Shuler, Town Clerk, Town of Highlands at 828.526.2118.

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At Monday night's Board of Education meeting, Macon County Schools' Chief Technology Officer Tim Burrell presented members with a demonstration regarding digital textbooks. With an iPad tablet in hand, Burrell showed board members that more and more books are becoming available in digital format and while the cost up front to provide the technology may be significant, there are cost-saving measures to look to in the future.

Burrell informed board members that the district is currently working to test the implementation of digital textbooks at all high schools in the district. Depending on funding levels next year, Burrell hopes to have all high schools follow a 1:1 (one device for every student) in all high schools in the district by next school year.

By utilizing a portion of the \$1.5 million allocated by county commissioners to upgrade the school system's technology, Burrell said he has enough money (\$250k-\$300k) to purchase the tablet devices for half of the high school students. For the other half, he will need an allocation in the coming year's capital outlay budget to finish the project.

The state has steadily decreased funding for textbooks each year and although Macon County has received a small portion designated for new books, the money was used elsewhere.

The state-mandated reversion -- where the state allocates money to school systems and then demands it back -- forced the district to rearrange funds within the budget. Instead of spending the small pot of money issued for books from the state, the district made the decision to use that money for teacher positions.

"We are having to choose between textbook and teaching positions, and that just is not right," said Baldwin.

According to Baldwin, Clay County, which has less students in their district than Macon has at Franklin High School has already implemented a district-wide 1:1 technology program, with other counties in the state intending to follow suit.

Burrell explained that a traditional textbook would cost the district \$75-150 per book. After the cost of the tablet device, digital textbooks will be available for purchase for a fraction of that cost at only \$14-\$15, perpetually.

If funding allows, Burrell plans to establish a tablet recycling plan that would cycle tablets from the high school to middle and elementary grades every two to three years. The recycling plan would prevent extended wear and tear on devices as high school students would have different

## ...UKRAINE continued from page 8

But as a realist, he doesn't think that will ever happen because Ukraine is a strategic country for Russia.

So why doesn't the younger Ukraine generation run for office and try to make changes that way?

"Because the government is corrupt," he says. "When people run for office and are running their campaigns, especially when courting the elderly generations, they hire people to go to them and say 'Hi grandma, who are you going to vote for? She may say 'Well I'm going to vote for this guy.' 'Well, they say, 'this guy just sent you coffee and potatoes and here's \$20. This is the guy you want to vote for.' They are brainwashed and so poor that they figure some guy just gave them something they need so he must be a good guy and they vote for him."

He said back in 2004 Ukraine had the "Orange Revolution" and hopes for real change were high.

"At that time, the now exiled president Yanukovich was running against Viktor Yushchanko who was pro-western politics and was supported by the U.S. as a candidate. He promised to make some changes and move the country toward EU entry. Yanukovich won, but the election was rigged so the people demanded a re-election. They got it and Yushchanko, the pro-western guy, won. But in 2004, the majority of the senate was pro-Russian. So they changed the constitution reducing the president's power to a minimum so he couldn't do anything. Instead, the senate was deciding everything. So after four years of being president, he couldn't do anything. Then there was another election and Yanukovich was elected and the pro-Russian senate changed the constitution back to give the president the majority of power."

Kravets said all this makes him and his generation angry. "So you ask why we can't change things? Here was a guy who had the support of the U.S. and others and he couldn't do much because the Russian hand was so strong. We want to make changes, but we literally can't because it's all bought and paid for."

Meanwhile, until May 25 when elections are held for a new president, Interim President Turchynov is working to fight off Russia while taking the necessary steps to become part of the EU.

Kravets says if there is a war, Ukraine



would need help from NATO, but what his country really needs is financial and economic change and support.

"I think the current Ukrainian government understands that it needs help. It needs financial advisors, it needs government schooling – how to be a government and what to do best," he said.

Kravets plans to become a U.S. citizen. He came to America on a temporary work and travel visa, was then issued a long-term visa which led to a Green Card and he later married to Kimberly, daughter of Bill and Melinda Barber who own Dry Crawl Space.

He said he doesn't plan on going back to Ukraine where his mother, father and 16-year-old sister live. Eventually, he and Kimberly plan a family and he wants to raise them as American citizens.

He says he thinks he can do more for his country while in the U.S. by telling people the real story and exactly what is happening in Ukraine.

"I don't want the U.S. to get involved militarily. But, people need to know that Russia is trying to be part of the international community by hosting the Olympics in Soshi and spending over \$50 billion to have promote this international image. Peo-

ple should know the image isn't genuine; it's just a façade and what he really wants is to expand the Soviet Union."

## THE TOWN OF HIGHLANDS 2014 Town of Highlands Scholarship Information

1. Reminder: The Town of Highlands Scholarship Application Deadline is April 15th. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.
2. Highlands Annual Three River Fly Fishing Tournament May 1-3, 2014.
3. Scholarship Fund Golf Classic Thursday, June 19, 2014 at Wildcat Cliffs Country Club.
4. Highlands Own Craft Show and HomeTown Day Saturday, October 11, 2014.

All funds raised benefit the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund. Applications can be accessed at [www.highlandsc.org](http://www.highlandsc.org) or picked up at Town Hall. For more information, feel free to contact Rebecca Shuler, Town Clerk at 828.526.2118.

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## ...DIGITIZE continued from page 10

uses for the tablets as lower grades would.

Baldwin said from discussions he has heard from officials across the state, there is an initiative brewing to require all districts to become 100 percent 1:1 by the 2016-17 school year.

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## Easy tips to spruce up your home's exterior trim

*Roofline, windows & doors, eaves, color...*

(StatePoint) Trimming out a house "from the top down" with colorful but low-maintenance finishes and accessories is a growing trend for busy homeowners looking for easy-care home exteriors. Experts advise starting at the top of your home with gable vents and louvers, and then making your way down with decorative millwork, window and door trim, followed by a balustrade system and porch columns.

"Today's homeowners are selecting materials for the outside of the home that are long-lasting and require minimal upkeep," says Heather Kovacs, product manager for Fypon. "Urethane and PVC accessories perfectly match the needs of homeowners looking for stylish exterior enhancements that resist moisture, insects, cracking, peeling, rotting and warping."

Depending on the look you're going for, keep in mind the finish. If you plan to paint the accessories, a smooth finish works best. For staining, opt for timber. A stone cast replicates concrete. With these options, you can personalize your



home exterior and complement your home's design with durable, synthetic materials.

### Roofline

At the roofline of the home, consider gable vents and louvers that come in shapes like octagons, cathedral, triangles and ovals. Functional venting louvers should feature corrosion-resistant screens to help keep insects out of the home and angled slates to protect interiors from rain, while still encouraging ventilation for attic spaces.

### Windows and Doors

Pilasters, pediments, crossheads and shutters can enhance key elements of a home's exterior.

"The windows on the front of a home gain tre-

mendous curb appeal when accented by trim accessories," points out Kovacs. "Similarly, you can transform a ho-hum entryway into a stunning grand entrance for a home by installing easy-care door surrounds."

### Eaves

To add the ultimate finishing touch to eaves and window areas on the exterior, Kovacs recommends incorporating brackets, dentil blocks and corbels. These pieces can be positioned under showcase window areas and on porches, and are also typically found under the roofline of a home. A trellis system installed above a garage door or a secondary entryway of the home can carry through the decorative elements on

the exterior.

### Color

With the right color combinations, the trim you add to your home can be striking, drawing together the entire exterior. For this reason, it's best to consider materials that come with a pre-primed surface ready to stain or paint. For example, Fypon offers paintable detailed mouldings, brackets, trellis systems, louvers and other millwork pieces in a variety of architectural styles that are low-maintenance and weather resistant. For color and style tips, visit [www.fypon.com/design](http://www.fypon.com/design).

For an easy way to add instant curb appeal and character to your home, consider trimming your home top to bottom.

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## The best bang for your buck kitchen remodeling tips

(StatePoint) Kitchen remodeling can significantly increase home value. However this can get extremely expensive. But simple kitchen fix-ups can add both value and comfort to your space.

With this in mind, consider sprucing up your kitchen without breaking the bank. Don't know where to start? Try these tips from HomeAdvisor, a leading website offering resources for home repair and improvement projects:

- Fix the countertops: Changing the material of kitchen countertops is a

simple way to make an impact in the room. Materials such as ceramic, laminate, granite and siltstone are all great options. Laminate is the most cost effective and granite is the most popular.

- Refinish the cabinets: Even though cabinet replacement can be pricey, giving your existing cabinets a new look can come at an affordable price tag. Remove the original finish and add a new stain coat. Or paint the cabinets a bold color. Combine the paint with a crackling glaze to give the cabinets a weathered appearance.

- Redo lighting: Al-

tering the lighting in your kitchen can give it a different look and feel. Track lighting is a good aesthetic choice with many different options. Add a few task lamps to improve the functionality of the work space area. Dimmers are easy to install and can make the atmosphere of the room more versatile.

- Upgrade appliances: Buying even just one or two new appliances can significantly increase the kitchen's value. Large appliances, such as the refrigerator, oven and stove, should be upgraded first.

- Restyle the floor:

Laying a new floor doesn't have to be a costly project. Materials such as peel-and-stick vinyl tiles are inexpensive and can be easy to install. Other excellent options include linoleum, porcelain, cork and stained concrete.

More great ideas for your kitchen and beyond can be found at [www.HomeAdvisor.com](http://www.HomeAdvisor.com).

You don't need to start from scratch to give your kitchen a makeover. With small improvements, you can get a great return on your investment.



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## Educators invited to 'Project Wild' workshop at Highlands School

On Saturday, April 26, Highlands School will host a Project Wild workshop for K-12 educators from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the school's new outdoor classroom.

Project Wild is a popular wildlife-focused conservation education program used

nationwide ([www.projectwild.org](http://www.projectwild.org)).

"We invite anyone who works with K-12 students to sign up for this fun workshop," said Stephanie Smathers, who teaches 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science at Highlands School. The workshop is open to teachers as well as to educators who work with young people in non-classroom settings.

Since 1983, Project Wild has helped teachers make natural resources and responsible stewardship come alive for students.

When teachers attend a Project Wild workshop, they get a guidebook of activities that make it easy to include environmental education in their core curriculum —whether they're teaching science, math, language arts, social studies, art, or other subjects.

"I used these materials in Georgia with teacher workshops and student teachers for 30 years and always got lots of positive feedback about how much teachers enjoyed using the user friendly guidebook," said Ann Campbell of the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society.

There is no charge for the workshop, materials, or the lunch and snacks which will be provided. Teachers can receive one hour of staff development credit.

To sign up for the workshop, contact Smathers (828-526-2147, [stephanie.smathers@macon.k12.nc.us](mailto:stephanie.smathers@macon.k12.nc.us)). Deadline for registration is April 1.

Local sponsors for the workshop include the Highlands Plateau Audubon Society and the Mountain Garden Club. A national network of state wildlife agencies oversees Project Wild ([www.projectwild.org](http://www.projectwild.org)).

### Dem 'meet and greet' set for April 5

The Macon County Democratic Party Convention of 2014 will be held on Saturday, April 5th, at 11 AM at the Macon County Courthouse, upstairs in the big courtroom.

Come early for coffee and a "Meet 'N Greet" with the Democratic Candidates beginning at 10:30 AM.

All Democrats and Unaffiliated voters are invited to attend.

### GOP Forum set for March 29

On Saturday, March 29, there will be a Republican candidates forum in the Community Building in Franklin 2 p.m.

Candidates include Jim Davis who is running for re-election to the state senate; Judge Donna Stroud, court of appeals; Ashley Welch, district attorney; Jim Tate and John Shearl, county commission district 1; Ron Haven and Gary Shields, county commission district 2, Robbie Holland and Bryan Carpenter, sheriff; James Cochran, register of deeds. Patti Alexander will represent her husband, Ted Alexander, candidate for U.S. Senate. Kyle Hall will represent Bill Southern, court of appeals

## Artists wanted for October show

Artists in all media are wanted for an October show featuring historic sites in Macon County. This will be a juried show, and cash prizes will be offered.

A grant from the Jim McRae Endowment for the Visual Arts will support the project. The Association for the Visual Arts (AVA), a group formed to help direct the endowment's activities, is sponsoring the art show with the assistance of the Macon County Historical Society.

"We are still working on the details, but we wanted to let artists know about this opportunity, so they can start working on their projects," said AVA spokesperson Barbara McRae. "We want the show to provide high visibility for art and artists, and hope it will become an annual event in Macon County."

She said that AVA hopes to enlist other partners in the project.

The group plans to kick off the exhibition with a gala opening in Franklin on Oct. 4. After being on display for two weeks in Franklin, the show, or part of it, will move to Highlands and Nantahala.

Artists may submit up to three pieces, with an entry fee of \$35. Other than the requirement that entries focus on an historic Macon County site, no restrictions will be placed on style or medium.

"We hope this subject will provide ample

scope to area artists," McRae said. "The history of Macon County stretches back thousands of years, to Native American settlement. The manmade structures that reflect its history range from ancient Indian mounds and humble settler cabins to 19th century commercial buildings, rural historic districts, great homes and inns, and simple country churches and graveyards."

Twenty-three Macon County sites, including four districts, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the county has a number of properties that are eligible for listing, and many others that have local historic importance, which are not on the register.

This will be the third year of grant-making for the Jim McRae endowment. Earlier grants were used to purchase a piece by Cherokee potter Joel Queen for the Macon County Public Library and support an art class for students at Macon Middle and Mountain View Intermediate schools.

AVA members include Karen Wallace, Karen Kenney, Cherry Jackson, Rachel Hoskins, Tom Ritter, Russ Gale, Ashley Harlee, Hank Shuler, Nancy Scott and Kim Justice.

Contact McRae at [mcbarbara@frontier.com](mailto:mcbarbara@frontier.com) for more information..



## The New Artists Series continues at PAC with the Malpass Brothers March 29, 7:30pm

The Malpass Brothers' momentum is growing as fast as their sideburns. They're as authentic as country ham & red-eye gravy — and things just don't get much better than that. NC natives, the Malpass Brothers — Chris, 27 and Taylor, 23 — are the real deal in traditional country music.

Touring as opening act for music legend Merle Haggard has broadened their introduction to audiences across America. They've made

festival appearances in Northern Ireland and The Shetland Islands, and the title cut video from their album "Memory That Bad" topped the chart at number seven in CMT's Pure Country.

"Music is what we love and it's what we do. Traditional country music is the heart and soul of what makes us who we are." *Malpass Brothers*

Saturday, March 29 at 7:30pm. \$20 tickets are available online: [highlandspac.org](http://highlandspac.org) or by calling 828.526.9047

**Whole Life Market**  
Natural Products Store

Carrying a wide variety of natural products for your Mind, Body & Home.

**NECTAR Juice Bar**

Organic Fresh Juices & Smoothies and Salads To Go!

526-5999  
Corner of Foreman Road & Hwy 64 east  
Mon-Sat 10a to 5:30p

**THE DRY SINK**  
HIGHLANDS, NC

**Spring SALE**

Starts this Saturday, March 29th!

Selected HOME DÉCOR 50% Off!

Also: Bath & Body discounts on select Thymes, Caldrea, Simpatico & K Hall!

50% Off All Colonial Candles!

The Dry Sink Main Street Highlands, NC

## ...COPPER continued from page 1

other exterior materials can be simulated – stucco, clapboard, shingles batten or shiplap siding – copper can't be a simulated.

The vote was 5-1 with member Chris Boltz voting no because she objected to the stipulation that the copper be uncoated, saying she preferred the bright, shiny look of new copper and is afraid uncoated copper will eventually lose its shiny patina. Other members said they believe the copper will actually look better once it ages.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

The Planning Board has been charged with devising a Comprehensive Plan for the town so the board discussed the logistics of the project.

The town's Comprehensive Plan will be used as a guideline to determine the direction the town takes in all matters over the next five years.

Subjects include: Utilities – water, sewer, electric, garbage, broadband; Transportation – streets, sidewalks, including the Master Sidewalk Plan and parking; Recreation – the Rec Park, ball field, greenway, K-H Park and uses and policies for each location; Land Use – commercial districts review, specific uses, zoning changes, and environmental resources protection; and Public Safety – police and public safety, fire & rescue, EMS and emergency communications.

After all the fact gathering – including statistics gleaned from utility use throughout the year – the board will hopefully be able to determine the ramifications of the population influx that occurs on the Highlands Plateau over the year.

The hope is the Comprehensive Plan will help the town deal with the community changes currently occurring – that of a full-time summer destination becoming a year-round weekend retreat.

According to the Comprehensive Plan's mission statement, "It is critical to protect the character and cultural assets that will continue to attract people to Highlands during the evolution of the town."

Commissioner Eric Pierson, who attended the meeting as a bystander, said in the end the document will be something the town can use when making decisions and it will be broader than the current Land Use plan."

Each component is expected to take three months to formulate.

– **Kim Lewicki**

## ...OBITUARIES continued from page 3

### **Gwendolyn Vaughan Marshall**

Gwendolyn Vaughan Marshall passed away peacefully on Monday, March 24, 2014, at Eckerd Living Center in Highlands, NC. She was born in Lilly, Georgia on April 15, 1927 to James Nunnally Vaughan and Ferol Adams Vaughan.

In 1946 while in nursing school at Georgia State College for Women in Milledgeville, she met and married William M. Bowen and became a longtime resident of Macon, GA. She became a widow at just 36, and two years later she married O. Wesley Marshall. She was an active member of Vineville Baptist Church and served her community in Macon as the president of the Ingleside-Rivoli Garden Club and the Federated Garden Clubs of Macon. Many knew her best as the owner of the Bath Shop at the Macon Mall where she loved her customers and enjoyed decorating their bathrooms for over 20 years.

She is survived by her son, William M. Bowen (Bill), and his wife, Carol Pennington Bowen, of Highlands, NC and her daughter, Melanie Bowen Steglich and her husband, Dr. Lee Steglich, of Dallas, Texas, grandsons Scott Bowen and Jeremy Bowen and his wife Tralene Farrow Bowen, and three beloved great granddaughters, Brandlee, Bailey, and Ryan Bowen all of Griffin, Georgia.

She is preceded in death by her siblings James S. Vaughan (Sonny), Jacqueline Reeves (Jackie), and Van Vaughan of Vienna, Georgia. She is survived by a sister, Leigh Bass of Bradenton, Florida, and

a brother, Jerry Vaughan of Montezuma, Georgia, and nieces and nephews.

Gwen was always a strong fighter and survivor, overcoming many health issues throughout the years. She was known for her pleasant smile which encouraged those she touched. We wish to thank all those

who graciously cared for our mother and made her happy the last years of her life.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be sent to Vineville Baptist Church, 2592 Vineville Avenue, Macon, GA 31204 or Eckerd Living Center, P. O. Box 190, Highlands, NC 28741



### **Start Serving Food at 5:00 PM**

BBQ Pork or Chicken

Baked Beans, Coleslaw, roll & Drink

Adult Plate \$8.00

Combo Plate \$10.00

Child Plate \$5.00

Food available for take-out

Whole Boston Butts \$35.00

Whole Chickens \$10.00

Home Made Sauce Pint \$5.00-Quart \$10.00

Place orders for whole Boston Butts or whole chickens no later than March 21<sup>st</sup>

Contact John Munger at 828-371-0722

### **Bluegrass Music Starts at 6:00 PM**

#### Auction

Cakes, Breads, & Various Other Items

#### Raffle

Selling Tickets on a Chance to Win \$300 cash

### **Blood Drive set for April 22**

Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (HCH) along with AnMed Regional Blood Center will continue their annual joint blood drive April 22nd. The AnMed bloodmobile will be at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital on Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and at the Highlands First Citizen Bank from 3 to 5 p.m.

Anyone 16 years or older and at least 110 pounds can give blood. If you are taking medication, it won't usually prevent you from giving blood; however, you may want to bring the name of the medication with you. The AnMed officials will determine their eligibility through the donor screening process.

Giving blood will only take 30-45 minutes out of your day. Be sure to eat and drink plenty of fluids before you come. Donating just one pint of blood can save up to three lives.

## Highlands School Ladies Soccer



### SOCCKER ROSTER

#### SENIORS

Rebekah Parks  
Emily Gabbard  
Ellie Cate Beavers  
Bella Lupoli  
Ana Martinez  
Mary Gillian Renfro

#### JUNIORS

Kirstyn Owen  
Jessica Tilson  
Ashlee Maitland

#### SOPHOMORES

Whitney Billingsley  
Courtney Henry

#### FRESHMAN

Blakely Moore  
Emily Crowe  
Sarah Torres

#### MANAGERS

Allie Preda Manager  
Betty Garcia Manager

#### HEAD COACH

Jeff Weller

#### ASST. COACHES

Brian Crook  
Jimmy Blyther  
Christy Weller

## Highlands School Ladies Softball



### LADIES SOFTBALL ROSTER

#### COACH

Brooklyn Ellenburg

#### ASST. COACHES

Aaron Reese and Kayla Bell

#### TEAM

Kassie Vinson  
Ann Marie Crowe  
April Moss  
McKinley Mosely  
Emily Shuler  
Bethany Shuler  
Amber Reese  
Megan Vinson  
McKayla Hensley  
Carrie McClure  
Autumn Houston  
Sierra Nyland  
Alexa Reese  
Erica Barnes

## League sponsoring Candidate Forum Thurs., April 10

On April 10, the League of Women Voters of Macon County will sponsor a forum for candidates for county commission. The public is invited. The meeting will be held at noon at Tartan Hall in Franklin.

One seat is open in District 1. Michael Rogers (D), John Shearl (R), and incumbent James Tate (R) are running for the seat. In District 2, incumbent Ronnie Beale (D), incumbent Ron Haven (R), John Martin (L), and Gary Shields (R) are running for two available seats.

The election will be held on May 6. Early voting starts on April 24 and ends on May 3. Absentee voting began on March 17. Voter registration deadline is April 11.

## Highlands School Golf Team



Photo by Jessica Webb

Senior John Pisano; Juniors Brent Amundrud and Davis Moore; Sophomores Kyle Gabbard, Austin Nichols and Johnny Lupoli. Head Coach Keven Gabbard and Assistant Coach Jerry Moore.

## High School Track Team and Middle School Track Team



Photo by Melody Spurney

## INVESTING AT 4,118 FT.

### Make that first and lasting impression count!

By Wanda Klodosky  
Landmark Realty Group

Spring is here (or so the calendar says) and many people are considering listing their homes for sale. The first impression a buyer has of your home is often the difference between whether your house makes their 'short list' of consideration or in many cases, whether the house is even viewed by the buyer. The following list includes a few things a seller should consider when putting their home on the market:

- Drive by and stand outside of your home. Look at it as if for the first time. Is it appealing? What would make it more so?

- The front door is typically the initial place of entry. Is it clean? Is the paint or varnish fresh? Does it lock and unlock easily? Watching an agent struggle to unlock the entry door is not a positive first impression.

- Clean out and repair the gutters.

- Repair or replace torn and/or missing window screens. Removing the screens during the listing time does let in more light, but the removed screens should



be stored somewhere safe and be ready to be put back on the windows.

- Pressure wash or hose down exterior (siding, driveway, porches, decks, etc). Make sure any exterior furniture is clean and mildew-free.

- Have the yard surrounding the house trimmed, neat and freshly mulched. Adding colorful plants/yard ornaments could be a plus

- Just as the front door is extremely important, so is the entry area. This should be clean and inviting to have a positive impact. Consider adding a good piece of art, sculpture or even a small fountain.

- Can prospective buyers en-

vision themselves in this home or does your family's presence overwhelm the space? During the listing period, it is a good idea to remove your keepsakes and photos. Carefully store and mark them, extra bonus, that's one less box to pack when the home sells!

- This is also the optimum time to clean out and neaten up your storage areas. As in the point above, this is one less step you'll need to take when your home has sold and will give the buyer the impression of available storage.

- While cleaning out and removing items from your home, consider a yard sale. This has multiple positives, including an opportunity to let your neighbors know you plan to list your home – do they know anyone who might have interest?

- Kitchens and bathrooms are often a buyer's main focus. Before listing your home, have all grout, tile, ovens, stoves, appliances, surface units, etc. thoroughly cleaned. Replace or repair any broken tile. If you do not already use a professional cleaning service, having a complete spring-cleaning before going on the market is a good idea. This will make it easier for you to maintain the house.

This information is just a basic guideline to start you on the right track for selling your home. Each home has its own positives and drawbacks. Work with your REALTOR®. REALTORS® see many properties and can help guide you toward showcasing what your property offers. It is important to choose a REALTOR® and discuss preparations before you begin preparing your home for sale. Your REALTOR® will be able to help you develop a plan of action so your home will impress.

- Landmark Realty Group of Highlands is located at 225 Main Street. Landmark covers the rest of the plateau with two locations in Cashiers and an office at the Burlingame Welcome Center. Visit them today at [www.LandmarkRG.com](http://www.LandmarkRG.com) or call (828) 526-4663.

**VARSITY TRACK:** Cade Bordner, Andy Marquez, Remy Adrian, Carter Potts, Luke Rodgers, Clayton Pair (Not pictured), Jody Thor-ske, Montana McElroy, Chance Gilbert

**Middle School Track:** Jose Jimenez, Freddie Lopez, Juan Garcia, Jose Machuca, Manuel Contreras, Kim Feria, Trinity Dendy, Madison Lloyd, Sarah Rogers (Not pictured)

**HEAD COACH:** Ryan Kean



# • SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

## Disturb the darkness



By Virginia Monroe  
Church of the Good Shepherd

The journey toward the dawn of Easter is growing shorter. But we are not there yet. As we scan the horizon, the shadows of the Cross obliterate our view of that early morning sky that will announce to the world—with the white hot Light of Easter—the rising of the Son.

As we peer into the pitch-black of Good Friday we glimpse the silhouettes of two figures, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Two fearful, fledgling disciples who heretofore secretly followed Jesus. From the shadows they watched, listened, heard the cry, “It is finished.” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (John 19:30) Darkness enveloped the world. Touchable darkness.

Suddenly, courageously, Joseph asked Pilate for the battered, lifeless body of Jesus. “Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body. Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds.” (John 19:38-39)

The two men got busy. Fine linens were carefully wrapped around the body. Mountains of embalming spices lavishly piled up. A new tomb was prepared. They did not have to do it. It endangered their lives. But they had to do it. They had to stir up the stillness. They had to disrupt the darkness.

My mind turns to another tenebrous time. The thirty-day vigil of praying, watching and waiting was over. Finished. Mother was dead. I returned to the tiny hotel apartment across from the hospital. The flashing neon sign—Town House—ironically reminded me that this place had been my home during the earth-shattering, life-changing ordeal.

Darkness filled the apartment. Thick, tangible darkness. I yearned for the darkness to enfold me, to blot out the ache in my heart. Yet I feared that the darkness would engulf me, snatching me away from life.

I began to clean. Dingy floors were mopped until they were spotless. Cheap plastic furniture was dusted with the care reserved for fine antiques. Bathroom tiles scrubbed until they gleamed. I did not have to do it. Housekeeping would come later that day. But I had to do it. I had to disrupt the devastating darkness.

There are times in your life and mine when darkness enshrouds our world. Thick, tenacious, tangible darkness. Darkness that threatens to destroy us. In such lightlessness, sometimes all we can do is get busy. We have to do it. We have to do it. Shatter the silence. Stir up the stillness. Do something to disturb the darkness. And wait. Knowing that our Savior Jesus Christ will pierce the darkness with the white-hot Light of Love.

## 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  
242 Hwy 107N, 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers  
www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter: 828-743-9814  
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: Education and choir rehearsal, 9 am, Holy Eucharist Rite II, (sanctuary), 10:30  
Wednesday: 10 a.m., Morning Prayer  
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist, (chapel), 10 am

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS**  
www.fbchighlands.org  
Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor  
220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741  
828-526-4153  
Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am  
Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Meeting 6:15 pm; Choir 5 pm

**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

**HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Hwy 107N. • Glenville, Nc • 743-2729  
Pastor Nathan Johnson  
Sunday: School 9:45a, Worship 11a & 7p  
Bible Study 6p  
Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

**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)  
Sun.: 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 )  
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 Troy Nicholson, (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  
Sun.: 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.  
Child Care - 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
Religious Education - 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.  
Youth 8th - 12th grade meets 2nd Sundays 5 - 7:30 p.m.

**WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers  
Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

# ...PARKING continued from page 1

sistency of its application," said Mayor Patrick Taylor. "If we can't find common ground, then maybe in the future the elimination of the ordinance will be an option. But if we can come together, I think we can make this work for all concerned."

He said the Town Board, town staff and he have been listening to all stakeholders and understand fully how people feel about the issue, but he said the critical problem about the ordinance is its enforcement.

"Contrary to what some have said, the police and town staff are not lazy in enforcing the ordinance. The police spend substantial time investigating violators. But too often violators go to Town Hall expecting the tickets to be forgiven, or those same people refuse to pay the fine and continue to violate the ordinance," said the Mayor. "For those few who violate the ordinance over and over again, there needs to be consistent polity of enforcement and consequences for these flagrant acts of non-compliance."

The fine for not complying with the ordinance is \$50.

"With any ordinance you are always going to have folks who refuse to obey them. How do you enforce it? Write a ticket and what are the repercussions if they don't pay the ticket? Does it go on their credit report, or do you get a tow truck in there? If violators don't care about what's on their credit report, if they just continue to violate it, I don't know how you are going to prevent that," said Commissioner Brian Stiehler.

Last year police issued 16 tickets – usually to the same people. Mayor Taylor said the vast majority of merchants do comply with the ordinance; it's just a handful of people who don't.

As at the retreat, Commissioner Stiehler said he would be reluctant to do away with the ordinance.

"The ordinance is far from perfect but it serves a purpose for visitors and locals. There are times when all of us run into town for a quick stop into a store and it's nice that we don't have to

compete with employees for parking spots," he said. "The parking spaces have an economic impact value, too. We owe it to the community and businesses with whom we have a working relationship to make this work. The more success the businesses have the more success the town has in the form of sales tax revenue. This is an important thing; it's a joint venture and it needs to continue that way."

At the retreat Commissioner Donnie Calloway said he was the one who suggested doing away with the parking ordinance. He said he was tired of dealing with parking issues and did so 19 years ago when he was on the Town Board. Thursday night he said he believed the town and the ordinance were on the right track, but was concerned with the fact that violators just tear up tickets and continue to disregard the ordinance.

"I understand the previous mayor and previous town manager allowed this and we just can't have that. We have people who aren't paying just like they aren't paying water, sewer and utilities. They snub their noses. They can't do that. We have to have some teeth in the ordinance or we shouldn't have an ordinance," he said. "If we can get together and come up with an ordinance that everyone thinks will work, I have no problem with that. But if we can't, we should just kick it to the curb."

Director of the Chamber of Commerce Bob Kieltyka said the fact that Highlands is one of the few towns that has a parking ordinance.

"I pooled 23 chambers in counties west of Asheville and everyone has parking problems. Many said they wished they had an ordinance. So we are well ahead of the curve which speaks well of the town and its stakeholders," he said.

He also said since the town dropped its two-hour parking limit in the business district five years ago for the current ordinance the parking situation improved greatly with very few complaints.

"But we do have to make it work better," he said.

Mayor Taylor proposed that a committee be formed of town personnel, merchants and citizens to review the ordinance and make recommendations to the board specifically concerning its enforcement, in a month's time before the season starts.

Saying he wants the ordinance to work, assigned to the committee are Bob Frye, Chief Bill Harrell, Josh Ward, Bob Kieltyka, Leslie Scott (Reeves) Harry Bears (Xtreme Threads) Jerry Moore (Kilwins) Julian Franklin (retired businessman), and Commissioner Brian Stiehler.

Commissioner Stiehler said he hopes the committee can come up with something that has teeth, but doesn't know how the town will ever get 100% to comply.

"To me it seems like there is a small handful of people who refuse to abide by the ordinance and again, I don't know how you deal with that."

## Wayfinding

After the Town Board agreed on the font and verbiage, the final piece of the Wayfinding project is completed. The 11 signs listing several destinations and six blade signs listing one destination have been ordered and will hopefully be erected before the season starts.

At its February retreat, commissioners agreed to let the Small Town Main Street Program in which the town has been involved for over four years, go dormant.

Now that the branding and signage is complete and since Town Planner Josh Ward said participation and interest has decreased greatly, commissioners agreed citizens could take it from here.

Commissioner John Dotson said people can come to the Town Board with ideas without continuing the program.

Commissioner Amy Patterson agreed. "Government doesn't have to do everything and we don't have to be in the middle of everything."

## ABC Board

Recently the town learned that the regional ABC Commission, that oversees local ABC Boards in North Carolina, told

the town that members of the local board should not be purveyors of alcoholic beverages.

Mayor Taylor said staff is checking with Raleigh to see if that is true since the local board members don't set prices or or-

der stock. Members of the ABC Board are Tom Clark, John Underwood, Harry Bears, Thomas Craig and Brenda Pierson. Thomas Craig owns the Ugly Dog Public House in Highlands.

– Kim Lewicki

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

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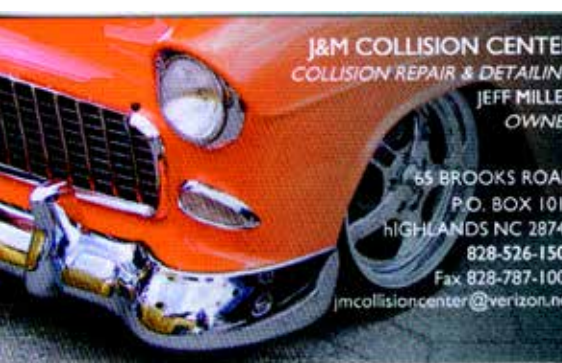
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# • POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

**Highlands PD log entries from March 11.**  
**Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor, or public officials have been used.**

## March 11

• At 2:30 p.m., officers received a report of shoplifting at Potpourri where a person took a pair of Oakley Gold Shield sunglasses valued at \$170 off the shelf and put them in a pocket.

## March 13

• At 3:05 p.m., officers received a report of a burglary with forced entry at a residence on Laurel Street.

## March 14

• At 5:45 p.m., a nuisance dog report was taken involving an incident on Memorial Park Drive.

## The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log

**entries from March 19**

## March 19

• At 11:57 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brookside Lane where someone had fallen.

## March 20

• At 11:37 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Highlands Plaza for a medical call.

## March 22

• At 10 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to US 64 west near The Bascom for a medical call.

• At 1:04 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Broadview Circle for a medical call.

## March 24

• At 10 a.m., and again at 2:14 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Old Walhalla Road. It was false.

## March 24

• At 7:47 p.m., the dept. stoodby at the Hospital for a MAMA landing.

# • CLASSIFIEDS •

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**FULLTIME HOUSEKEEPER FOR RETIREMENT COMMUNITY.** Apply at Chestnut Hill of Highlands, 24 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands, NC. (4/10)

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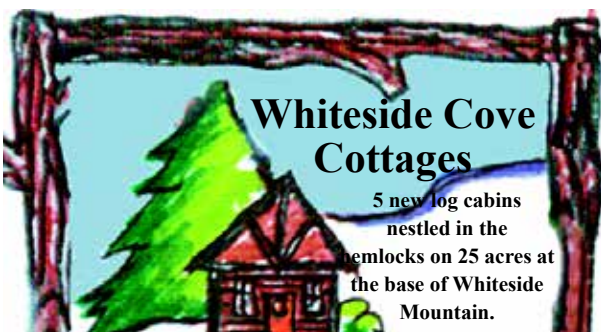
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# • CLASSIFIEDS •

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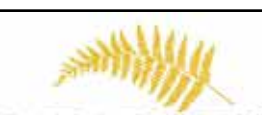
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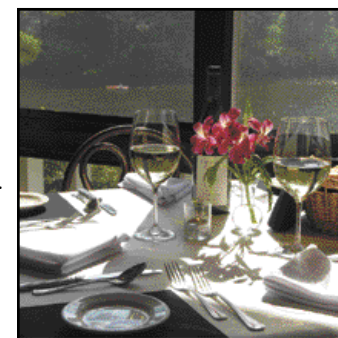
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