

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Feb. 4, 2016

Police Department in line for upgrades and more

Once again a benevolent citizen has stepped up and the town of Highlands, its Police Department and Highlands taxpayers are the lucky beneficiaries.

At last week's Town Board meeting, Police Chief Bill Harrell said the department had received

a private donation of \$13,000 to purchase new bullet proof vests.

"The new vests are resistant to high power rifle caliber shots from a distance; not just resistant to pistol shots as the ones we have now," said Chief Harrell.

As in the past when a citizen

donated the money for another police dog and all that entailed, commissioners graciously accepted the donation.

The chief went on to request permission to apply for grant money from the Governor's Crime Commission for 2016 for neces-

sary upgrades in the department.

There are two grants – a block grant for up to \$24,500 and a technical grant for up to \$200,000 – neither of which requires a match from the town, just an OK to apply.

•See **POLICE** page 5

Bishop pleads guilty in Federal Court to fraud

State charges against Former Board of Elections Director Kim Bishop are pending following Bishop pleading guilty to similar charges in federal court on Monday.

Last week, A True Bill of Indictment and Order of Arrest was issued for Bishop for five counts of felony attempted embezzlement by a local employee.

Macon County Sheriff Robert Holland worked with Bishop's lawyer to allow Bishop to square

things away with her family and children before turning herself into the Macon County Detention Center on Wednesday. When Bishop failed to meet Holland's deadline without any notice, the Sheriff classified her as a fugitive.

The Macon County Sheriff's Office actively searched for Bishop until Monday, February 1 when they learned Bishop had been booked into the Buncombe County Detention Center on a Bill

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County Manager assesses FY 2015-'16

For Macon County Manager Derek Roland, the first half of the year has been geared toward increasing services and effectiveness, while maintaining a revenue neutral budget. Addressing Macon County Commissioners last week, Roland said the county's conservative budgeting has upgraded technology while reducing costs and investing in infrastruc-

ture.

"The county allocated \$80,000 to go toward the upgrade of our county-wide data storage network," said Roland. "Our old system had reached end-of-life status as our growing technology needs were far outpacing its capacity. The new SAN data storage has resulted in faster network connec-

•See **ASSESES** page 5

Legos robots set for competition



Highlands School middle school students, from left, Jordan Powell, Colton Gibson, and Seth Staffelbach, are programming a robot they made from Legos as part of the first Smoky Mountain Area Robotics Team competition. This is the first team from Highlands School to participate in this program. The students meet after school to prepare for the competition that includes a mission track that the robot must complete in two and a half minutes and a project called Trash Trek that addresses a recycling issue. First Lego League (FLL) is the organization that promotes this program with the goal of keeping students interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math). FLL emphasizes teamwork and fun. Anne Porter, Technology/Business teacher is the coach, Jeff Weller, local architect is the mentor, and Jackie Powell is the parent volunteer.

— Photo by Anne Porter

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Altitude Broadband almost ready

Consistent, dependable broadband and cell service is on the minds of more than one citizen these days.

During the public comment portion of last week's Town Board meeting, Landscape Architect Hank Ross urged commissioners to do whatever is necessary to improve coverage in Highlands.

To that end, GIS/MIS Director Matt Shuler said that the 40 people who have expressed interest in hooking up to the town's Altitude Broadband service and will be served within a couple of weeks.

He said 95% of the transmitters to be installed on the Big Bear Pen Tower are in and the framing pipes are on the way.

"Once Big Bear Pen Tower is operational, we will begin connecting these customers," he said.

Shuler said the Satulah tower isn't usable because it's not physically strong enough to take on any more hardware, but the town will

•See **ALTITUDE** page 3

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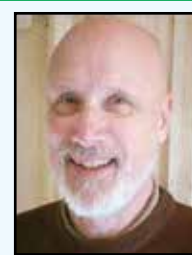


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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

How the town deals with extreme weather

Contrary to any rumors, during the snow storm the mayor's and town board members' driveways were not plowed by town crews. Private driveways are not plowed by the town.

Let me review the town priorities for plowing roads during snow storms. First, crews plow major town roads. We also plow Main and 4th streets which are technically state roads. The state plows all state highways and secondary roads, but does not plow these two downtown streets.

A surprising number of residential streets are state roads. DOT maintains and plows them. For instance, Webbmont; Big Bear Pen and Cobb Road are state roads, and are not on the town's priority lists. Our crews will always clear town roads first, then assist the state in clearing their roads if possible.

Since the Great Recession the state reduced funding to DOT and have not fully restored the lost funds. DOT crews and equipment have been reduced, so their winter storm response, especially on their secondary roads, has been reduced.

Private roads are also not on the town's priority list. If one lives on a pri-



Mayor Pat Taylor

vate road, the residents own, maintain and control the road, not the town. After all the town roads are cleared, crews may clear private roads in order to facilitate trash pickups and other services.

There were requests that entry ways and driveways be plowed. Given there was 13 to 14 inches of snow, to plow everyone's driveway and entrance was simply not possible.

During the storm, our town road crews worked 36 hours straight. Finally, they were told to go home and sleep for a few hours, then return to work. For the remainder of the week, road crews worked 10 to 12 hour shifts. Our electric crews had the same kind of schedule. During winter storms, these folks work in dangerous, potentially life threatening conditions. We want them to work safe, which means not necessarily working fast.

Some residents called in electrical outages only to wonder why town staff did not call them back to let them know when the power would be restored. In a major storm that is not a realistic expectation. Hundreds of residents may be out of power. In almost all cases, crews can't pinpoint how long a job will take.

Some people were concerned that the garbage had not been picked up on the regular schedule. In subfreezing conditions garbage will not rot and bears are in hibernation. We have workers operating quarter of a million dollar trucks, and the primary concern is the safety of our operators and the trucks. A rollover on icy roads has tragic consequences.

We routinely have requests to remove those ugly downtown snow mounds. The problem is where to put these huge snow amounts. One suggestion has been to

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Highlands Newspaper

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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.

• LETTER •

Be an informed and legal voter: Make sure you have a photo ID

Dear Editor,

If you listen to Republican Presidential candidates, this country is going to Hades in a wicker basket. Two recent letters parroted this fear and implored all God fearing voters to replace a government of laws with a government based on God as its ultimate authority.

I know facts are not deemed relevant to a political discussion by many people these days, but just for fun here are a few. We presently have the strongest economy in the world. More than 14 million jobs have been created in the last 5 years, the longest period of such growth in our history. 17 million have health insurance that did not have it before. The employment rate is now down to 5%, and deficit spending is less than half of what it was. We are now producing all the energy we need, with enough available to sell our excess on the world market. And, American car companies are having a banner year. Every one of these accomplishments are a direct result of actions by the current administration.

Republican candidates and their letter writers seem to be in fear that our borders are being violated, and that elsewhere foreign terrorists are not being carpet bombed. Again just a few facts to confuse things. Border security is tighter than it has ever been. The flow of migrants across our borders is at an all time low. The US and its allies have pushed ISIS back so they have now lost much ground previously gained. We have thousands of troops in harms-way doing the dirty work of war. What we will not do is directly confront these terrorists because that is exactly the excuse they want.

As for religious liberty, it was a conservative Supreme Court that granted equal rights to all citizens, which is what our founding fathers said was a Constitutional right.

Students have always been allowed to pray in school and still do. What is not allowed is teacher led prayer. Believe it or not there is more than one religion in this country, and choosing whose God to pray to would probably cause a bit of a disruption. Religiously motivated politicians opposition to abortion has severely limited low and middle-income women's access to a wide range of health rights, negatively impacting many families, in every red state.

Would you rather live in a country governed by laws or one governed by unelected religious authority? (Sharia law, anyone?)

Everyone, not just God fearing Americans, needs to exercise their Constitutional Right to vote.

Make sure you learn the new 2016 Voting requirements for ID. Learn valid facts on candidates and issues. Make an informed choice and vote, because the future freedom of our children and grandchildren depend on it.

Shirl Ches
Franklin, NC

...ALTITUDE continued from page 1

use the water tank on Brushy Face to handle that side of town.

He said Jon McCardle, formerly of Morris Broadband, was hired for Lead Broadband Installer. "This will increase pro-

ductivity greatly," said Shuler.

Meanwhile, in an effort to entice Verizon to expand coverage, rather than waiting for Verizon to move on the project, the town is going to extend the Big Bear Pen Tower by 20 feet at its own cost.

"We were going to give Verizon a \$42,000 rent abatement anyway so we might as well pay for it and this way, once the tower is extended, they can hook on and begin paying rent right away," said Mayor Pro Tempore Amy Patterson.

Shuler said Verizon is in favor of the idea.

"They have given permission for the town to use their engineering and construc-

• See ALTITUDE page 3

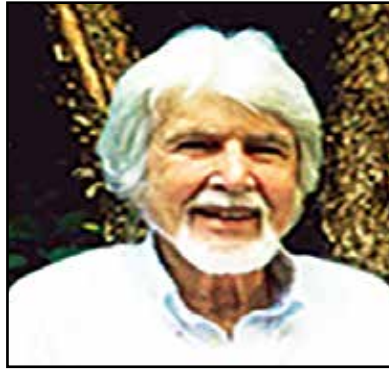


• OBITUARIES •

Jim Cavanaugh

Jim Cavanaugh, 81 was a resident of Highlands and Fairhope, Alabama. He passed away on January 4, 2016 after a battle with cancer. He loved gardening, walking his dog, Honey, and volunteering at Mountain Findings.

Funeral services were held January 12, 2016 at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Fairhope, AL. He is survived by his loving wife, Chip Wilson.



John Paul Jones

John Paul Jones, age 83 of Franklin, NC, passed away Wednesday, January 27, 2016. He was born in Macon County, the son of the late Grady Montgomery Jones and Vonie Priscilla McMahan Jones. He had worked for CR Industries as a mechanic, and had worked at Conley Ford as parts manager. Mr. Jones was a member of Cowee Baptist Church, and was a veteran of the US Navy serving on the USS Iowa Battleship during the Korean War and was also a veteran of US Air Force.

He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Mary Florence Garner Jones; four daughters, Susan Jones Roper (Roy) of Raleigh, NC, Linda Carol Jones Sampson (Scott) of Clayton, NC, Nancy Jones Carpenter (Mark Sanders) of Franklin, NC, Lynnette Jones Runyon (Frank) of Lincolnton, NC; sisters, Mary Sue Jones Frady, and Betty Lou Jones Addis both of Clarksville, GA, and Frances May Howard of Pooler, GA; seven grandchildren, Kelsie Roper, Branden Roper, Jacob Roper, Kevin Cabe, Matthew Cabe, Abigail Carpenter, and Jonathan Carpenter; one great-granddaughter, Reagan Cabe. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son-in-law, Larry Roper.

Funeral services were Saturday, January 30 at Cowee Baptist Church with Rev. David Powell and Rev. Lloyd Fish officiating. Burial was in Cowee Baptist Church Cemetery. Pallbearers were Branden Roper, Jacob Roper, Matthew Cabe, Kevin Cabe, Jonathan Carpenter and Matthew Reynolds. Military graveside rites will follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Angel Hospice, 170 Church Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

• MILESTONE •

Ivy Satterwhite of Highlands and a graduate of Rabun Gap Nacoochee School made Deans list at UNC-Chapel Hill with a 3.5 GPA for the Fall semester. Her major is physics. She is a freshman.

...MAYOR on DUTY continued from page 2

dump it into Mill Creek or area lakes. If that was done, EPA would fine the town for putting the salt, brine and chat mixed in the snow directly into the watershed. Road snow has to melt into the ground.

Hopefully this information helps explain how the town deals with these extreme weather situations. Highlands dodged a bullet. If the snow front had dipped a few miles more south we could have been dealing with conditions close to the legendary 1993 blizzard. Luckily, town costs were contained to about \$30,000 in overtime and equipment repair.

I appreciate everyone's understanding during these difficult weather events.

...ALTITUDE continued from page 2

tion drawings. They also volunteered to give us the names of three or more contractors. I have also contacted US Cellular for contractors and I'm checking with the FAA for any permitting that may be necessary," he said.

Once Shuler has estimates in-hand, he will return to the board for direction.

— Kim Lewicki



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...BISHOP continued from page 1

of Information for what essentially amounts to fraud.

According to Bishop's court records, the maximum penalty for the charges Bishop pled guilty to is a term of imprisonment of not more than 10 years, a fine not to exceed the sum of \$250,000, or both. The minimum penalty is a term of supervised release of not more than three years and a \$100 special assessment.

Bishop, who worked as the director of the board of elections office from 2002 until she was replaced by Debbie George in 2014 in the midst of the investigation, plead guilty on federal charges that declared Bishop, while an agent of local government, in a continuous one-year period received benefits in excess of \$10,000 under a federal program involving a grant, contract, loan, guarantee, insurance, and other form of federal assistance, did embezzle, steal, and obtain by fraud, and did without authority knowingly convert to the use of a person not the rightful owner,

property, that is money, worth at least \$5,000 and under the care, custody, and control of such local government.

Holland, who was not aware Bishop was appearing in federal court on Monday prior to her appearance, said that while the investigation was lengthy and involved his department, the SBI and the FBI, was thorough and allowed for prosecutors to present facts that ultimately lead Bishop to plead guilty in court on Monday.

In January 2014, the Macon County Board of Elections office was placed on lockdown after County Manager Derek Roland received a tip that financial issues might be present. Roland contacted Sheriff Holland, who suggested the SBI be called in due to accusations against county employees. The SBI's initial investigation and search warrant showed dozens of checks authorized by Bishop for payment to four people: Cassidy Ledford, Kathy Holland, Misty Bryson, and Sonya Stevens, none of whom were employees of the board of elections office. The checks were allegedly authorized to

pay the employees for work conducted at the elections office.

In 2014, the total cost of missing funds at the office was thought to be around \$50,000. According to the findings of facts on file with the United States Attorney's office and the Buncombe County Federal Courts, the total amount of funds embezzled by Bishop total \$72,000.

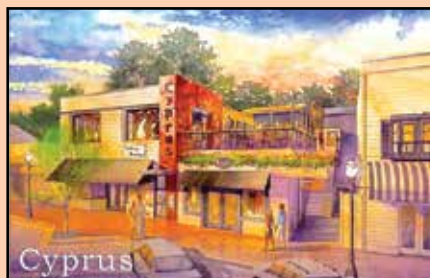
From June 2013 through January 2014, Macon County received benefits in excess of \$10,000 under a Federal program involving a grant, contract, loan, guarantee, insurance and other forms of Federal assistance. Those funds are thought to be the reason why the FBI became involved in the investigation.

Now that Bishop has entered a guilty plea with the federal government, DA Ashley Welch must decide whether to move forward with prosecuting the state charges or dismissing them since a guilty plea in federal court has occurred.

Bishop was released and is currently awaiting sentencing.

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...ASSESSSES continued from page 1

tions, more secure data, and has enabled us to store data more efficiently. Also, the \$72,000 spent to upgrade the county's phone system will pay for itself in one year, as projections have shown the new system will reduce phone related operating costs by as much as \$87,500 annually."

Between technology improvements, consolidating the county's animal control with the health department for better oversight and efficiency, and an overhaul of the county's health insurance fund, Roland said effectiveness was increased while still being able to pay down the county's debt load.

"Our debt load continues to decline even as we have taken on additional capital projects," said Roland. "In FY '15-'16 our total debt payments decreased by approximately \$465,765. We have grown our fund balance by close to 7 percent giving us a degree of financial security unmatched not only in our region but across the state."

The county has made strides so far this year in significant infrastructure developments such as the opening of the Parker Meadows Recreation Complex.

"In September, we saw the grand opening of the \$3.5M Parker Meadows Recreational Complex," said Roland. "I feel the grand opening illustrates more than anything this park is first and foremost for the citizens of Macon County. The first games played on these fields represented the birth of MCARS or Macon County Adaptive Recreation and Sports. Over 200 mentally handicapped and disabled Macon County children ranging in age from elementary to high school participated. Aside from those playing, there were over 150 volunteers primarily Macon County government and Macon County School System employees."

According to Roland, the county saw a \$150,000 increase in sales tax receipts over last year for the months of September and October, the months in which two tournaments were held at the complex. "With 25 tournaments scheduled for next spring and fall conservative estimates project a \$6-10M total economic impact to Macon County," said Roland.

For the last several years, Macon County leaders have continued to make

...POLICE continued from page 1

Under the block grant, the chief is requesting \$14,000 for Tasers and under the tech grant, the chief is asking for \$157,600 to cover various items: a repeater, a base, portable radios, car radios, car/body cams, an AFIS system and server.

"All the tools and resources we are applying for are necessary because our current equipment is dated and scheduled for replacement within the FY 2016-2017 budget year. The monies could help cover the cost of these items. Without the possibility of funding from the GCC, we would need to purchase these items out of pocket," said Harrell.

He said the department's current radios, both in-car and portable, must be converted from analog to digital, which includes the base and repeater at the Highlands Police Department.

"All pieces work together; and therefore must be purchased and implemented simultaneously," he said.

The car/body cams are units that would be designated to be worn by each officer and would work in unison with the in-car video system of their patrol vehicle.

Harrell said the officer's perspective is captured on the body-worn camera, while in-car video captures the bigger picture.

"It sees what's happening in and around the cruiser, where the majority of incidents occur," said Harrell. "Together, body-worn and in-car videos document an entire scene in a way that is impossible to capture by the use of only one camera."

The Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) would save the department time and money.

"This machine would allow officers to fingerprint arrestees that can make bond, without having to transfer them to the Macon County Sheriff's Office as we have to do now," said Harrell. "Anytime an officer must transfer someone for fingerprinting, that officer is taken out of service in Highlands, oftentimes leaving only one officer to service Highlands for several hours. The ability to fingerprint arrestees that can make bond would prevent officers from having to

public education a priority and have invested \$50,000,000 to the brick and mortar of the school district since 2008. By December, the county had completed additional infrastructure renovations at Union Academy and Highlands School through zero-interest QZAB loans from the state.

"In addition the School System Capital Outlay was increased in FY '15-'16 by \$100,000 giving the school system much needed funding for addressing capital needs arising during the year," said Roland. "Operating funds were left at prior year levels for FY '15-'16 and this level of funding appears to be more than sufficient as the FY '14-'15 audit shows the school system increasing its fund balance by over \$1,000,000. In addition, the state budget increased public school funding by approximately \$540,000 in FY '15-'16. With this increase in state funding it could be assumed that a fund balance increase equal or greater to the \$1,000,000 realized in FY '14-'15 will be on the horizon for this fiscal year."

In terms of secondary education, Roland commended commissioners for their ongoing partnership with Southwestern Community College, which is

continuing to be an education leader in the state.

"The recent decision by the Board of Commissioners to partner with the school system, Southwestern Community College and private businesses in Macon County on the Golden Leaf Grant initiative shows our commitment to education on all levels," said Roland. "The \$60,950 match commitment from Macon County will lead to a \$778,287 Golden leaf investment which will provide our students with the latest in STEM learning opportunities."

• Next week: Looking ahead to FY 2015-'16



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...POLICE continued from page 5

leave city limits and the department short-staffed.”

He said the machine would also allow officers to fingerprint individuals for jobs or background checks, without having to send them to the Sheriff's Office in Franklin.

The Tasers, which would be covered under the Block Grant, would mean upgrading dysfunctional and out dated tools.

“Like the radios, our current Tasers are dated and require replacement. Several of these no longer operate properly, which means several of our officers do not even carry a Taser,” he said.

Commissioners unanimously OK'd application to the grants.

Through documentation in the Consent Agenda, Chief Harrell also updated the board on recent cases listed in the police log.

- Shooting at 24 Buttermilk Lane: Joseph Baty will be indicted at the next Grand Jury session.

- Child Statutory Rape Case: Suspect Marcos Lopez is still at large. An ongoing investigation is continuing in effort to apprehend him.

- Breaking and Entering at Sweet Treats Creekside Café on 9/09/2015: Arrest warrants were granted for the breaking and entering and felony larceny that occurred at Sweet Treats.

- On January 13, 2016 charges were brought against four individuals for breaking and entering's that have occurred. One took place nearly two years ago; whereas the others, within the last eight months.

SUSPECT and VICTIM ADDRESS:

CJ McCall was charged with: three counts of felony breaking and entering,

three counts of felony larceny after breaking and entering, four counts of injury to personal property, four counts misdemeanor breaking & entering, and one misdemeanor breaking & entering.

The crimes were committed at the following addresses: 190 Biscuit Rock Road, 355 Upper Lake Road, 65 Big Bear Pen Road, 462 Bowery Road, 7 Bowery Road, 369 Bowery Road and 526 Spruce Street.

John Carpenter was charged with misdemeanor breaking and entering, and injury to property at 369 Bowery Road.

Brett Walters was charged with felonious breaking and entering, and felony larceny.

Nicholas Shane Thomas was charged with felonious breaking and entering at 268 and 355 Upper Lake Rd, misdemeanor breaking and entering at 190 Biscuit Rock Road and felonious Larceny after breaking and entering.

— Kim Lewicki

Mating & Dating at the Bio Station!



Celebrate Valentine's Day early with the Highlands Biological Station! Bring your friends for an entertaining program called "Mating and Dating in the Animal Kingdom: A Gameshow Mash-up." This evening promises to be filled with adult-only hilarity delving into the seductive world of animal courtship rituals. The lengths that animals go to in order to impress a member of the opposite sex are truly awe-inspiring. Roses and chocolates don't stand a chance when compared with the fantastic, and sometimes sleazy, romantic practices among our fellow animals. In this game-show-like program, test your knowledge, trivia and acting abilities with your spouse or significant other. Going stag for Valentine's Day? Not to worry! Friends are also encouraged to come out for the program as long as they are in groups of two. Desserts and drinks will be offered along with a prize for the top couple. Registration is required. Call (828) 526-2623 to register. Join us for the fun and maybe you will go home with some new ideas for your own Valentine's Day celebration!

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« WINTER EDITION »

PRIME

NOT YOUR MOTHER'S HEALTH TALKS



Free, fun evening for women that includes health information, dinner and more!

**Topic - Women's Heart Health:
Signs and Symptoms of Heart Attack**

5:30 – 7:30 P.M., THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 11

**Bistro on Main at The Main Street Inn
Highlands, NC**

Presented by Dr. Laura Verde

Pre-registration is required. To register, email Megan Brooks at Megan.Brooks2@msj.org or call (828) 213-3353.

**HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS
HOSPITAL**

Love your heart so you can love your life.

As we grow older, the minor aches and pains of our youth may give way to more complex medical issues. Many times we dismiss signs of serious health risks.

Joe Schmalo didn't – and he's alive today.

Although the retired businessman appeared healthy, Joe smoked, ate fast food and didn't exercise regularly. One day, without warning, he began to feel bad and sensed that his discomfort might be serious.

After an evaluation by his primary care physician, and then the emergency department staff at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, Joe was flown in a MAMA helicopter to Mission Hospital.

Five days and a triple bypass later, Joe returned home, ready to take his heart health seriously. He changed his diet and continues to exercise almost daily. Seven months later Joe is feeling thirty years younger and full of life and energy.

Take time during Heart Month to love your heart.

Visit Mission-Health.org/HeartMonth

to learn more about how you can participate in our educational Heart Month events and screenings happening in your community. Screenings may include total lipid panel, BMI calculation and blood pressure checks. Many events include refreshments and the opportunity to hear heart-care tips from Mission Heart specialists.



• HIGHLANDS EVENTS •

Winter Pool Schedule

Through May 27, 2016

LAP SWIM – ADULTS ONLY

Monday thru Friday

7 – 10 am, 6 lanes

AND Monday thru Thursday

5 – 6 pm, 1 or 2 lanes

Sharing pool with water

aerobics @ 5:15 on

Mondays, Tuesdays, and

Thursdays

PUBLIC SWIM

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

3 – 5 pm & 6 – 8 pm

Wednesday 3 – 5 pm

Saturday 11 am – 6 pm

Sunday 1 – 5 pm

WATER AEROBICS

Monday-Friday

10 – 11 am

Saturday 11:15 – noon

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

5:15 – 6 pm

Fee: \$4 per class or

\$30 for 12 classes

POOL PARTIES

Pool available on Fridays,

Saturdays, Sundays

6 – 8 pm

Fee: \$75 // \$50 deposit required

\$50 non-refundable deposit if party is

cancelled or a no show less than 2 days

before

1st Wednesday of the month—

Kayak Clinic

2nd Wednesday of the month—

Youth Night

3rd Wednesday of the month—

Water Volleyball

4th Wednesday of the month—

Senior Night

6:00 – 7:30 pm

Call us about membership fees

ICE SKATING RINK

Open Thursday 1-8p

Friday & Saturday 1-10p

Sunday 1-5p

\$5 fee with or without skate rental

Ongoing

• Highlands Hurricanes Swim Team is open to all levels of swimmers ages 6-18. To sign up contact Coach Steve Hott at 828-421-2121.

• Anyone interested in taking Adult, Child and Infant First Aid/CPR/AED certification class needs to contact the Highlands Recreation Department.

Last Sundays

• At The Wellness Center, donation based Sound Healing Concert. Learn how to use Music to heal your Nervous System and

Reduce Your Stress Naturally at 3pm. 468 Dillard Road (828) 526 9698

Mon., Thurs., Fri., Sat., Sun.

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

Mondays

• Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Meeting at 7 pm first Mondays.

• The Humanist Discussion Group meets every Monday morning from 9:30 to 10:30 in the Meeting Room in the back of Hudson Library,

Mon. & Wed.

• Zumba with Mary K. Barbour at the Rec Park from noon to 1p. For more information, call 828.342.2498.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class 8:30am-9:30am at the Rec Park.

• Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

First Tuesdays

• The monthly family support group for those with family members, friends, or loved ones living with the challenge of mental illness meets at 7 p.m. at Memorial United Methodist Church, 4668 Old Murphy Road, Franklin. Sponsored by the local affiliate of NAMI. For info call 828 369-7385.

Tuesdays

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

• The Beyond the Walls Book discussion group meets at 4 PM at The Ugly Dog Public House. Each week a short story discussed.

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

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

Every 3rd Tuesday

• The Macon County Poultry club in Franklin meets at 7 pm at the Cooperative extension office on Thomas Heights Road. For more information call 369-3916.

Last Tuesdays

• At the Wellness Center, donation based Belly Dancing 101 at 6:30 p.m. 468 Dillard Road (828) 526 9698.

Tuesday and Thursdays

• Zumba with Connie at the Rec Park 8:15 a.m. \$5.

• Pickle ball is played from 11:30a to 1p in the gym at the Rec Park.

Wednesdays

• At the Wellness Place at 6:30 p.m., donation based Art of Meditation. 468 Dillard Road (828) 526 9698.

1st Wednesdays

• Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:30pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

3rd Wednesdays

• Recently released movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

Thursdays

• Storytime with Miss Deanna at Hudson

• HIGHLANDS EVENTS •

Library 10:40 am. Open to the public.

• Weight Watchers support group meets every Thursday at 6pm at the Cashiers Community Center. 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.

3rd Thursdays

• Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: from 4:30pm-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video Conference Room, 3rd Floor; 120 Riverview Street, Contact Majestic 828-369-9474

• Kidney Smart Classes in Sylva: from, 7:30am-9am, DaVita Sylva Dialysis Center, 655 Asheville Highway, Contact Sue 828-631-0430

Fridays

• 99ers Bridge at the Rec Park 9a to noon.
• At the Wellness Center; donation based Pinterest Fridays at 6:30p. : Essential Oils, Appetizers and Crafts Night. 468 Dillard Road (828) 526 9698

Every 3rd Friday

• Senior Dinners are at noon November through April.

Saturdays

• At The Wellness Place Donation based 9am Yoga For Dummies at 9 a.m. Fun, Judgment Free Zone, All Levels and All Ages! 468 Dillard Road (828) 526 9698

Sun., Feb. 4

• Bolivian Mission is repeating the fundraiser on Super Bowl Sunday, from noon to 7PM. Pizzas can be ordered in advance by calling 526-3605 or on Sunday, 526-3376. Two toppings sell for \$25 and three or more for \$35. Toppings include two kinds of cheese, (one topping), beef, sausage, pepperoni, onions, green peppers, black olives, and mushrooms. All proceeds support the mission foster home, water projects, and medical support for several clinics and hospitals in Montero, Bolivia.

Fri., Feb. 5

• At Highlands School, Hoops for Hope in loving memory of Coach Butch Smart. Varsity Basketball teams invite you to come out and show your support by wearing yellow. Games begin at 6 p.m.

• The High Mountain Squares will host their "Sweetheart Dance Friday night, at the Macon County Community Building, GA Road (441 South), Franklin NC from 6:30 to 9 PM. Ace McGee from Anderson, SC will be the caller. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. We will start our next class April 18th. Everyone is welcome. For information call 828-371-4946, 828-342-1560, 828-332-0001.

Sat., Feb. 6

• At PAC, Coriolanus Live via Satellite at 1 p.m. Adults: \$22 PAC Members: \$19 Students: FREE Tickets are available online at highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling the Performing Arts Center 828-526-9047.

Thurs., Feb. 11

• At The Bistro at Main Street Inn, Prime (not your mother's health talks) 5:30-7:30 p.m. Free, fun evening for women that includes health information, dinner and more! Topic: Women's Heart Health: signs and symptoms of heart attack. Pre-registration required. call 828-213-3353.

• Mating & Dating Gameshow. at the Nature Center. Call for reservations. 526-2623.

Sun., Feb. 27

• At PAC, National Theatre of London Live in HD at 1 p.m. Call 828-526-9047 for tickets.

Sat., March 16

• At PAC, The Met Live in HD at 12:45 p.m. Call 828-526-9047 for tickets.

Coriolanus Live via Satellite at PAC, Sat. Feb. 6



The Highlands Performing Arts Center presents the National Theatre of London's production Live via Satellite on our large theater screen Saturday, February 6 at 1pm of Shakespeare's searing tragedy of political manipulation and revenge, Coriolanus. A successful Roman general seeks political leadership. When an old adversary threatens Rome, the city calls once more on her hero and defender. But famine threatens the city, the citizens' hunger swells to an appetite for change, and on returning from the field Coriolanus must confront the voice of an angry people. Adults: \$22 PAC Members: \$19 Students: FREE Tickets are available online at highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling the Performing Arts Center 828-526-9047

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Blowing the doors of mercy wide open

By Rev. Bruce Walker

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

I have just returned from Haiti. I was blessed to travel with Jane Chalker, Robbie Forrester, Christopher Dyer, and Matt Rickie from Highlands. The experience is still shaping and reshaping who I am. What is clear is that God has provided me yet another reality check.

We live in a world that is largely based on a scarcity model. People generally think that there is never enough, no matter what we are talking about, be it food, time, money or perhaps even God.

In a recent meditation I was reminded that "the flow of grace is largely blocked when we live inside a worldview of scarcity. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the mind is apparently unable to imagine anything infinite or eternal. So it cannot imagine an infinite love, or a God whose love is everlasting." - Rohr

Being in Haiti, where scarcity is not just a mental thing to contemplate, but an ever present reality, brought me back in touch with the eternal.

My friend's granddaughter made her first trip to Haiti last fall. She described her time there as eye opening and a chance to take life in as it might have been in the days when Jesus roamed the earth in bodily form.

She assessed her Haiti experience this way: "The majority of the people live in poverty. Most are unemployed and everywhere you go there are people asking, begging for things: money, shoes, food, and soccer balls. There are vast numbers of sick and injured people, who get no treatment for their problems. With the comforts and luxuries of modern American life, it's hard for us to imagine living in these conditions.

"When Jesus came to the world, he came and healed, he had compassion. He challenged the way of thinking and pointed to a radical new life.

"In conclusion and my point of this whole thing, is that we are the rich and the poor. We are the rich having to do with physical possessions, such as money, jobs, and so much more, but we are also the poor, in spirit. With all of our physical possessions, we are far more likely to become disconnected to God by having our priorities out of line.

"Each of us is a person, who, left to himself and to his own wisdom and resources, has a spiritual poverty worse than the physical poverty in Haiti. If you are a believer, you know that Jesus came with a mission. He saw people's obvious needs, and did not ignore them.

"I think he was put on this earth as an example to us, showing that we can offer our help to anyone in need and that we should. We should be grateful for what we have because at times it's easy to forget what it's like not living in a place where any opportunity is offered. I think it was really cool to go on this mission trip because it always serves as a humbling experience that kind of brings you back to God reminding you why you were put on this Earth."

These are some pretty beady, but also heartfelt thoughts coming from a fourteen-year old.

Sometimes it takes that personal experience of unconditional love and eternal presence to move us out of our notions of scarcity and into the divine world of infinite abundance. This was our experience in Haiti. In the giving and receiving we shared with each other, the doors of mercy were blown wide open!

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

CHAPEL OF SKY VALLEY

Sky Valley, GA • 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

9:30a Sunday School; 10:30a Family Service w/ Music

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

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas • 743-5470

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: 7p.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

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. Bruce Walker • 526-2968

Sundays: Education for Adults, 9 a.m.

Holy Eucharist Rite II, (chapel), 10:30 a.m.

8 a.m., services and Healing services will resume in the spring.

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 • fpcchighlands.org

Sun.: Worship: 8:30a and 11 a.m.; School: 9:30

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

Wednesdays: Choir: 5:30p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd) • Rev. Carson Gibson

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

Bible Study: 6 pm

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: 743-9814

Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

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, 6p.

Wednesday: Bible Study, 6:30p; Prayer Mtg., 7:30p.

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);

7pm Intercessory Prayer Ministry

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Sun: 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

at St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin

828-524-9463

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

Sun: 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 (Father Francis): 526-2418

Mass: Sun: 11 a.m.; Sat. at 4p

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Marty Kilby

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 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

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1448 Highway 107 South, Office: 743-2359

Rev. Douglas E. Remer

Oct-May: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a Rite II, 10:30

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

Nursery available for Rite II services

Sept 6-Oct 25- Informal Evening Eucharist- 5:30 p.m.

Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive • 828-524-6777

Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE •

The Highlands Police log entries from Jan. 16. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Jan. 16

• At 9:09 p.m., officers responded to a call from the ice skating rink where a woman said she had received strange messages from an unknown person.

Jan. 20

• At 5 p.m., officers responded to a call from a woman at a residence on Cook Road where a person was in possession of meth, marijuana and opium. The case is under investigation.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log from Jan. 26.

Jan. 26

• At 2:02 p.m., the dept. assisted EMS at a residence on Bowery Road.

Jan. 27

• At 10:08 a.m., the dept. responded to a false alarm at a business on Main Street.

• At 10:10 a.m., the dept. responded to a false alarm at a residence on Happoldt Drive.

• At 2:23 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mirror Lake Road.

• At 12:15 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.

• At 3:22 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

Jan. 31

• At 2:01 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a business on Main Street.

Highlands Varsity Basketball Teams

invite you to

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In loving memory of Coach Butch Smart

Friday, February 5

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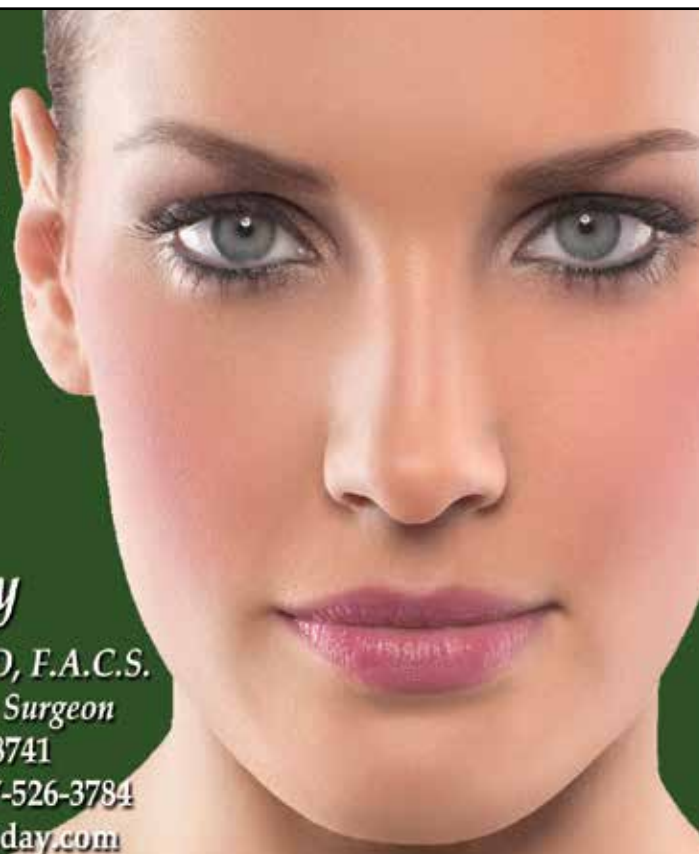
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Truth or myths?

By David K. Bee, Broker

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty

Buying or selling a house is not something most of us do every day. You may do it once a decade, or even once in a lifetime. Despite the fact that most people enter the world of real estate only rarely, we all think we know how it works, based on the experiences of friends and family members, stories we have heard and things we have read.

But for everything we believe we know about the industry, there are a number of myths that circulate about how real estate actually works.

Buying into those myths can hurt your chances of buying or selling the right home at the right price.

In recent years, technology has radically changed the way homes are bought and sold, and yet some aspects of real estate are the same as they were when your parents bought their last home. If a long time has passed since your last transaction, you may be surprised at how much has changed.

The Internet has made much more information available to consumers, but not all the information is equal, or even accurate.

For some reason people believe everything they read on the Internet, but the information needs to be taken with a grain of salt.

The danger with believing everything you hear or read in real estate myths can cost you money when it's time to buy or sell a home. Here are some of the most common ones that can trip up buyers and sellers:

Set your home price higher than what you expect to get. Listing your home at too high a price may actually net you a lower price. That's because shoppers and their real estate agents often don't even look at homes that are priced above market value. It's true you can always lower the price if the house doesn't garner any offers in the first month or so, but that comes with its own set of problems. Buyers are highly suspicious of houses that have sat on the market for too long.

You can get a better deal as a buyer if you don't use a real estate agent. That's a completely false premise. If the house is listed with a real estate agent, the total sales commission is built into the price. If the buyers don't have an agent, the seller's agent will receive the entire commission.

You can save money selling your home yourself. Some people do successfully sell homes on their own, but they need the skills to get the home listed online, market the home to prospective buyers, negotiate the contract and then deal with any issues that arise during the inspection or loan application phases. It's not impossible to sell a home on your own, but you'll find that buyers expect a substantial discount when you do, so what you save on a real estate commission may end up meaning a lower price. It's not impossible to sell your home on your own for the same price you'd get with an agent, but it's not easy.

The market will only go up. In recent years, homebuyers and sellers have experienced a time of increasing home values, then a sharp decline during the economic downturn and now another period of increasing values. They think

• See INVESTING page 13

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& Waynesville****Specializing in Sewer and
Drain Cleaning and Repairs****We Get****To the Heart
of the Problem!****828-526-0536 • 865-314-9381****Highlands Workshop on Non-native Invasive Plants
coming February 26**

The Coalition for Non-native Invasive Plant Management (CNIPM) is a combined effort between the Land Stewards (the conservation arm of the Laurel Garden Club), Highlands Biological Station, Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, Highlands Plateau Audubon, Highlands Plateau Greenway, and the Town of Highlands. CNIPM will be sponsoring a workshop for landscape professionals on Friday, February 26, 2016 at the Community Building, 869 North Fourth Street, in Highlands. The title of the workshop is "Highlands Workshop on Non-native Invasive and their Control" and it will highlight the ecological effects of non-native invasive plants, methods for the management of invasives, and native plant alternatives for landscapes. There is no charge for the morning session and all landscape professionals are encouraged to attend.

The workshop, taught by Dr. Randy and Becky Westbrook, invasive plant specialists from Southeastern Community College and Dr. Dan Pitillo, Professor Emeritus, Western Carolina University, will consist of a morning and afternoon session. Participants may attend one or both sessions. There is no charge for the morning

session, and all landscape and nursery professionals are encouraged to attend. This session will provide an overview of the invasives problem in western North Carolina with an emphasis on the Highlands-Cashiers area, followed by an overview of control and eradication of invasive plants of regional significance. The final morning segment will address native alternatives for invasive ornamental plants. Lunch will be provided following the morning session.

Landscape and nursery professionals who are licensed pesticide applicators are encouraged to attend both morning and afternoon sessions, for which they may earn 3.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) through the North Carolina Department of Agriculture. The Westbrooks will review invasive species prevention and management principles and practices, the process of biological invasions, and strategies for predicting invasiveness. The cost for attending both the morning and afternoon sessions (including CEUs) is \$50. The workshop will begin at 8:30 a.m. and will be completed by 4:00 p.m.

Early registration is recommended as space is limited, especially for the morning session. For additional information and to register, please go to highlandsbiological.org, or call the Highlands Biological Station at (828)526-2602.

...INVESTING continued from 12

that the market only goes up. They don't think about when a correction will come. The recent recession should have reminded everyone that real estate prices can indeed fall. Economist Robert Shiller created an inflation-adjusted index for home prices dating to 1890 and found that home prices have fallen a number of times over the years, including in the early 1990s, the early 1980s and the mid-1970s.

You should renovate your kitchen and bathroom before you sell. If your kitchen and baths work, a major remodel could backfire. Prospective buyers may not share your taste, but they don't want to redo something that has just been renovated. You might be better off adjusting your price accordingly. Many times, most buyers want to put their own spin on things but as a seller you need to be aware of the fact that your home might need those renovations.

You'll earn back what you spend on renovations. If you fix the heating and air conditioning system or roof, you will sell your house more quickly, but you probably won't recoup what you spent. According to Remodeling magazines Cost vs Value report, the only renovation that is likely to net you as much as you spent is a new front door. You're likely to recoup only 67.8 percent of what you spent on a major kitchen remodel and 70 percent of what you spent on a bathroom remodel.

All the properties listed in the multiple listing service show up online. Your agent must choose to let the listings show up online. Most do, but it never hurts to verify that yours will.

So where does all of this bring us? Make sure you are using an agent who is professional and understands your goals. One that will be upfront with you concerning your properties value and will market your property extensively.

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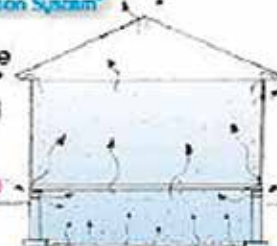
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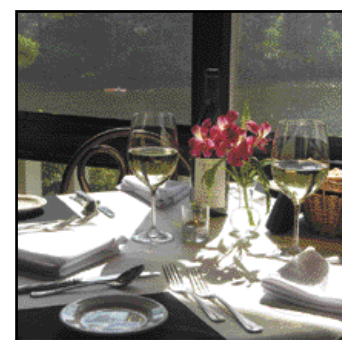
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