

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 14, Number 8

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

Thurs., Feb. 23, 2017

HF&W 'talk' on hold and other Town Board news

Plans are in the works for the Highlands Food & Wine Festival to be held Nov. 9-12 in various venues around Highlands.

Like last year, promoters would like to have the tented Main Event on Main Street between

4th and 5th streets but this year on the south side of the street. Last year, placement on the north side where most of the businesses reside, was a point of contention.

Though discussion of the event was on the Town Board

agenda last Thursday, concerns raised by Town Manager Josh Ward, Macon County Fire Inspector Jimmy Teem as well as EMS and Highlands Fire & Rescue, the item was tabled until the March meeting.

According to President of the Chamber of Commerce, Bob Kietyka, the placement of the 40-ft. wide by 350 feet long tent, which was going to be shoved up against the south side Main Street "wall,"

•See TOWN BOARD page 5

Opioid abuse is rampant in Macon C.

According to the State Department of Health & Human Services, in 2016 alone doctors in 16 WNC counties prescribed 64,488,991 opioid pills. That breaks down to 82.5 pills for each of the 781,026 people there.

Like other WNC counties, Macon County has an epidemic of opioid drug use and overdose drug deaths. Citizens want action.

According to state statistics, Macon County's rate of opioid prescriptions is significantly higher than the state average.

In 2014, 258 opioid pills per resident were prescribed in Macon County which tops the list of the five counties in the region that have higher-than-average rates of opioid pills prescribed per person.

"In Macon County, there is a prescription for every man, woman, and child," Commissioner Ronnie Beale said at last week's

•See OPIOID page 13



From left: Mattson Gates (state winner), Abby Olvera (state winner), Grace Crowe (local winner) and seated is John Brooks (state winner and State Judge's choice). They are all 10th graders taught by Cathy McIntyre-Ross.

— Photo by Cathy McIntyre-Ross

Highlands S. writers are 'Young Author' winners

The local and state winners of the annual Young Author Project sponsored by Western Moun-

tains Reading Council have been announced.

•See AUTHORS page 2

County may cap teacher supplement allocation

Macon County School leaders approached commissioners in December asking for additional dollars to fully fund the district's two percent supplement. The supplement is given to teachers and teacher assistants around Christmas time each year.

Though late in the game, the supplement was initiated in Macon County in 2004 and has been used to provide a once-a-year bonus to teachers ever since.

One reason it was initiated was to stop the flow of Macon County teachers leaving for nearby Georgia and South Carolina which have given supplements – and much higher ones at that – for years.

Over the last 13 years, the school system has never used the entire amount funded for the supplement by the county, so when the school system asked for an increase for the supplement line item this year, the county didn't increase it.

"Since the school system had funds in that line item left over to go toward other things like principal and assistant principal supple-

ments some years, or funding for needs such as books for the maintenance department," said Macon County Manager Derek Roland, "it is due to that trend that we didn't increase the amount this year."

However, for the first time since the supplement was enacted, the school board not only needed the full amount allocated by commissioners, but asked them in December for a \$23,415.13 increase to provide all teacher and teacher assistants with the supplement this year as promised.

"We are not asking for an increase in the supplement," said Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin in December. "We have simply made the county commissioners aware of the amount needed to fully fund the two percent supplement for teachers and teacher assistants in school/fiscal year 2016-17."

The increase was associated with the salary increase the state has given teachers over the last

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Spring cleaning in the works

It's time to spruce up Highlands. As warm weather approaches our town crews will be doing repair work in advance of the season. I realized that work was about to begin while I was walking around town this past Sunday, a winter day that felt more like spring. I noticed on sidewalk sections small white V marks. These marks indicate where the concrete is scheduled to be replaced. Last year the town replaced a large number of sidewalk sections that had broken down over several winters of snow, ice and salt. The same process will be followed this year. If you see a section of the sidewalk that is in disrepair and does not have the white V marks, let me know.

As I stated a few weeks ago, crews will begin patching potholes in the forthcoming weeks. Crews need two things to happen in order to begin work. First, warm weather is required so the asphalt can be properly worked. Second, the asphalt plants have to resume production after their winter shut-downs.

There will be some major repairs made



Mayor Pat Taylor

to road sections this spring. On Leonard Avenue the road section that was removed to replace a failing culvert will be paved. Helens Barn Avenue will be resurfaced after all the water and electric line construction is finished. The large failing patch on Spring Street, located just below the 4th Street intersection, will also be addressed either this spring or summer. Spring Street is high on the priority list for paving

this coming year.

If anyone notices something in town that needs attention, please let me know. I'm talking about little things, not big ticket items like building a 10-story parking garage with a helicopter port on top. I don't think that will happen, but small maintenance items that may have been overlooked can be addressed.

Now, I know we have trash and litter on the roads once again. If you see something really big on the road, like a construction bag that has fallen off a truck, let me know. Winter reveals the accumulation of litter. Last year I started a volunteer litter patrol by supplying trash bags, pickup sticks and road vests to anyone who was willing to pick up litter in a neighborhood or town area. I still have the equipment for those wishing to volunteer. Give me a call at 828-506-3138, or drop by the counter at town hall, and a staff person can provide the materials that are stored in my office.

The Highlands Community Cleanup,

•See MAYOR page 3

Highlands Newspaper

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• LETTER •

'This is how dictators get started'

Dear Editor,

As a journalist and former member of the working press, I continue to be appalled and frankly disgusted at President Trump's daily assault on the media. I began my career as a reporter for a Scripps-Howard newspaper in South Florida. My beat was politics. In addition to feature writing, I covered city, county, and special district meetings and the Florida Legislature.

My training (BA in journalism), my city editor, and my personal integrity demanded the truth, the utmost accuracy, and as the old Dragnet character Joe Friday used to say, "The facts ma'am, just the facts." My livelihood depended on it.

President Trump's overblown ego, his obsession with ratings, and his personal attacks on anyone who happens to disagree with him, does nothing to advance this nation's substantial agenda. His CODL strategy (confuse, obfuscate, distract, and lie) doesn't work (although it seems to work for him), won't work, and only serves to bolster his questionable base of adoring lemmings.

Arizona Sen. John McCain commented this past Saturday on Trump's labeling of the media as "the enemy of the people."

"This is how dictators get started," McCain said. So if this is what Trump's loyal cadre want, let's then all ignore these enemies and believe only the pre-packaged drivel of President Trump's Svengali Steve Bannon.

Hopefully, the majority of educated, thinking, and independent Americans will see through the smokescreen and reject Trumpworld and the alternate universe in which this president lives.

Kurt J. Volker
Otto, NC

...AUTHORS continued from page 1

The theme this year was Step Outside: Writing About the Natural World.

John Brooks, a 10th grade student in Mrs. McIntyre-Ross' classroom at Highlands School received the distinction of being designated as a Judge's Choice by the North Carolina Reading Association at the state level. His piece was entitled "The Emptiness."

State winner Grace Crowe wrote "Beauty of Nature;"

State winner Mattson Gates wrote "I

am a Leaf;" and state winner Abby Olvera wrote "Light of the Night."

Locally, there will be a Young Author's Celebration in March to which the state and local winners are invited. In addition, the state winners are invited to the state Young Author's Celebration, at 2 p.m. Saturday, March 18 at the Raleigh Convention Center. State Winners will also be recognized at the February 27th Board of Education Meeting.

• WEEKEND WEATHER •

FRIDAY
FEB 24



64°/50°

SATURDAY
FEB 25



58°/24°

SUNDAY
FEB 26



49°/25°

For real-time weather and the extended forecast go to
www.highlandsinfo.com and click on Weather

• OBITUARY •

John Miller Anderson

John Miller Anderson, 88, of Highlands, passed away Monday, February 13, 2017.

Born in Pittsburgh, PA, he was the son of the late Gilbert L. Anderson Jr. and Iva Miller Anderson. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Gilbert Lee Anderson Jr. John was a US Army veteran, serving during the Korean conflict. He received a bachelor's degree in fine arts from Syracuse University. He was a former member of the American Institute of Interior Designers and owned and operated Carriage House Interiors in Clearwater, FL for over 30 years. John was



Presbyterian by faith.

He is survived by his friend and caretaker, Michael M. Murray of Highlands.

A private memorial service will be held.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Highlands-Cashiers Humane Society. Mr. Anderson was well known in Highlands for walking his two Springer-Spaniels that he adopted from Highlands-

Cashiers Humane Society.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Online condolences can be made at maconfuneralhome.com

...SUPPLEMENT continued from page 1

few years. The supplement is based on a teacher's base salary, and since the state has been increasing the base salary, the supplement increases as well.

Last week, the Macon County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to approve the additional funds for the supplement that was paid out in December which will go back into the school system's operating budget. This is basically paying MC Schools back since the supplement was paid without knowing if the commissioners would reimburse it.

However, the future of the supplement is likely to be a topic of discussion during budget time this year.

Macon County Commissioner Paul Higdon noted that while he supports the supplement and appreciates the work of the district's teachers, a discussion needs to be had regarding a possible cap.

Higdon noted that county employees only receive a one percent supplement and

as a commissioner he has to answer to that. Higdon's fellow commissioners agreed and said that the supplement and a potential cap would be discussed in the coming months.

Dr. Baldwin believes the supplement is crucial for teacher morale and hopes the commissioners consider continuing to fully fund a two percent supplement because based on the 105 districts in the state which provide a supplement, two percent ranks fairly low in comparison.

There are only 10 school districts in North Carolina that don't provide a teacher supplement.

Macon County is the county furthest west to provide the supplement with Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Swain, Madison, Yancy and Mitchell making up the WNC counties without a supplement.

Schools in Alleghany, Halifax County Schools and Weldon City Schools do not get a supplement either.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

aka the Gorge Road Pickup, is scheduled for April 22. That Saturday is Earth Day! The Highlands Chamber of Commerce will again be coordinating this spring event. Last year we expanded the pickup to other town corridors, and the many volunteers picked up a tremendous amount of trash. Jennifer Cunningham of the Chamber and I will be releasing more details concerning this community event.

My fingers are crossed for good spring rainfall to make things green again.

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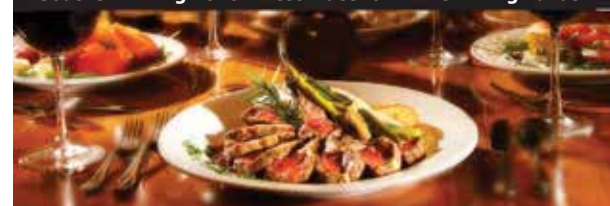
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...TOWN BOARD continued from page 1

doesn't leave enough access room for emergency crews.

He said to satisfy all safety regulations, the tent would have to be moved to the center of the street which would make it difficult to cordon off the area from people without tickets.

"We want to make this event town-centric, but it might not be possible," he said. "Other sites may have to be considered."

Last year, due to town policies concerning using public property for ticketed events – one reason K-H Founders Park could not be a location – the 2016 Main Event was held on property owned by Park on Main.

Besides the safety issues, the "using public property for ticketed events" issue still looms, as does the loss of numerous parking spaces on Main Street that day.

"The Food Fest folks will address those questions concerning public access versus ticketed events at their presentation in March. I'm sure board members will have concerns," said Mayor Pat Taylor. "Nothing has been discussed by the board. I got Josh to start contacting the Food Fest folks this month so they could get their plan and proposal to the board now, instead of like last year when they came to us in May"

Coal Ash Fee

Mayor Taylor reported that Duke representatives visited recently and suggested the town join a class action suit to be heard by the Public Service Commission to set the rate for retail customers, an increase that will help Duke recoup coal ash recovery costs.

Since the town is a wholesale customer, Kevin O'Donnell, the town's Duke liaison, suggested the town not join in the retail settlement but instead retain the services of an attorney who will represent numer-

ous wholesalers and who will go before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Washington, DC, when Duke asks for its rate increase on wholesalers.

Mayor Taylor said O'Donnell is researching numbers to compare what is paid in other states for coal ash cleanup.

Duke plans on filing with FERC for its retail rate increase by March 31.

Fundraisers

Commissioners OK'd Highlands School's second annual Color Fun Run and a request from Nick Bazan with K-H Founders Park to close the park the morning of Saturday May 20 for a "Drive for the Community" fundraiser.

Sponsored by Franklin Ford, five vehicles will be on display and can be driven at \$20 a pop. Bazan said they hope to raise \$6,000 which will go toward completing and maintaining the park.

Verizon lease on Bear Pen

The board went over the lease proposed by Verizon and had several issues. Due to veribage in Verizon's favor, Attorney J.K. Coward was asked to add a few paragraphs which will be in the town's favor concerning the arrangement.

"The way it is written, we can hardly get out of this lease at all; it's very much in their favor," he said.

Commissioners are concerned about Verizon holding up its end of the bargain – basically expanding coverage for Highlands citizens as promised.

"This is a municipal asset and we want the ability or some leverage to say 'if you don't do what you promised, or whatever, you are out,'" said Commissioner Amy Pat-

• See TOWN BOARD page 8

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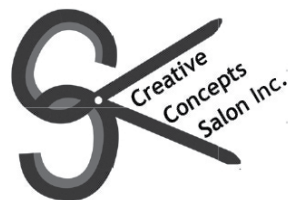
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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Lord, hear Our Prayer

By Chaplain Margaret Howell

Holy Family Lutheran Church: ELCA

Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Charlotte NC, where up to 4,000 immigrants, mostly Latino, worship, congregants can offer a spontaneous prayer during a part of the Mass called the Prayer of the Faithful. The rest of the congregation then responds, "Lord, hear our prayer." If it sounds familiar, we do the same except we call them Prayers of Intercession. One of the constant prayers lately, "Pastor Vincent Finnerty said, is "That God would touch those who hate us and change their hearts."

For those who might be surprised that undocumented immigrants would pray for those who would oppress them, rather than curse them, Rev Greg Gay said "They are trying to be faithful to the teaching of Jesus, who said that people with hardened hearts might look to God to soften their hearts and see the reality.

In our gospel for this past Sunday, Jesus says "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

You have to admire these people who put into practice what is asked of all of us, because sometimes we fail to do this even in the best of circumstances.

Thursday was a special day in Charlotte this past week. It was a day that immigrants stayed home from work and school. I don't feel they should have kept their kids out

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 13



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Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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

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10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Child. Program,

10: 45am: Worship Service

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

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

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Wednesdays: Choir: 5:30p

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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Sun.: Morning Worship 10:45 a., Evening Worship, 6:30 p.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 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

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

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 6 p.m.

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Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

LITTLE CHURCH IN THE WILDWOOD

Beginning Memorial Day weekend

Horse Cove - Kay Ward 743-5009

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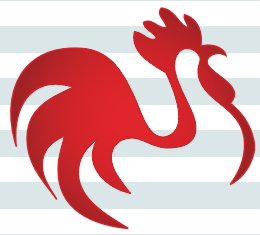
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...TOWN BOARD continued from page 5

terson.

Commissioners also requested a "self-reporting" clause with a time-frame saying that Verizon is required to keep the town up-to-date on how the project and plans are proceeding.

Coward will communicate with Verizon and return to the March Town Board meeting with a

revised lease agreement.

Landscape/Mowing contracts

Cuttin' it Close got Highlands Park & Recreation and Zachary Park; J&J Lawn & Landscaping got Highlands Memorial Park; Tate Landscaping Service got Town landscaping and K-H

Founders Park.

Closed Session

After coming out of the Closed Session on Thursday, February 16, commissioners agreed to enter into contract for the purchase of Lot 4 Bear Pen Mountain PIN: 7540833601 for \$75,000 with a two-week due diligence period to conduct a title search with an approximate closing date of Friday, March 17.

Mayor Taylor said the property is a future investment.

"The owners of the property offered it to us. We have no immediate plans to develop the property other than possibly moving the proposed small Verizon utility building for its antenna closer to or slightly on the new property. This would better shield that structure from view. In addition, in 10 to 15 years the existing water tank will need to be replaced. The new property would allow the town to relocate a new tank and shield it better from view, as we;" he said.

— Kim Lewicki

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\$21.95 serves four.

Tuesday: Made in-house Italian sausage
lasagna and a large house salad.
\$21.95 serves four

Wednesday: Chicken or steak pot pie
and a large salad.
\$21.95 serves four

Thursday: Roasted meatloaf with
mashed potatoes, gravy and a large salad.
\$21.95 serves four

Friday: Wild caught fried shrimp,
baked potatoes, hush puppies &
coleslaw. \$24.95 serves four

Saturday: In-house smoked bbq,
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beans, and yeast rolls. \$21.95 serves 4

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Storage Wars

Choose your battles. Sage advice given to many a new bride and to parents of teenagers, and sometimes to sellers when listing their homes for sale. There are all kinds of hurdles for sellers, but one of the first is the Battle of the Bulge – for some, it turns into an all-out war – a storage war.

One of the most asked questions from potential buyers is “Why are they selling?” No matter what reason the seller has, the showing Realtor should never hear “I know why they’re selling, they don’t have enough room for their stuff!” but we hear that quite often.

In our area, most of the homes listed are second homes and are offered furnished, and not necessarily because they’ve been staged to sell; the sellers already have another home full of furniture. Older sellers are finding their children and grandchildren don’t need or want the furniture from their family home, much less furniture from a second or third home. Sometimes, family homes become unwilling storage units waiting on “one day” when those children and/or grandchildren come to collect the once perceived prized possessions of the family home.

For sellers, the time is now. There’s no doubt, homes show better with furniture, but the potential buyer needs to be able to see the home and where they’ll place their own furnishings. There are several options for those that are looking to unload home furnishings:

- Thrift Shops – we have three in town – most are run by volunteers. Mountain Findings has just expanded to help house cast offs. Donated items are resold with the proceeds going to local nonprofits. Before the expansion, they themselves had a storage problem – eight storage units full of things waiting to be priced and sold. Fibber Magee’s Closet sells donated clothing items and donates proceeds to local needs. The Thrift Shop next to Bryson’s Food Store offers clothing and small household items and donates its proceeds to the Highlands School Booster Club. The Bookworm sells donated books with the proceeds going to the library. Any of these places welcome slightly used items in good condition.

- Consignment shops – there are several of these around, some strictly furnish-

• See INVESTING page 11



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February 25
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Saturday
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...INVESTING continued from page 10

ings, some strictly clothing, and others allow a mixture. There are also "consignment mall" places as close as Franklin. These places will sell your items for a percentage of the proceeds.

- Estate sales and yard sales – sometimes there's not a lot of difference, but most estate sales have someone in charge that's not attached to the items being sold, and the items being offered have been appraised.

- Storage pods – some people choose to keep their things, but just keep them 'out of sight, out of mind.' The storage pods can be set up at your home (depending on your zoning or HOA rules). These are considered very temporary (like putting everything in a pod while you refinish your floors). These shouldn't be considered as a way to store furnishings until your home sells.

- Warehouse storage – these are popping up in huge numbers all over the country and have been for years. It's a pretty easy fix for your storage problem, but you should visit your storage unit occasionally to make sure what is there is really worth storing. I'm sure there's a statistic somewhere that tells how much money is

spent on warehouse storage where the owner never reclaims the items. (Either they quit paying, or it's left for survivors.)

- Peer-to-Peer Storage- – a concept we've heard of, but I'm not sure of the success rate. This is where you rent a space (a spare room, basement, garage, a free-standing building, etc.) from someone to store your things. I'm not sure of the personal or insurance liability, but it may be something to look into if you have extra space. Why not? If AirBnB can rent out a spare bedroom to people, why not for another's belongings?

In a recent bestselling book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, Japanese author Marie Kondo offers the advice that if an item doesn't give you joy, get rid of it. The TV show *Hoarders* puts a negative light on the word that we used to refer to as collectors. Granted, the people depicted on that show have a true problem, and it's unfortunate that it's shared for the world to see. There's nothing wrong with collections; people spend their lifetime collecting things that bring them joy. Eventually those things will pass down to a loved one, or end up in one of

• See **INVESTING** page 13

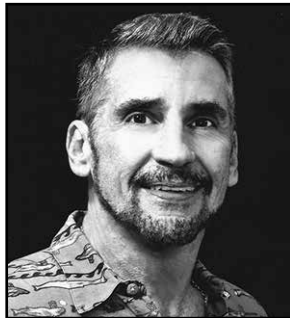
Box Office opens for HCP Dinner Theater production 'Middletown, USA'



Adair Simon



Lauretta Payne



Michael Lanzilotta



Ralph Stevens

For their March dinner theater, The Highlands Cashiers Players have a new venue and a new play to be presented in a dramatized reading. The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in Highlands is the place for the dinner, with seating beginning at 6 p.m. and the dinner at 6:30. The audience will be seated at tables that accommodate eight.

The play *Middletown USA* was acquired by special permission from award-winning play-

wright Dan Clancy, whose work has been produced all over the U.S. and in 15 countries around the world. It premiered in our area last summer at the Cashiers Library. It concerns two couples who have been friends for 33 years, sharing each other's joys, trials and sorrows in a beautifully told story with laughter and tears.

The couples are played by four outstanding HCP actors, with impressive theatrical backgrounds and experience. Adair Simon was

recently seen in HCP's production of *Vanya, Sonia, Masha, and Spike* as was Lauretta Payne and Michael Lanzilotta, president of HCP, and Ralph Stevens, who has appeared in a number of HCP plays, most memorably in *Proof*. The ensemble is directed by Ellen Greenwald.

The box office, 526-8084, at the Highlands Performing Arts Center opens for HCP season subscribers on Thursday and Friday, February 23 and 24, 11 a.m. till 4 p.m. The dinner theater play is

Live via satellite, MET Opera 'Rusalka' this Saturday at PAC



The Highlands Performing Arts Center will present Live via Satellite the MET Opera's production of *Rusalka* by Dvořák on Saturday, February 25 at 12:55 p.m.

There will be a pre-opera discussion led by Beverly Wichman beginning at 12:30 p.m. Kristine Opolais stars in her first Met performances of her breakthrough role, the title character in Dvořák's *Rusalka*, in a critically acclaimed new staging, directed by Mary Zimmerman and conducted by Mark Elder. This haunting love story, inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid," will also star Jamie Barton as the witch Ježibaba, with Katarina Dalayman as the Foreign Princess, Brandon Jovanovich as the Prince, and Eric Owens as *Rusalka*'s father, the Water Sprite.

Tickets are available online: highlandspac.org, at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands



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the third play of the subscription series, so there is no extra charge to subscribers. Others may make reservations beginning Saturday, February 25, at a cost of \$32 per ticket, including tax, for play and 4-course dinner. The play runs Thursday through Saturday, March 3, 4, 5 and March 9, 10, 11. There will be no Sunday matinees.

If the HCP line, 828-526-8084, is busy, please leave a message for a call-back.

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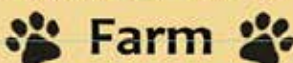
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...OPIOID continued from page 1

board of commissioners meeting. "And that just isn't right. That isn't OK."

Western North Carolina has been hit particularly hard by the opioid epidemic, which includes heroin, other illicit drugs and prescription pain medications.

In 2014, 17 of 23 WNC counties ranked among the top in the state in the rate of fatal overdoses – more than 20 deaths for every 100,000 residents.

In 2015, for the first time in U.S. history, the number of heroin-related deaths outnumbered gun homicides. In North Carolina, 25 percent of the 1,567 drug overdose deaths in 2015 involved heroin.

Members of the community filled the commission boardroom last week, pleading with commissioners to do something, anything, to address the drug epidemic in Macon County.

Carol Anne Elliott was the first to address commissioners, saying more than 150 people participated in a newly founded "movement" she and Michelle Rogers, started in response to the death of her friends' daughter.

The movement known as "Prayers Against Drugs" gathers the first Friday of every month on the courthouse square to pray for an end to drug abuse and for the families and victims affected by drug abuse in Macon County.

"What you are doing tonight is the most important thing," said Commissioner Ronnie Beale. "The stigma is what we have been fighting for years; we have things in place in Macon County that other areas don't have such as the support meetings and the walk-in clinic, but the stigma is what holds it back."

Stephanie Almeida, director of Full Circle Recovery Center which was started in 2012, also spoke to commissioners. Almeida's fight against drugs abuse started with the death of her brother due to an overdose more than 20 years ago. Full Circle Recovery offers services for the victims and

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 6

of school, but many did. There was a spontaneous demonstration in Charlotte Thursday by immigrants and their supporters. It was completely peaceful and proclaimed love far more than hate or fear. This day was to remind all of us that immigrants are already our neighbors. They are already an integral part of our communities, even here in the far-flung mountains. Unless we are of Native American descent, ALL of us are the descendants of immigrants. And our ancestors didn't have an easy time of it, either. In the 19th and early 20th century there was great resistance, prejudice and persecution of the Irish, the Italians, the Greeks, the Chinese and later, during WWII, the Jews and Asians. Thousands of American citizens of Japanese descent were forced into detention camps in the desert because of unfounded fear and suspicion after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

We acknowledge now that that was a grave injustice, but hopefully we have learned a lesson about over-reacting to perceived or imagined threats. I pray that we have evolved since then. I pray that we trust Christ enough to welcome the stranger, show compassion and hospitality to the oppressed and welcome those fleeing the horrors of war and criminal battle zones.

I found it interesting in the Leviticus reading for this past Sunday at the very end, it says.

"You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as your-

family of drug abuse. The center located at 3261 Georgia Road offers such services as DWI assessments, ADETS and DWI groups, opiate treatment, free syringe exchange service, free HIV/HCV testing and free overdose reversal kits. Full Circle Recovery Center also offers a free family support group Learn to Cope NC every Tuesday night from 7-8:30 p.m.

The boardroom was silent as local resident Jan Stanfield shared the heartbreaking story of how she lost her son to a drug overdose.

"As our elected officials, I think it is imperative that you know the stories that are impacting the lives of your constituents, and if people aren't telling you their stories, I hope you are seeking them out, so you can go and address the issues that are important to them and effectively lead us to solutions," said Stanfield. "I hope my son's story will inform you, move you, and engage you to lead us in the work to combat this public health crisis, this impending storm," she added. "The problem cannot be solved until we look at the cold hard truth."

...INVESTING from page 11

the above situations.

As a seller, remember your possessions may not invoke the same memories for potential buyers as they do for you. Your home shouldn't be stark and cold, in fact it needs character, but let the home speak for itself. Show off the "good bones" by allowing the potential buyers to see the stone work, wood accents, mouldings, tile work, etc. instead of the things on them. A buyer may choose your home because they have a collection to display, and your space is just the perfect place.

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self. I am the LORD."

This does not mean that we are to embrace with open arms predators and real criminals.

I agree that they should face civil justice. But for the thousands of women, children and men who have come to America seeking a better life for their families, we are called to love them and seek justice for them when they are persecuted. In Charlotte, I live in an area that has experienced a rapidly growing Latino community. I have found my new neighbors to be family oriented, hard-working and faithful. I have a family that moved in some years ago across the street and down a house or two. I have watched their children play and grow. At every school bus stop in my neighborhood, parents are there, waiting to meet their children as they get off the bus, and they are there no matter the weather. The children are happy. That says it all. I have met many people who have fled Mexico and Central America where the drug trade has taken over the country and terrorized the people. If I were in that situation, I would take my family and flee for safety-- isn't that what Joseph did when he took Mary and the baby Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod's murderous rampage? If it was good enough for Jesus.....

Yes, many people have come into our country illegally.

But if your life and the lives of your children depended upon it, wouldn't all of us do the same thing?

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now accepting applications and interviewing for all positions. Front Desk, Housekeeping, Maintenance, Night Audit, Breakfast Host & cook. Full time and part time available. Call 526-5899 for appointment or stop by 96 log cabin lane for application. Resumes or questions may be emailed to sales@highlandsinn-lodge.com. (st. 2/16)

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for Assisted Living. Apply at Chestnut Hill, 24 Clubhouse Trail, Highlands, NC (828)526-5251. (3/2)

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reading this, right?). Either way, at The Ugly Dog Pub we value people for their unique personalities and qualities, not just for their prior experience. If this agrees with you give us shout, send us an email, or stop by and see us. theuglydogstaff@gmail.com 828-526-8364 If you don't know where we're located then look us up! www.theuglydogpub.com (st. 1/16)

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needed after hours cleaning banks. Please call Cathy @ 828 772 9831 (st. 12/22).

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The Highlands Police log entries from Feb. 12. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Feb. 12

• At 2:25 p.m., officers responded to a motor vehicle accident on US64 west near First Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log from Feb. 14 .

Feb. 14

• Twice that day, the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pierson Drive.

• The dept. provided mutual aid to the Satolah, GA fire dept.

Feb. 16

• The dept. responded to a motor ve-

hicle accident on US 64 west.

• The dept. responded to a fire alarm on Hospital Drive.

Feb. 17

• The dept. was first-responders to a residence on Blue Valley Road.

• The dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

Feb. 18

• The dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Hudson Road.

Feb. 19

• The dept. was first-responders to a residence on Big View Drive.

Feb. 20

• The dept. was first-responders to a residence on Blue Valley Road.

• The dept. was first-responders to Main Street.



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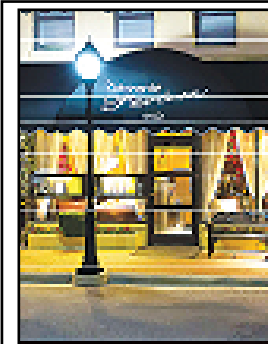
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