

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 12, Number 12

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Thurs., March 19, 2015

Town is considering getting into Wi-Fi; broadband biz

"If Hollywood is moving to Wilson, NC, then they sure has heck can come here. Looking forward like this is dynamic."

At the Town Board retreat, Monday, March 9, Commissioner John Dotson summed up the

board's feelings about seriously considering investing in wi-fi and broadband as a utility for Highlands and outlying areas.

During his presentation, Matt Shuler, MIS/GIS Director discussed the viability and the

importance of wiring Highlands' downtown business area as well as residences in and outside of town for broadband connectivity – something he has been pushing for years but something that has fallen on deaf ears until now.

Trouble is the window enabling municipalities to get into the broadband business shut about six years ago, when North Carolina courts ruled that munici-

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Gift Surplus sweepstakes machines legal in some counties; not Macon, yet

Case against MC Sheriff Holland and Highlands Police Chief Harrell is dismissed

By Merritt N. Shaw

The battle over the legality of gaming machines in Macon County has been raging for years now, but the most recent conflict isn't whether sweepstakes machines are legal – though some NC District Judges have ruled they are legal – and whether local law enforcement will allow businesses with sweepstakes machines deemed legal to do business without the threat of being shut down or having the machines seized.

Gift Surplus, LLC, a Georgia based company and owned by Michael Macke, developed software for sweepstakes machines and has been the center of legal cases all over North Carolina including Macon, Jackson and Haywood counties.

According to its attorney, George Hyer, several North Car-

olina District Courts have ruled that sweepstakes machines are compliant with North Carolina's law as being legal machines."

However, the ruling of an individual District Court Judge in North Carolina has no legal binding on other districts in North Carolina. Each particular case must be decided by individual district judges on its merits and set of facts.

That is why Hyer voluntarily dropped the civil lawsuit that was pending against MC Sheriff Robbie Holland, Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell, Sylva Police Chief David Woodard and instead joined a lawsuit in Onslow County that is seeking legality.

The case is being heard by the NC State Supreme Court. The appeal seeks relief from law en-

•See SWEEPSTAKES page 6

Headed to All-Star game



Highlands School seniors Kirstyn Lamb and Brent Amundrud have been selected to play in a 1A all-star basketball game on March 21 at Cherryville High School. Highlands School Athletic Director Brett Lamb was chosen as one of the girls' coaches for the West team. The students were selected by the conference coaches for their overall play within the conference. Both students were named All Conference this season as well.

– Photo by Carol Bowen

MC not affected by measles outbreak

By Merritt N. Shaw

An outbreak of measles, that started in California and spread to 18 states in late 2014 and early 2015, rekindled a debate of the

pros and cons of being vaccinated and brought the consequences of the right of individual free-

•See MEASLES page 6

QZAB loan could fund renovations to Highlands School

By Merritt N. Shaw

Macon County Commissioners agreed to apply for a QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds) loan, last Tuesday night, to pay for the renovations of Union Academy and the Highlands School.

The deadline to get the QZAB loan is December of this year. MC Finance Director Lori Hall said that it took about five months to get approval for a previous QZAB loan attained by the county for renovations to the Highlands School elementary wing.

Given the time it takes for approval, Commissioner Ronnie Beale said applying for the loan will at least get the ball rolling. MC Attorney Chester Jones re-

•See QZAB page 5

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

On tonight's Town Board agenda

The agenda for tonight's Highlands Town Board meeting is very brief. I do not anticipate a long meeting that begins at 7 pm.

The board will approve the transfer of funds within the budget to do extensive repairs of sidewalks around town. I see a lot of folks walking on these sidewalks early in the morning and in the afternoon all year around.

Walkers may have noticed white painted V marks on many sidewalk sections where there are major cracks and implosions of the concrete. These are the areas that will be replaced after the transfer of funds from savings on other public works projects.

What I like is that the town can make these repairs now instead of having to delay for the arrival of the new fiscal year in July.

The board will also review amending the current budget to cover two items for recreation projects currently underway. One item is a covering for the new gym floor. Installation of the floor began this past Monday. When the gym will be used for activities such as bridge tournaments



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

and art shows, the cover will protect the new maple floor. While this is an additional expense, the long term payback will be less frequent floor refinishing costs.

In addition, there is an amended budget request for new bleachers at the ball field. Currently, the ball field complex is being rebuilt and the bleachers are a part of this upgrade. Ball teams should be playing in the new facility sometime in May.

In the consent agenda there is a request to award a paving contract to pave parts of Oak Street. This project is part of the current town budget and was not scheduled during the past fall and summer seasons. As warm weather returns creating ideal conditions, the contractor will have until April 30 to complete the project before large numbers of seasonal residents and visitors return.

There will also be updates on other construction projects, such as the Lake Sequoyah water project, the park construction and the pool enclosure. The pool plan calls for swimming in the summer regardless of the progress on the pool enclosure.

Some projects begun this winter are near completion with finishing touches in process. The 6" waterline on NC 28 is in place. The contractor is now doing upgrades to neighborhood service connections because the main project came well under budget. These new upgrades were overdue, and I am delighted that they are being done now while the contractor is already on site.

Paving will soon be placed next to the new stone wall on 3rd Street. The stone tree planters on Main Street, a project donated to the town, will be completed soon.

Hope to see everyone tonight at the Highlands Community Building next to the ball field.

• LETTERS •

Responsibilities come with 'open government'

Dear Editor

The national week of the celebration for an open government is meaningless unless our elected officials change their ways. We can make that happen by voting for those who believe in an open government.

Those we elect must be qualified, forthcoming, not above the law, truthful, honest and sincere. Their number one priority should be what is best for the American people as opposed to any self interest. They must be responsible and admit to mistakes they make and not blame others. They should be completely transparent in all their dealings and they should do to others as they would have others do to them.

Issues such as concealing documents, lying "or misspeaking," not aware of it or we'll get to the bottom of it just does not cut the mustard. This makes for mistrust.

If we truly had a trustworthy and open government we would most certainly have more to celebrate.

Paul S. Horvath
Highlands

We need a healthcare system citizens can afford for the long term

Dear Editor,

The Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, is proof that our healthcare system in America is beyond broken.

As a father of four and a small business owner, I understand the importance of access to healthcare. Notice I did not say access to health insurance.

I realize that without health insurance, in today's marketplace, it usually means no access to healthcare; but does Obamacare really fix that situation? If you cannot afford the premium and the deductibles and co-pays, do you really have access to healthcare?

From my perspective, it appears the American people, through their representatives and senators, have sold their future to insurance companies, not healthcare providers. When 87% of the 11.4 million people enrolled in Obamacare are receiving an average subsidy of \$3,312 per year, I find that figure alarming.

Why should the federal government be subsidizing health insurance, much less healthcare? I realize we do not have a true free market system but subsidizing

health insurance to the tune of more than 10 billion dollars a year just for Obamacare is going to take us further off track from allowing average Americans access to healthcare. I suggest that our healthcare is so good (or overpriced) the average American cannot afford it, even with Obamacare subsidies.

With the federal government already subsidizing the food industry, through food stamps, to the tune of \$75 billion dollars annually, what is next?

The federal government's overwhelming role in the day to day life of Americans is clearly a slippery slope.

It appears the only real winners in Obamacare are the health insurance companies and maybe the providers as the cost of healthcare continues to soar.

According to an article written by Paul Mullen and published on Obamacarefacts.com, healthcare costs will continue to grow faster than the economy for the next 20 years. This growth is unsustainable when you consider the average worker with an employer sponsored plan already spends 10 to 20 percent of the median U.S. income for health insurance and healthcare costs. This is more than the cost of groceries for most families.

If we are to save healthcare in America, we need to create parity between what the average worker earns and the cost of healthcare.

If you receive a routine MRI that takes less than one hour to administer and less than one hour to interpret and the

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Locally owned and operated by

Kim & Jim Lewicki

Adobe PDF version at

www.HighlandsInfo.com

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Letter Policy:

We reserve the right to reject or edit letters-to-the-editor. No anonymous letters will be accepted. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.



• OBITUARIES •

Eugene Gartly Partain

Eugene "Gene" Gartly Partain, born on October 4, 1930, passed away Saturday, March 7, 2015 at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC. Gene was the son of Eugene Gardner and Zoe Allen Partain, and the brother of his closest friend, Edward Allen. Married to his beloved Ute Agnes Gisela Reinsch for 63 years, Gene was the father of two adored children, a daughter, Gia Michele, and a son, Matthew Reinsch. Gene also had four grandchildren, Cara Allen Murphy, Audrey Elisabeth Murphy, Kyle Nicholas Reinsch Partain and Ian Christopher Wong Partain, and a loving daughter-in-law, Yoke Ching Wong and son-in-law and dear friend Paul Joseph Murphy. Gene is also survived by his nephew, John David Partain and niece, Lisa Partain Hampton.



yers, the International Academy of Trial Lawyers, the International Society of Barristers, the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Union Internationale des Avocats.

During his career he was listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in American Law, Best Lawyers in America and was recognized by the American Bar Association Journal as one of the coun-

try's top litigators.

He and his brother, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) USA, both served their country during the Korean War and both served in airborne and special military units. They took great pride in the fact that their father had served as an enlisted foot soldier in World War I and that their maternal great grandfather served as a cavalry captain during the Civil War.

There will be a celebration of Gene's life on March 21, 2015 at 2 PM at Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church located at 805 Mount Vernon Highway, Atlanta, GA 30327.

In lieu of flowers, contributions in Gene's honor may be made to Mission Hospital at www.missionphilanthropy.org/donate/.

An online memorial register is available at www.grocefuneralhome.com

Enrollment extended for Affordable Care

Did you pay a penalty for not having health insurance in 2014? Do you still need coverage to avoid the penalty for 2015? Help is on the way for tax filers who still need to get covered for 2015. A SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD will run from March 15th through April 30th for people who meet the following qualifications:

- Are not currently enrolled in coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace for 2015
- Paid the fee with your 2014 federal income tax return for not having coverage in 2014
- Were confused or didn't know about open enrollment dates for 2015 coverage and need another opportunity to enroll in coverage for the remainder of 2015.

Free in-person assistance is available to help people during this Special Enrollment Period in the seven western most counties of North Carolina (Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Graham, Clay and

Cherokee). Call a local Certified Marketplace Navigator from Mountain Projects, Inc. Call now for appointments beginning March 15 at 828-452-1447 locally in Haywood or toll free at 800-627-1548.

...LETTERS from page 2

cost is \$1,200 to \$1,800; how do you have parity when the average worker is earning between \$12 and \$18 per hour or \$600 per week?

We cannot allow healthcare to bankrupt our country and its citizens but we must find a real solution to a real problem.

I want everyone to have access to healthcare but I want a system our country and its citizens can afford for the long term.

Sources: Healthcare.gov, Obamacarefacts.com, Forbes.com (Bruce Japsen 5/22/13), USDA.gov, Census.gov.

Jerry Moore
Highlands, NC



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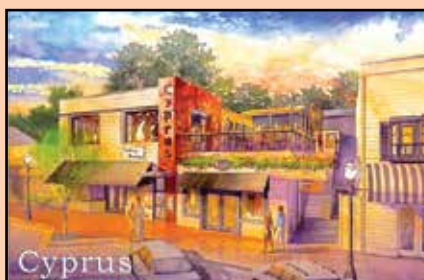
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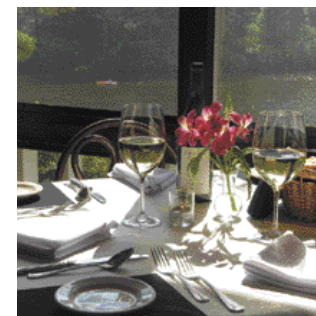


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...QZAB continued from page 1

minded the board that it wasn't committing to anything at this time.

"We can't give any expenditures tonight, but we can at least approve to start the application," said Beale.

Beale, who is on the Board of Education liaison committee said it was recommended to apply for the loan to find out what the payments would be so the county could budget and move forward on the renovations.

The preliminary budget for the renovation of both schools totals \$2.7 million.

County Manager Derek Roland suggested requesting \$3 million based on some things that were not included in the estimate such as title insurance, title examination, bonding council, engineering, humidity testing, field survey – a total of about \$40,300.

On the last QZAB loan for the Highlands Elementary School renovation these costs were not included in the estimate and exceeded \$80,000.

He said a 15-year loan would cost \$189,000 a year for \$2.7 million and about \$665,000 was coming off the annual

debt service this year.

Hall said right now the interest rate is at zero.

"It should stay at zero, but there is no guarantee. We have some QZAB loans on the books that are at 1.1% interest and one at 1.4%. It's still a low interest rate," she said.

Beale said one of the things to consider is that they would have to go through the bidding process and they will have to put up some "front money" just like they have to do on all school projects.

The county would enter into a local agreement and would put in a request for quotes from the architects then whatever monies given ahead of time by the county would be paid back as part of the loan package through a reimbursement resolution from the loan proceeds.

Renovations to the Highlands School high school wing include: a new ceiling, lights, paint, floors, all new windows, marker boards, cabinets, HVAC system which will include a heating and cooling pump in each classroom, some new wiring and piping (if needed).

In addition, the office area will also be renovated with more glass so employees can see into the center lobby and hallway. The media center will also get new carpet and paint.

Highlands School Principal Brian Jetter requested that the renovation include connecting the high school and middle school wings to the elementary building for safety reasons.

The QZAB application will be presented and voted on at the continuation and joint meeting with the MC Planning Board and MC Commissioners March 31 at 6 p.m.

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...SWEEPSTAKES continued from page 1

forcement from threatening the shutdown of the stores that have Gift Surplus, LLC machines in their stores and will once and for all settle, statewide, the ambiguity of whether the machines are considered legal under the gaming laws in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Court of Appeals (NCCOA) ruled that the Gift Surplus software is considered within the legal confines of the general statutes.

Three appellant judges who ruled on the case upheld an injunction filed against Onslow Sheriff, Ed Brown, to keep him from seizing or shutting down businesses that have Gift Surplus, LLC machines.

This order is specifically enforceable only in the locations which are validly operating four or less Gift Surplus System (v1-01.1) Gift Surplus computer kiosks at one location or on one site. The attorneys for law enforcement filed a motion to dismiss the injunction and the lawsuit. The appellant judges denied the dismissal and granted the injunction.

Furthermore, the NCCOA said in its decision that, "There is a likelihood that Gift Surplus, LLC will prevail in this case because the software (Gift Surplus System v1-01.1) conducts a valid sweepstakes within the applicable law. They are dependent on skill or dexterity as required under NC statutory law and are a lawful promotional device for the sale of gift certificates and operation of their promotional sweepstakes.

There were several defendants in different counties in North Carolina who were being prosecuted by their local law enforcement for having illegal video gaming machines,

until they put in machines that complied with the NC statute defining legal machines.

The case pending in State Supreme Court will determine and give relief of whether local law enforcement has the right to threaten shut down or criminally prosecute retail store owners, if businesses use this type of software or machines.

It all boils down to an "uncertainty, insecurity and controversy" between the parties about whether the machine is in compliance with the statutes.

Sheriff Robbie Holland said that Mike Bonfoey, the District Attorney, at the time said the machines were illegal and he acted on that information. Holland said now he is not sure what the status is and deferred to MC Sheriff Dept. Attorney Brian Welch.

"George Hyra, the attorney for Michael Macke, owner of Gift Surplus, LLC, filed a motion to dismiss their appeal which was granted by the court and ended the case in our favor," said Welch. "They have a similar case pending in Onslow County which they apparently thought was the stronger case and they did win on the first issue in that case involving a motion to dismiss."

...MEASLES continued from page 1

dom to the forefront

One side advocates for vaccinations and the other side doesn't want to expose their children or themselves to what they think are manmade chemicals or more government control.

Fortunately, the virus never made its way to North Carolina and there are no reported cases of measles in Macon County to date, but if there ever is an outbreak here of any kind of contagious disease, the public health department is prepared.

According to Kathy Crist, Director of Patient Care Services at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital if there was an outbreak, the hospital would partner with Macon County Public Health to follow their process for an outbreak.

"Internally, we follow our Infection Prevention policy for prevention of exposure and use our airborne isolation room if we had an admission," she said.

The way Macon County prepares for this type of outbreak is through an "Epi Team." The team meets monthly to review current communicable disease issues in the community and to prepare and train for potential communicable disease outbreaks.

"All the preparation we have done for Ebola has helped us prepare for any outbreak that might happen," said Health Board Member Jimmy Villiard, DVM and Personal Health Section Administrator.

MCPH staff has recently participated in training on contact tracing and isolation procedures which would be relevant in any communicable disease outbreaks including measles.

Population Health Section Administrator with Macon County Public Health Becky Barr said that the Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine is available at the Macon County Public Health in Franklin.

"If you are not sure whether you need a vaccination or not, a nurse at the health department can help you determine if you need a shot. There is also a blood titer (test) that can verify immunity," she said.

Barr provided the 2013 percentages of children in

The Onslow case is still active and the order that was entered specifies that it only applies in Onslow, so there is no precedent that applies statewide.

The case actually states the restraining order against the Onslow Sheriff, is in regard to any and all machines owned by Michael Macke, statewide, but the restraining order is only against the Onslow County Sheriff.

Welch said in his opinion Gift Surplus machines are illegal in North Carolina, with the exception of Onslow County

Although North Carolina law generally prohibits gambling (except for lotteries allowed under Chapter 18C), the state has long permitted businesses to market and promote the sale of their products through the use of promotional sweepstakes. More particularly, sweepstakes are specifically allowed under the most recent gaming statute, N.C.G.S. 114-306.4, which went into effect on December 1, 2010.

Gifts Surplus LLC Attorney Hyler concluded that oral arguments are expected to be heard in front of the North Carolina Supreme Court sometime in April and an expected decision approximately three months later.

Macon County who were up-to-date on all of the immunizations, including MMR. As of 2013 there were 96% of children who are up to date on immunization in Macon County who were associated with the Public Health Center. Macon County has historically been well above the state average on immunizations rates.

Macon County requires every child to be vaccinated to attend school, but allows religious and medical exemptions.

Dr. Chris Baldwin, Superintendent of Macon County Schools, reported at the beginning of February, that there were 16 students who were exempt from immunizations. Fourteen of the 16 did not have all the immunizations and there were none who had opted out due to medical issues.

There were two students who were not compliant with providing immunization records and the school has no record of their immunizations. There are four students in kindergarten, due to age, who have not had their second MMR. In total, there were 20 students without complete protection from MMR.

Brian Jetter, Principal of Highlands School, said there was only one student in Highlands School who was not immunized.

Families skeptical of vaccines seem to be divided into two types. Those that believe in a "grand conspiracy" that the whole medical community is trying to make money at the expense of their child who also don't believe in science or the data -- and no amount of discussion is going to change their minds. But there are also parents who are on the fence about the vaccine.

It has been hypothesized that the anti-vaccine movement was largely started in 1998 by a British doctor, Andrew Wakefield, who published a now discredited research report in The Lancet, a British Medical Journal saying the MMR Vaccine causes autism. In 2010, The Lancet retracted the report and Wakefield lost his license, his research was denounced as a fraud after 14 studies

• See MEASLE page 16



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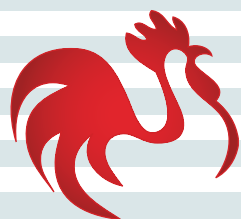
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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Ongoing

• Church of the Incarnation and the First Presbyterian Church are collecting food items for the Highlands Emergency Council and the Food Pantry. Drop off boxes are in the Ravenel Room at First Presbyterian and in the downstairs lobby at the Church of the Incarnation. Monetary donations also accepted. Make checks out to Highlands MountainTop Rotary.

• The Cub and Boy Scouts of America have three drop offs for worn and tattered flags. They properly retire them. Drop offs at Highlands Doors and Windows 2242 Dillard Road, the Highlands Fire Station or Highlands United Methodist Church office. Contact Phil Potts for more information 828 526-3719

Thurs.-Sun.

• Movies at the Playhouse: Thurs-Sunday, 2, 5 & 8 p.m. Call 526-2685 for weekly movie.

Monday

• Shortoff Baptist Church hosts a non-denominational Men's Meeting the first Monday night of each month at 7 pm and all men are invited to attend.

First Tuesdays

• FAMILY and Caregiver Support Group Meets: for Individuals that have a friend, family member or loved one living with mental illness. Learn how peers deal with stress and emotional overload. First Tuesday of Every Month 7-8 pm. Call Ann for more info (828) 369-7385

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

• OccupyWNC meets at the Jackson County Justice Center. For more information, visit www.occupywnc.org or call 828.331.1524 Tuesdays

• Reading dog "Beebles" will be at Hudson Library every Tuesday at 3:30pm. Please call (828)526-3031 to register.

• Free Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

• Zumba at the Rec Park at 8:05a. \$5.

Starting Tues., Feb. 24

• 12-week NAMI Program to educate families dealing with mental illness, 6:30 to 8:30p. The course has the dual focus of education, and understanding the experience of living with mental illness. Confidentiality is maintained. Class size is limited and pre-registration required. Contact: Ann 369-7385 or Linda 369-9838

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

• Zumba at the Rec Park at 9:05a. \$5

1st Wednesdays

• Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:15pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

3rd Wednesdays

• General Audience Movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

Thursdays

• Yoga at the Rec Park 8:15 a.m. \$6 per class.

• Storytimes with Miss Deanna at Hudson Library 10:40am. Open to the public.

• Weight Watchers support group meets every Thursday at 6pm at the Cashiers Community Center. Questions? Call Lisa 828-506-3555.

• NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness: depression, bipolar, schizophrenia, etc. and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15 pm. Call Donita for more info (828) 526-9510.

2nd Thursdays

• Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m. Newcomers welcomed.

Last Fri. of each month

• Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor from 11a to noon at The Hudson Library.

Sundays

• At the Mountain Laurel Tennis Club at 4:30 pm. Multi-denominational, Interactive Bible Study and Fellowship.

Wednesdays March 4-25

• Marriage Tuneup. 7 p.m. at Church of the Valley in Cashiers. Call 743-5470.

Thurs., March 19

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

Fri., March 20

• All Jackson County voters registered as Republicans by January 31st 2015 are invited to attend the Jackson County Republican Annual Convention at the Heritage Room at the Jackson County Senior Center, 100 County Services Park in Sylva. Registration begins at 5 PM at the Senior Center and will close at 6:30 PM. Those attendees registered as Republicans also will qualify to be one of the 27 delegates and 27 alternates to the upcoming conventions. Precinct meetings begin promptly at 5:30 PM followed by a full buffet dinner prepared by the Senior Center Chef and his staff. For more information call Jackson County Republican Chair Ralph Slaugh-

ter at 828 743-6491 or email jacksonctygop@yahoo.com

Sat., March 21

• The Highlands Plateau Greenway will conduct its monthly work day from 9a – noon this Saturday. If you are interested in participating, please email Ran Shaffner at highlandsgreenway@nctv.com or leave a message at 828-526-5622. We'll meet at the large upper parking lot (near the pool entrance) in the Recreation Park at 9:00 AM for a brief orientation session, and you will be furnished with the necessary tools and safety equipment.

• Live Music by Scott Low this Saturday the 21st, at The Lost Hiker, starting at 9pm.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous 5.5 mile hike with elevation change of 3400 ft. to Mt. Sterling in the Smoky Mountains Park for outstanding views of the Pigeon River Gorge. Meet at Waynesville Ingles at 9 am, drive 80 miles round trip from Waynesville. Call leader Keith Patton, 828-456-8895, for reservations. Visitors welcome, no dogs please.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 10.2-mile hike, elevation change 1300 ft. to Middle Prong Wilderness Loop, one of the Dirty Dozen Wilderness Hikes using Haywood Gap Trail, Buckeye Gap Trail and the Mountains to Sea Trail off the Blue Ridge Parkway. Meet in the old WalMart parking lot near KFC at 8 am, drive 60 miles round trip. Call leaders Bill and Sharon Van Horn, 828-369-1983, for reservations. Limit of eight hikers. No dogs please.

Sun., March 22

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4-mile hike to William's Pulpit on the Bartram Trail from Wallace Branch with elevation change of 900 ft. and views from the Pulpit. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 p.m., drive 6 miles round trip. Call leader Mary Stone, 369-7352. Visitors, well-behaved children and friendly dogs on leashes welcome.

• Let in HD at PAC, Romeo & Juliet from the Bolshoi Ballet at 12:55 pm. Tickets: Adults \$20 Students \$10 & PAC Members \$17 and are available online: highlandspac.org or by calling 828.526.9047

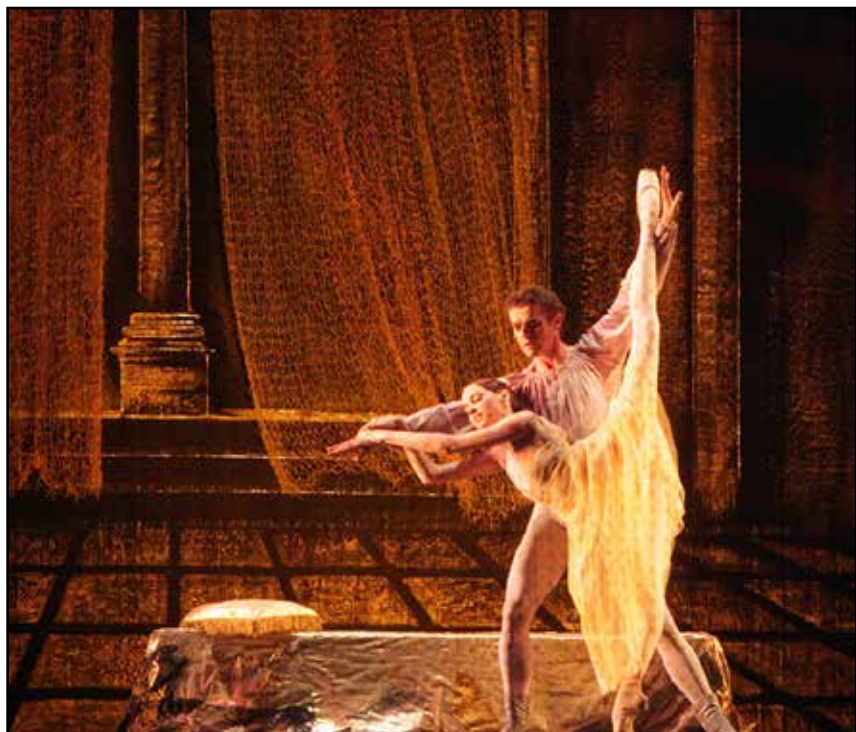
Tues., March 24

• Hudson Library Book Club will discuss "We are not ourselves" by Matthew Thomas beginning at 10:30a. Please call the library at (828)526-3031 or visit www.fontanalib.org for more information.

Forum and hot dog dinner. Parents and all interested citizens are invited! The Macon Middle School PTO in conjunction with the Macon NC Association of Educators, and the Macon Chapter of the League of Women Voters will be sponsoring a informational and organizational forum and hot dog dinner Tuesday at Macon Middle School at 6pm.

Guest speakers will cover the impact of recent cuts to driver's education, cuts to

Bolshoi Ballet's 'Romeo & Juliet' Live in HD at PAC



Romeo & Juliet presented Live in HD from the Bolshoi Ballet on Sunday, March 22 at 12:55pm at the Highlands Performing Arts Center. The rivalry between the Capulets and the Montagues as written in William Shakespeare's timeless story is brought to the stage through breathtaking choreography and Sergei Prokofiev's much-loved score. With its famous melodies, rhythmic variety and universal theme, this story of impossible love remains an all-time favorite, and is one of the world's most popular ballets. Stellar performances by Alexander Volchkov and Anna Nikulina illuminate this masterpiece, making the immortal tale of the lovers of Verona an unforgettable experience. Tickets: Adults \$20 Students \$10 & PAC Members \$17 and are available online: highlandspac.org or by calling 828.526.9047

• HIGHLANDS EVENTS •

textbook funding, teacher assistants and to the classroom experience in general. We will also discuss approaches to effectively make our needs known to local and state officials. Come and share your voice and vision for public education in Macon County.

- OccupyWNC will hold an open-to-the-public meeting at Signature Brew in Downtown Sylva, NC at 7 p.m. This first, in a series of 2015 meetings, intends to inform the community about OccupyWNC's many ventures since its beginning in 2011. The event will allow people to meet the Jackson, Macon and Swain county members.

Fri., March 27

- Community Coffee at The Hudson Library with Mayor Pat Taylor and Recreation Director Lester Norris from 11a to noon. Refreshments provided.

Sat., March 28

- Satolah Fire & Rescue Annual Spring Benefit. Food and Bluegrass music. BBQ pork and chicken plates. Food starts at 5 p.m. and music begins at 6 p.m. Auction and raffle, too. For whole Boston Butts or Whole Chickens call 828-371-0722.

- Bethel United Methodist Church is hosting an Easter Party on March 28, beginning at 10 am. There will be lots of games, an Easter egg hunt and a visit from the Easter Bunny. All are welcome.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will hold the Thru Hiker Chow Down for hikers on the Appalachian Trail, serving chili dogs and sweets from 11 am – 2 pm at the Lazy Hiker. If you would like to help prepare food call David Sapin, 828-369-2628.

Sun., March 29

- The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation presents Elisabeth Von Trapp at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary. Elisabeth is the granddaughter of Maria and Baron Von Trapp who inspired the Sound of Music. The concert is free but a love donation will be taken.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5 mile hike, elevation change 200 ft., on the Rufus Morgan Falls Trail to a beautiful waterfall named for the founder of the Nantahala Hiking Club. Wildflowers should be blooming. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 2 pm, drive 24 miles round trip. Call leader Jean Hunnicutt, 524-5234, for reservations. Visitors welcome, no dogs please.

Mon., March 30

- Macon County Public Health is currently conducting a series of public listening sessions to gain public input on a variety of vulnerable health populations who live in Macon County. A listening session to learn more about the issues affecting those living with a Mental Illness in Macon County will be held at 6p. Dinner will be provided. The meeting will be held at the Sunset Restaurant, 498 Harrison Ave. in Franklin.

Friday, April 3

- The annual Easter egg hunt at the Fidelia

Eckerd Center at 2:30 p.m.

Sat., April 4

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will meet at the clubhouse in Franklin to prepare Easter bags for hikers on the Appalachian Trail. Meet at the NHC Clubhouse at 9:00 am to help make the bags. Contact Elena Marsh at 369-8915.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 5-mile hike to Standing Indian Mtn. from Deep Gap north on the Appalachian Trail with elevation change of 1100 ft. Meet at West Gate Plaza in Franklin at 9 am, drive 44 miles round trip. Call leader Mary Stone, 369-7352, for reservations.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will have a booth with information about the Club at the Nantahala Outdoor Center Festival in Wesser NC. Call Olga Pader, 369-2457.

Sat., April 11

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 10-mile hike with elevation change of 2000 ft. on Standing Indian Loop from the Backcountry parking area, up Kimsey Creek to Deep Gap, lunch on Standing Indian Mtn., returning on Lower Ridge Trail. Wildflowers should be beautiful. Meet at Westgate Plaza at 8:00 am, drive 30 miles round trip. Call leader Don O'Neal, 828-586-5723, for reservations. Limit of eight hikers, no dogs please.

Free Von Trapp concert at Episcopal church March 29



The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation will present Elisabeth Von Trapp on Sunday, March 29 at 4pm in the sanctuary. Born and raised in Vermont, Elisabeth is the granddaughter of the legendary Maria and Baron Von Trapp, whose story inspired The Sound of Music. Singing professionally since childhood, Elisabeth has enthralled audiences from European cathedrals to Washington D.C.'s Kennedy Center. For more information call: 828.526.2968 Admission is free, a Love Offering will be accepted.



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Spring Home Improvement

NFactors that Impact a Home's Value

(StatePoint) It may seem like the size of your home is the be-all and end-all of your home's value. But there are many other factors that come into play when determining the listing price of a

particular home.

A new report offers some insights. The Coldwell Banker Home Listing Report, the most extensive home price comparison tool currently available in

the country, ranks the average listing price of four-bedroom, two-bathroom homes in nearly 2,000 markets across the country. Analyzing more than 51,000 similar-sized listings, it addresses how much a home

in one market would cost if the same home were located somewhere else in the United States.

For example, the report reveals that for the price of the average home in Los Altos, California, you could purchase 30 similar-sized homes in Cleveland, Ohio, nine homes in Charlotte, North Carolina, eight homes in Chicago, Illinois, five homes in Miami, Florida or two homes in Seattle, Washington.

But why are there such discrepancies?

"It's amazing how much location impacts a home's value," says Real Estate consumer specialist Jessica Edwards. "Typically, urban markets are more expensive, while suburban and rural areas tend to be more affordable. However, many factors contribute to the average price of a home, such as commute time or proximity to the waterfront. The Home Listing Report is a helpful reference, so you can gauge how your area compares to other parts of the country."

Local industry plays a role as well. In the case of Los Altos, which is ranked as the most expensive mar-

ket in America, the continued success of many tech companies contributes to the boom.

This information can be useful, whether you're planning to put your property on the market or you're looking to relocate. For example, if you are scouting out a neighborhood where home prices are on the verge of increasing, area features to look out for include cultural institutions -- such as art galleries and performance spaces -- as well as such factors as unique architecture and proximity to mass transit and other trendy areas.

Edwards also recommends doing some quantitative research, including talking to your Realtor about how fast properties

are selling in your area and whether business owners are investing in the neighborhood.

"Buying or selling a home is a huge emotional and financial decision," says Edwards. "By doing your homework beforehand, you will be able to take some of the uncertainty out of the process."

Remember, while this information is very useful for homeowners and prospective home buyers, it's by no means a replacement for a professional real estate agent who understands local conditions.

For many people, a home is their biggest investment and largest asset. Be savvy and stay informed about the ins and outs of its value.



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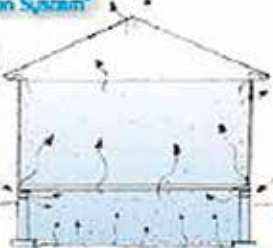
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Spring Home Improvement

What to Know About Replacing Your Mower

(StatePoint) Now is a great time to take stock of your lawn equipment, and assess whether your gear can withstand another season of wear and tear. If you've determined it's time to replace your toolshed's most valuable player -- your lawn mower -- get informed so you can make a savvy decision, as mower technology has changed a lot in the last several years.

Whether this is your first mower, your old mower is on the fritz or you're simply looking to upgrade, these tips and considerations can help you make a decision that's wise for you and your lawn.

Budget

The first thing to take into account is your budget. You need the most dependable and durable mower that you can afford. However, keep in mind, you may not have to pay the entire cost of the mower upfront.

Some brands offer various financing options that allow you to make payments over time. Whether you're seeking low minimum payments or you want to minimize interest payments, ask your dealer about your options.

Mowing Properties

Take into account the size of your property. A smaller lawn requires a smaller machine.

"For properties under a half acre, a 21- to 36-inch walk-behind mower should be ideal," says Daryn Walters at Ex-mark, a leading manufacturer of residential and



commercial mowers.

For smaller lawns, consider a small zero-turn mower with a 34-inch cutting deck. These mowers require little maintenance and offer fuel economy and durability.

If you live on a larger plot of land, don't rule out a commercial zero-turn mower, which is more durable, tends to be more comfortable to operate, and offers increased productivity with more professional-looking results.

Keep in mind, properties of more than an acre may warrant a mower with a 60- to 72-inch cutting deck. You'll be using your mower a lot, so look for an advanced ergonomic design that takes a scientific approach to ensuring that less vibration is transferred from the seat to the driver.

Mower Engine and Features

After you've considered your budget, lawn size and terrain, you'll want to look at the engine

and features offered.

Many models come with a variety of engine types and configurations, including eco-friendly models that can save you money on fuel. Mower accessories can include mulching, bagging and striping kits. Decide what your priorities are and get a model that's right for you.

By tackling your lawn with a low-maintenance, durable, easy-to-operate mower, you can save time, money and energy. So do your research before making a purchase.

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Spring Home Improvement

Create a Healthy Ecosystem in Your Own Yard

(StatePoint) This season, help promote a healthy ecosystem by learning to identify and control damaging plants and insects in your yard.

Information about common invasive species and backyard invaders is now being offered by Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE):

Invasive Plants

Invasive weeds can out-compete native species, changing the local ecosystem. Many varieties, first introduced as flora to plant in gardens, can be confused with similar, native varieties. Here are two common damaging ones to watch out for:

- Purple Loosestrife, native to Europe and Asia, is found in most states. One plant can produce more than two million seeds annually.

- Native to China, the Tree-of-Heaven was widely planted as an ornamental plant for many years and is often confused with other trees having similar leaves, such as black walnut, butternut, and most sumac.

Invasive Insects

Invasive insects can also have a severe negative impact on native species by out-competing them for food and resources. Many also cause and carry disease and prey on native species. Two common ones to look out for include:

- Emerald Ash Borer, native to Asia, is prominently found across the Northeast, Midwest, and Southeastern United States. The larvae do the most damage, killing ash trees by feeding on the inner bark.

- Zebra Mussel, native to lakes in southern Russia, is found in hundreds of waterways throughout the United States. The species commonly clog water intakes, damage boats, and can cause cuts and scrapes if they grow on rocks, swim rafts, and ladders.

Backyard Pests

Did you know native plants and insects can cause damage too?

- Ticks can transmit Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Left untreated, Lyme disease infects the joints, heart, and nervous system. After



time spent outdoors, check for ticks, especially in and around your ears, inside your belly button, behind your knees, around your waist, on your scalp, and in your hair.

- Mosquitoes can carry West Nile Virus. While most people may show few symptoms, 20 percent of people develop a fever along with headaches, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea or rash, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Follow the “three Ds” to protect yourself: Drain standing water; Stay indoors at Dusk and Dawn; Dress in long-sleeves and pants; and use DEET-based mosquito repellent.

- Poison ivy, poison oak, and poison sumac can lurk in backyards. Almost 85 percent of people develop a

rash when they come into contact with these weeds.

Control poisonous weeds long-term by carefully digging out the plants while wearing waterproof gloves or treating with a pesticide.

Defend your local ecosystem by identifying exotic plants in your garden or yard. Spot invasive weeds and insects in your area? Let your county extension office know, which may have a monitoring and management program in place.

For more lawn and garden tips, visit www.DebugTheMyths.com.

By being aware of invasive species and other pests in your area, you can help support native species and a healthy ecosystem in your own backyard and neighborhood.




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Spring Home Improvement

Tips to Add Design Appeal to Your Home

(StatePoint) Want to set your home apart? You can add character and beauty to your home by learning more about your house's architectural style and adding design elements to complement the look.

"With the right knowledge, it's easy to transform any room of your home as well as the exterior," says Niki Decker, senior product and marketing manager with Fypon, which creates synthetic millwork products.

The experts at Fypon are offering some tips and guidelines to achieve an authentic, coordinated look throughout your home -- inside and out.

- Proportions matter. If you're going to be adding shutters to your exterior, do a bit of math. The width of shutters used in pairs on a window should be half the width of the window, and should be the same height as the window.

- The higher the ceiling, the taller the baseboard should be. Additionally, the height of your baseboard moulding should always be larger than the casing, which is the frame around a door or window.

- Make a room feel taller by placing a chair rail -- the moulding used to prevent the backs of chairs from rubbing against the wall -- one-third of the way up from the floor. Chair rails should be 1/2 or one inch narrower than casings.

- If you have a classic Georgian style home, characterized by strict symmetry and a centered and paneled front door, cap the front door panel with an elaborate crown supported by decorative pillars.



- Enhance your Victorian style home with ornamental spindlework on the porches and patterned shingles on the roof. Offset the complexity with simple surrounds for windows.

- For country style cottages, consider clapboard shingles for siding, or wood shake for siding and roofing, and wide white trim or shutters around windows.

- Complete the look and feel of your Mediterranean-style home, rich with such decorative accents as round columns, tile and stone, by planting lush gardens and installing an ornate fountain.

- Maintain a traditional look with innovative, updated building material that lasts longer and with less upkeep. For example, polyurethane pieces are a lightweight alternative to wood. The pieces are easy to install and resist insects, moisture and weather conditions. Manufacturers like Fypon, which creates thousands of millwork pieces, offer products that come both textured and smooth. A new line of Classic Woodgrain decorative millwork

offers a refined woodgrain texture suitable for staining or painting, and complements home styles such as Arts & Crafts and Mediterranean.

To learn more about enhancing your home's architectural style, you can download Fypon's free Style Guide at

www.fypon.com/literature/catalog.asp.

Don't just update your house haphazardly. Do a bit of research so you can complement your home's architectural style authentically and with sophisticated flair.



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• TELL TALES •

The storm of 1977

In February 1977, we decided to enter our sailing yacht, Rubber Ducky, in the Ft. Lauderdale to Key West Race, so got our crew together and took her to Ft. Lauderdale for the start off Port Everglades.

Most of the fleet, consisting of some 45 or 50 sailing yachts, would later continue from Key West on to St. Petersburg where the St Petersburg Yacht Club sponsored the Southern Ocean Racing Conference that would take them all the way to Nassau, Bahamas. We, due to business obligations, could only make one leg to Key West.

Weather at the start was fine. The starting line was jammed with sailing yachts, some more than twice our size but we managed to get a good start in the middle of the fleet.

We settled in with the crew taking four hour watches and the rest goofing off and before long we were approaching the Florida Keys.

The Keys are lined with a series of lights to navigate by and when darkness fell, we had to stay on our toes to pick out the next light and stay safely away from the reefs that lay to starboard lest we hit one and tear our bottom out. I stayed as close to the reefs as possible because there was less current running against us and we made better time.

Don't remember what time it was, but during the night I heard what sounded like someone yelling in the distance. None of the crew heard anything so I thought maybe I was hearing things. After we finished the race, we found out it was some looney out sailing a little Hobe Cat who managed to capsize and was hollering for help. Another yacht picked him up.

We managed to put up our spinnaker as we rounded the Keys in the morning light and before long, we crossed the finish line, in the middle of the fleet. It had been an uneventful sail to Key West.

We took a berth at the old Naval Docks in Key West, along with the other boats in the fleet and managed to go ashore and eat at all the usual hangouts the locals used.

Probably a couple of hundred feet from us was a very large motor yacht and some of us got the idea of rigging up a



Bob Wilson

slingshot using some rubber tubing and lobbing water filled balloons at the yacht.

There were a number of Martini sipping well-dressed folks, on the bridge of the yacht who hadn't noticed that some of our water balloons were smacking the side of their boat with one actually flying over their heads.

Suddenly, there was a commotion on that boat and obviously one of our water balloons had hit smack in the middle of the crowd. Lucky shot.

I still have a vivid memory of what was probably their captain (might've been Ted Turner) running along the docks, obviously in a rage, looking for the guilty parties. Sibbie and I just sat in the cockpit and looked as innocent as we could, choking back our laughter.

Sailors are a crazy bunch.

Our crew rented a car and returned home so Sibbie and I had to bring the boat home by ourselves.

A few hours into the trip home, dressed in shorts, I noticed an ominous dark cloud formation to the north of us. Turns out it was a cold front that had moved much further south than usual and it hit us hard. We had bitter cold winds shrieking in the rigging and finally had to come in from offshore to get out of the huge swells and continual soaking spray coming over the bow.

With Sibbie feeding me hot soup continually, we put in at Duck Key Inn to wait out the storm. The Inn had no heat of any kind save for hot showers but they gave us some extra blankets to sleep under.

Some of you old timers may remember the storm of 1977 when they reported snow in Nassau.

We finally made our way into Miami where we began to see freeze damaged trees and palm fronds.

Home finally, our outdoor well pump had exploded from water freezing in the pump.

We didn't get much news about what went on up north during this storm and have only heard a couple of references to it since then but it must have been a real lu lu of a storm.

• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

High Fashion & Real Estate: Self Expression and Societal Reflections

Paris Fashion Week wrapped up recently, and the highlight for many was (as is typically the case) Chanel's 2015 Winter show. Creative Director, Karl Lagerfeld, transformed the Grand Palais into a Parisian brasserie, complete with waiters, croissants, café tables, and a sumptuous bar. Models walked casually (rather than strutted) through the venue in front of the audience and stopped at tables to enjoy a brief chat and refreshments. The clothes and setting had a uniform message: enjoy your life – thoroughly – in style.

I consider fashion to be wearable art – a creative expression of who we are as individuals, as well as a reflection of the society and times in which we live. Fashion may also be considered a predictor of trends to come in politics, societal values, and cultural norms. Like the early indications of a rising or falling stock market, fashion shows us glimpses of where we are headed next, long before a tipping point has been reached.

One may say the same is true for real estate.

We select our homes, their contents, and the settings in which they are located with a desire to create and express the vision we hold for how we want to live our lives. Real estate is our dream – our fantasy – of daily living; like fashion, it is one avenue for how we strive to create our reality, not unlike how one constructs a home – board by board, nail by nail, design element by design element. The walls (and everything contained within them), in so many ways, hold, define, and reflect one's life.

Beyond a mere transaction or investment, your real estate choices show us how you move in the world, what is deeply held close to your heart and spirit, and where you see yourself heading next. You create your intimate living spaces, and, in turn, they create you.

Real estate choices, like fashion, are also an interesting harbinger of things to come in terms of trends, ways of living, and life style decisions. One may view the “tiny house” trend as such an example. Generally under 500 square feet in total, a “tiny house” is a small, jewel box of a home that lives large (often with high design elements), typically constructed in



Susie deVille
Broker-in-Charge
(828) 371-2079

private settings in the woods or near a lake, river, or the sea. Folks desiring such properties tend to like their independence with a side of solitude. They view their home as their opportunity to live on their own terms, with a small footprint and low costs, without compromising quality or aesthetics.

I have more and more clients sharing their dream to take the reins of their lives back into their own hands, to live on their own terms, and to create a life and legacy that matters. All of them see real estate as an integral part of the path in doing so. Whether it is a second home in the mountains to enjoy on weekends, a home for enjoying their retirement years, a fun investment that gets them further down the path to financial independence, or all of the above, the trending desire for clients is to begin now and choose today as Day 1 in making their visions become a reality.

This trend is precisely in step with Karl Lagerfeld's message during Paris Fashion Week: enjoy your life – thoroughly – in style.

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

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...BROADBAND continued from page 1

palities couldn't use taxpayers' money to compete with the private sector.

Recently, the FCC got the state's ruling overturned but it's back in the courts because Congress is now saying that the FCC doesn't have the right to overturn a state law – that the state is sovereign. So, at this point the future is unclear.

However, commissioners are now open to offering free wi-fi throughout the

downtown area – Kelsey-Hutchinson Park is being wired for wi-fi – as a service for visitors and residents.

Shuler said it would cost the town \$50,000 to set up wi-fi. However, the town is just now entering the FY 2015-'16 budget process so capital improvements are in the discussion stages.

The project would involve two 100 megabit connections and the use of street

lights as the main component.

Long term plans – FTTx

The other connectivity project initiated by Shuler would take a lot more than \$50,000 and would mean a 15-year investment return, maybe sooner if outlying areas were included in the plan.

FTTx is Fiber to Premise which would involve many hurdles – the first being overturning Congressional rulings and the other investing the money in the project.

"But think of the 1920s when people said we need electricity if we want people to come and stay in the town," said Shuler. "It's about stimulating the economy through technology. Highlands had electricity before other areas for this reason. The longer they stay, the stronger our town economy becomes."

Second home owners from urban areas expect similar services and it's possible people would stay yearlong if they could run a business remotely through video conferencing including telecommuters, telemedicine, home monitoring, etc., he said.

While visiting Wilson, NC recently – a town that is grandfathered because it got into the broadband business before the window closed – Shuler learned of a video editor who works for Hollywood from her home in Wilson.

Since Highlands doesn't have any industry, shipping routes or railways, technology would be the new industry opening the door to software, graphic and web design companies.

"These businesses don't need shipping routes, they need bandwidth," he said.

Shuler said if the Congressional hurdles were eliminated, there would be two ways to get into the Fiber to Premise business – one by partnering with another company or doing it on our own.

He said partnering would be less expensive but Highlands wouldn't have total control.

At the retreat, the board learned that

Verizon had not yet signed the contract with the town involving extending the tower on Little Bear Pen.

"They said it's not a priority at this time," said Shuler.

Town Attorney J.K. Coward suggested officially revoking the contract which would both protect the town and open the co-location spot to another company.

US Cellular recently contacted the town about possibly erecting a triple flag pole configuration at the Town Hall complex. If they agreed to the Little Bear Pen tower instead, it would eliminate the need for additional poles in town.

Commissioners asked Shuler to contact US Cellular to see if it would be interested in the tower.

"We can't let Verizon tie it up if it isn't going to use it," they said.

Verizon's recent move halted discussion about partnering with a company.

"The only way to do it for ourselves is to do it ourselves," said Commissioner Amy Patterson.

Shuler said the town has the fiber backbone in place and it is the number one broadband transportation mechanism.

It offers higher available speeds than DSL and cable; it offers longevity and can handle longer distances from the town's central office than DSL; it is immune to interference from weather, less susceptible to lightning and robbery than copper.

"For now we work to convince Congress to allow us to get into the broadband business," he said.

"If the FCC decision holds, Highlands must take this opportunity now," said Mayor Pat Taylor. "The situation is analogous to rural electrification in the 1930s. If the private sector won't act, then government institutions charged with serving the people should have the option to provide these essential services."

Meanwhile, free wi-fi in still on the budget table.

– Kim Lewicki



Live in HD Series

<p>Sunday, March 22 12:55pm</p>  <p>Romeo & Juliet</p> <p>Adults \$20 -Students \$10 -PAC Members \$17</p>	<p>Saturday, March 28 7pm</p>  <p>A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE ARTHUR MILLER ...NO VAN NOVE</p> <p>Adults \$18 PAC Members \$15.30</p>
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After School Art Adventure
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Thursday and Friday, April 9 and 10
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To register, contact Anna Ali at 828-787-2865

...MEASLES continued from page 6

were done that showed no linkage. However, skepticism remains mainly because no one knows the cause of autism.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Measles is a highly contagious respiratory disease that is spread through the air by coughing and sneezing. It also can be transmitted through contact with secretions from the nose or mouth of an infected person.

Initial symptoms may include fever, runny nose, watery red eyes and cough and is followed by a rash of tiny, red spots – basically starting at the head and spreading to the rest of the body. Measles can lead to pneumonia and other complications, es-

pecially in young children and adults over 20. The disease also poses serious risks for pregnant women. The virus has an average incubation period of 14 days and can stay alive on a surface or in an airspace where the infected person coughed or sneezed.

Even though Measles seemed to be non-existent in the United States, it remains endemic in many countries around the world and importation of the virus will continue to occur.

People in the United States still get measles, but it's not very common because most people in this country are protected through vaccination.



Fifth Grade DARE Class graduation at Highlands School

D.A.R.E. is a substance abuse prevention education program – Drug Abuse Resistance Education. The mission and vision is to teach students good decision-making skills to help them lead safe and healthy lives in a world in which students everywhere are empowered to respect others and choose to lead lives free from violence, substance abuse, and other dangerous behaviors. Pictured with the 5th grade classes are D.A.R.E. officer and Highlands Police Officer Ronnie Castle, 5th-grade teachers Tracy Hedden and Angela Sanchez.

– Photo by Carol Bowen

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

If You Want to Make God Laugh...

By Margaret Howell

Holy Family Lutheran Church - ELCA

Be careful what you wish for, folks. The other day I was sitting thinking, "I sure wish I could see more of my Mum and sister." They both live in Raleigh which is quite a hike from Highlands.

My mum moved in with my sister Helen and her family after Dad passed away.

I try to get to see them when I can, but as far as I'm concerned, it's never often enough!

About a week ago, Helen called to tell me that Mum had taken a fall when they were down at the Outer Banks. She was in Carteret General Hospital in Morehead City, NC.

As soon as church was over that Sunday, I hopped into my trusty car and made a two-stage trip to the coast, stopping long enough in Charlotte to drop off the dog and kiss my husband before continuing the journey.

Mum's out of the hospital but will be at the coast cottage for several more weeks before she can travel home to Raleigh. I have indeed seen a lot more of both my mum and sis than I imagined.

Believe it or not, despite the rigors of hospitals, sleepless nights, and caregiving, there has been great joy in knowing that I can do something for the people I love most in the world.

Would I rather it had been under different circumstances? Of course, but it is often in times of crisis that the bonds of love and family are most deeply felt.

We are nearing Holy Week, the week that Jesus chose to suffer and sacrifice himself for all the people he loved, that is, all of humanity.

I have had folks ask me. "What is so good about Good Friday?" It was a day of great suffering and pain, but also a day to remember with gratitude all that was done for us.

As we walk the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday as a community, let us ponder the depth of God's love for us, that the Creator of All Things, would not only come down in human flesh, but would become a living sacrifice to atone for all the sins of humanity, past present and future.

We mourn for the pain suffered, but we wait with anticipation for the Third Day, when God turns death on its ear and brings eternal life and love to the entire world.

The devil and his plans are cast into outer darkness, where, Matthew likes to say, "there will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Ha-Ha devil—the joke's on you. He Lives.

We thank you, oh Christ, and we bless you. Amen.

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Proverbs 3:5

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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

CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY

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Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011

464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers

Sun.: 9:15a Christian Education at Buck's Coffee Cashiers

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Sun. 10:45am, S.S 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.

Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

1st & 3rd Sunday night Service: 7 p.m.

Wednesdays - Supper at 6 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: Child. Program,

10:45am: Worship Service

Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC

University

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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

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor

220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741

Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Mtg 6:15 pm;

Choir 5 pm

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors

526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Worship: 11 a.m.; School: 9:30

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

Wednesdays: Choir: 5:30p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

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Bible Study: 6 pm

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John 3:16

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

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: 5:15; youth, & adults activities: 6; Handbell

rehearsal, 6:15; Choir Rehearsal 7. (nursery provided);

7:00pm Intercessory Prayer Ministry

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-

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

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

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743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church,

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Jerry David Hall • 526-3212

Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 7

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June-Sept: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a, Rite II, 9:15 & 11a

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SOCCER •

On Fri., March 6, the Lady Highlanders travelled to Pisgah for their first game of the season. They brought home a win with a score of 3 to 0.

Tues., March 10, they travelled to Habersham but took a loss of 10 to 2.

Thurs., March 12, they travelled to Brevard and won 5 to 3.

Mon., March 16, they played Pisgah again for their first home game. Once again, they won with a score of 5 to 1.

Blakely Moore came out ear-

ly to score Highlands' first goal. Pisgah came back to score and tie it at 1 to 1 going into half-time.

In the second half, it was all Highlands with Kirstyn Lamb coming out to score 3 more goals.

With an assist from Jessica

Tilson, Trinity Dendy scored the final goal.

The Lady Highlanders play at home this Fri., March 20 against Brevard at 6p. Please come out and support them.

— Sierra Nylund

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The Highlands Police log entries from Feb. 24. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Feb. 24

• At 1:07 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Holt Knob Road.

Feb. 25

• At 11:15 a.m., David Michael Crisp, 26, of Candler, NC, was arrested for obtaining money/property by false pretenses (fraud).

• At 5:30 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident on Cul-lasaja Drive.

March 2

• At 7:30 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on NC 28.

March 7

• At 9:11 p.m., Christopher Dwayne Godfrey, 31, of Concord, NC, was arrested for DWI, reckless driving and driving with an open container when he was pulled over at the Citgo gas station in Highlands.

• At 12:29 p.m., officers responded to a call about a simple physical assault at the Subway in Highlands Plaza.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log entries from March 10.

March 10

• At 6:29 p.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Winterberry Court. It was cancelled.

March 13

• At 10:01 a.m., the dept. was

first-responders to a residence on Cherokee Drive.

• At 2:13 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Crescent Drive.

• At 1:55 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident at NC 106 and Main Street.

March 14

• At 12:56 p.m., the dept. responded to a medical alarm at a residence on Winterberry Court.

March 16

• At 1:05 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106.

• At 1:20 p.m., the dept. stoodby for the MAMA helicopter at the hospital.

• At 7:20, the dept. stoodby for the MAMA helicopter at the hospital.

• BIZ/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Smoky Mountain Urgent Care and Family Medicine Center is now open in Wright Square



Dr. Randall Castor (center), CNA Crystal Chapman (left) and Radiology Technician Tera Burgess (right) welcome you to the Smoky Mountain Urgent Care facility now open in Wright Square. It offers reasonable self-pay prices and accepts most insurance policies including Medicaid and Medicare. The center is open Monday - Friday from 9a to 7p and on Saturday and Sunday from 9a to 5p. For more information, call 828-526-0008.

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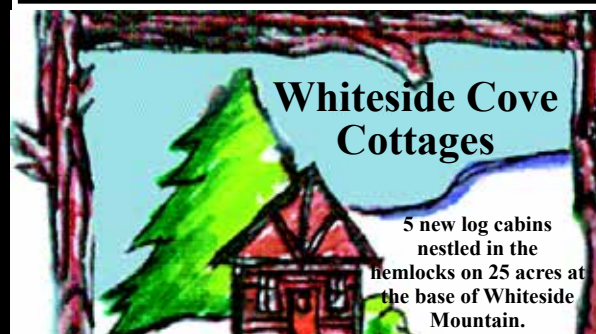
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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Wolfgang's new manager is on board



Jacque Babac has been visiting Highlands for more than 30 years and always knew she would someday live here. After a successful 15 year career in sales and sales management in Florida, three years ago she moved to Highlands full time. She and her husband wanted to raise their little girl in a wholesome and family-oriented community. Soon after arriving here, Jacque got a job at Wolfgang's and has worked her way up into the management position. Come meet Jacque!

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DAR inducts new Highlands member by video chatting



The Battle of Sugartown Chapter of the National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) in Franklin held a very unusual New Member Induction Ceremony on March 9, 2015, when two new members were inducted, one from the other side of the world. Pictured from left are Shelah Portoukalian, Chapter Regent; new member Susan Fritz from Franklin; and, Judy Hughes, former Chapter Regent and Margie Keener, Chapter Registrar, who officiated at the ceremony. Shelah is holding a cell-phone using a video chat application to enable new member, Melanie Ham, to participate live from Shanghai, China. The ceremony took place at 12:30 p.m. in Franklin with Melanie participating at 12:30 a.m. local time in China. Melanie, originally from Highlands, now lives in Shanghai with her husband and two children. She returns to Highlands each summer with her family.

"I've always had a strong passion for history, so was very excited when I found some family records in a storage box on a trip home a few years ago. I did a bit of research and found that my 4great grandfather had served in the Bucks Co militia in Pennsylvania during the Revolutionary War. It was so exciting to research his life and descendants as I traced their journey to North Carolina where they settled in Rowan County. Though I have only been to two DAR meetings so far, both times I felt very connected with a lovely bunch of women who welcomed me warmly—at the meetings I was also able to fortuitously meet long-time friends of our family that we had not seen in years. Though distance prevents me from regularly attending, I look forward to coming to meetings during the summer when our family returns to North Carolina and getting to know all the lovely ladies of the Battle of Sugartown Chapter."

— Melanie Ham



Michael and Melanie with their children Annabelle and Micah.

• CLASSIFIEDS •

ESTATE SALE

FRI. AND SAT. MARCH 27 & 28. Antiques galore! Furniture, Fine Art, Books, Tools and many odd finds for the bargain hunter. 468 Main Street. Unit 2. Have fun and make offers! Its all got to go!

HELP WANTED

SCALY MOUNTAIN NURSERY now hiring for landscape division. Call 526-9269 or Matt at 371-2474. (4/9)

CHEF NEEDED FOR CREEK-SIDE RESTAURANT IN HIGHLANDS. Experience, creativity and enthusiasm are necessary. Call Bob for an interview, 828-526-9822. (st. 2/26)

MOUNTAIN FRESH GROCERY is accepting applications for full-time positions as a coffee/ barista server. Contact Don at 828-526-2400.

MANAGER & SALES ASSOCIATES NEEDED FOR BARDO, a retail furniture and home accessory store. Full and part time positions in our Cashiers & Highlands locations are available. Send resume Bardo49nc@gmail.com (828) 482-2410. (st. 2/12)

WOLFGANG'S RESTAURANT now hiring experienced wait-staff and line cook. Please call Jacque at 828.526.3807 (st. 2/29)

FULL TIME GRILL AND PIZZA POSITIONS available at Mountain Fresh Grocery. Please apply in person or email jobs828@gmail.com

LOCAL CHURCH SEEKS FINANCIAL MANAGER/BOOK-KEEPER - Community Bible Church is hiring a full-time financial manager and bookkeeper. Interested parties can submit resumes to CBCFinanceResumes@gmail.com Job responsibilities will include accounts payable and receivable, budget tracking, payroll, financial reports, banking, insurance management, and asset tracking. Full and working knowledge of QuickBooks and Excel is required. Awareness of specific accounting and reporting requirements for churches is a plus. Salary determined

by level of experience. (st. 2/15)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

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HOME FOR RENT: Three Bedroom home, 3 miles from town. Beautiful terrace and yard, pond and mountain views. Available seasonally or year round. Call 828-421-4681 (st. 2/29)

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VAC/SEASONAL RENTAL

IN-TOWN 2BD/2BA CONDO AVAILABLE APRIL THROUGH DECEMBER. HVAC, hard wood floors, gas logs, screened porch, use of pool and tennis court. Adults only complex. No smoking, no pets. Min. 4 months lease. \$1400/mth. All inclusive. Call 601-888-0786. (st. 3/12)

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LOTS/LAND FOR SALE

LAND FOR SALE IN CLEAR CREEK: 2.18 acre parcel has road frontage on Mack Wilson Rd. \$17,000. Any reasonable offers will be considered. Call 828-526-2874. (st. 10/23)

FOR SALE BY OWNER - 3 building lots in the gated community of Rustic Falls. Macon County tax records value at \$51,000 each. Must sell due to health reasons. Asking \$15,000 each. Call owner at 803-640-6004. (St. 5/1)

ITEMS FOR SALE

MAGIC CHEF WINE COOLER, excellent condition. 21x28. Depth 17". 5 shelves. Black with black glass front. \$99.00. Call 828-526-0502. (st. 3/19)

SAMSUNG 55" FLAT SCREEN TV W/50" STAND. \$400. In Otto. 828-349-1453. (12/18).

WORMY CHESTNUT FOR

SALE: Approximately 300 square feet of 3/4" wormy chestnut wainscot milled and finished. Board length 36"; width varies from 4" to 8". \$2800 lot price. 404-944-5298 (st. 3/20)

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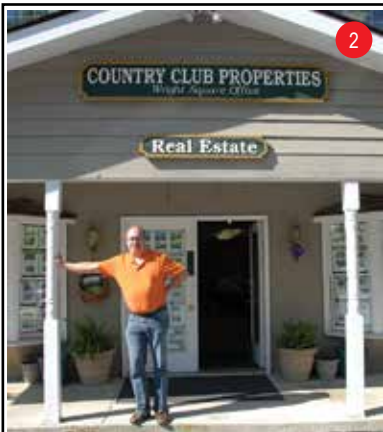
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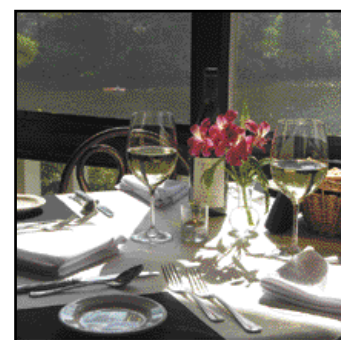
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