

# Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

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Thursday, Dec. 13, 2018



The porte cochere at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street fell victim to the heavy snow that started falling late Saturday afternoon and continued through Monday.  
— Photo by Jim Lewicki

## Heavy wet snow wrecked mayhem this weekend in Highlands

No one knows if this is an emerging pattern or just coincidence, but winter storm Diego dropped up to 14 inches in Highlands and Cashiers Saturday through Monday, Dec. 8-10, mimicking winter storm Benji that dropped 15 inches of snow in 2017, Dec. 7-9.

"The biggest difference between this event and others in the past that I have seen is how heavy the snow was this time," said Fire Chief Ryan Gearhart. "Roofs and awnings collapsing, rhodos weighed down onto

the roads."

Citizens in various areas of town and outside the town limits – which are under Duke's or Haywood's purview – were without power for 12 hours or more just to have it come on and go out again over the three-day period.

"When power went out again today [Monday] after having just recovered from not having power for 12 hours, I just cried," said one citizen who lives in town. "I can camp on the ground in a tent and climb six miles up to stay in a cabin without facilities, but

I was just miserable during this storm."

"Slick roads and ice accumulated on trees and limbs that broke off caused outages at a rate almost faster than crews could fix them," said Public Service Director Lamar Nix.

To help, Nix hired two contract electric crews who arrived Sunday.

"As of Monday morning, power was back on for some while crews continue to work on the rest," he said.

Gearhart said his department's calls ran the gamut of downed trees,

•See SNOW page 15

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## The Literacy Council has a new home

Thanks to its successful programs, the Literacy Council has outgrown its space in the Peggy Crosby Community Center. Its new home will be in the old post office building in Highlands Plaza next to Bryson's Food Store.

At the beginning of 2017, The Literacy Council underwent new management. Each program was carefully evaluated and re-structured to ensure effectiveness and a strong impact for its participants. The newly structured programs proved to be incredibly successful.

Within a year, the after-school programs had a 700% increase in participation; English as a Second Language (ESL) a 1,100% increase; GED a 400% increase; and individual tutoring a 300% increase.

New programs, such as the Senior Book Exchange and a read-to-dogs program were designed and implemented with great success as well.

News about the programs quickly spread and the programs filled, generating lengthy wait-lists

•See LITERACY page 12

## Highlands and Blue Zones

At the November Town Board meeting, commissioners gave the nod to exploring the possibility of Highlands becoming a Blue Zones Community®

What's a Blue Zones Community®? It's literally a happy place where people eat healthy, exercise, enjoy their friends and community and live productively to a ripe old age.

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which citizens, schools, employers, restaurants, grocery stores, and community leaders come together to optimize residents' longevity and well-being by impacting environment, policy, and social networks – which makes healthy choices easier.

Blue Zones founder Dan Buettner is a National Geographic Fellow and New York Times best-

•See BLUE ZONES page 16

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### Hoping AG Stein will step up

This past weekend we were all victims of that frustrating winter storm. Our town electric crews were the most frustrated. With the constant falling trees, limbs and power poles, they struggled to keep the power grid operative. When one line was put back up another would fall. I want to thank them for all their hard work and long hours of service. Their work is dangerous, especially in storm conditions, and I always worry about their safety. I also want to thank all the town crews and staff that worked beyond the normal call of duty during this unique winter storm.

Tonight we have a Town Board meeting at the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field. The meeting begins at 7 pm with an opening public comment period.

The board will hold a public hearing concerning a loan to finance the construction of the aerial portion of the fiber optic network. After this hearing, the town will seek permission from the NC Local Government Commission to take out the loan. The loan and approval process will take



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

several months before construction can begin.

The board will hear a report from Cassie Wilson of Martin and Starnes Associates concerning the annual town audit. That audit has also been sent to the Local Government Commission where their accountants will review and analyze the town audit and finances.

Lamar Nix, Director of Public Works, will make a recommendation that the town hire through

DOT the paving company who has the state contract to pave Main and 4th streets. While here, the contractor would also pave a section of 5th Street and Carolina Way. The town was already planning to pave these streets. Hiring the state contractor to do this work while paving the state projects should save money for the town.

The board will review the tree planning proposal for the center section of Main Street. This project has been in development for several months with the design changing over a series of meetings. The latest plan is a scaled down design that has DOT approval.

In my report, I will review the North Carolina Attorney General's statement concerning the Mission HCA sale and the creation of the Dogwood Health Trust that was issued last week. Stein stated his office would carefully review all aspects of this important conversion. The AG stated he wants to make sure the sale price is accurate, that the Dogwood Trust is setup to reflect the diversity of the entire service area and that the five smaller hospitals have sufficient protections.

I will urge the Attorney General to establish strong provisions that allow communities to buy back these small hospitals if HCA decides to close them. Case in point would be the Highlands Cashiers Hospital where residents have invested millions of dollars in its construction and operation. It is simply unacceptable for a corporation to ever sell it to another entity that would not operate it as a healthcare facility.

See you tonight at the meeting.

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and click on Weather**

## • FORUM •

### AG Stein can demand sustainable healthcare

Last week, State Attorney General Josh Stein said he wants to see changes in the proposed sale of Mission Health to HCA Healthcare to ensure the interests of Western North Carolina residents are protected.

Specifically, he is asking three things:

Are the provisions to ensure continuation of specific health care services at Mission Hospital and the five rural hospitals in the system are strong enough?

Is the roughly \$1.5 billion HCA proposes to pay enough?

Will the board of the foundation to get money from a sale be diverse and truly representative of WNC?

Residents and government officials in communities served by smaller hospitals in the Mission Health system – including Highlands Mayor Pat Taylor and Franklin Mayor Bob Scott – are pushing for more assurances that their communities won't be shortchanged if the system's proposed sale to HCA Healthcare goes through.

I recently wrote AG Stein outlining my recent experience at H-C Hospital as it pertained to ambulance wait-time.

I sent him the Oct 25 issue in which I published the letter I sent to HC Hospital President/CNO Jackie Medland, MC Emergency Services Director Warren Cabe, MC Commission Chair Jim Tate, MC Commission Vice Chair Ronnie Beale, HC Hospital Foundation Board Member Sam Lucas, MC Manager Derek Roland and Mayor Pat Taylor on Wednesday, Oct. 17 pertaining to the woe-ful access to ambulance service in Highlands.



Publisher  
Kim Lewicki

I also sent him the Nov. 1 edition where many letters-to-the-editor told of similar experiences and expressed concerns regarding timely, quality health services available at the H-C Hospital.

The purpose of my letter was not to reiterate what happened to me, but rather, using it as an example, suggest that he insist that the surgical unit Mission shut down at H-C Hospital more than five years

ago be reopened at least as an ER surgical unit. Such a move would mean money for the hospital which would likely guarantee its future.

I wrote in part:

"The mayor says he doesn't want services to deteriorate – unfortunately, they already have. I am writing to see if you have any leverage to reverse the process as part of the HCA/Mission deal.

"Highlands is a very affluent town that is home to year-round and second-home owners.

"It's our tax money that fuels Macon County.

"I recently had an emergency appendectomy – which ended up being a burst appendix.

"Once I got to the place of treatment, all went well. That isn't the issue.

"The issue is once diagnosed, I had to wait three hours for an ambulance to take me 20 miles down the mountain to Angel Medical Center in Franklin where "little" surgeries are now done.

"The reason for this is about five years ago, Mission closed the surgical unit in High-

• See FORUM page 6

### 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.

## • WEATHER •

	Friday 12/14		Saturday 12/15		Sunday 12/16	
	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight
Temp	47 F	42 F	47 F	37 F	51 F	31 F
RealFeel®	44 F	34 F	47 F	38 F	52 F	35 F
Winds	5 g 7	3 g 5	4 g 7	5 g 7	5 g 8	6 g 8
T-Storms	6%	24%	16%	1%	15%	1%
Rainfall	0.38	0.24	0.23	0.74	0	0
Snowfall	0	0	0	0	0	0



**HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN** Beautiful 3BR/3BA home in highly desirable Mirrmont. This charming home has been updated with all the bells and whistles you would expect to find in a brand new home. Gorgeous hard wood flooring on the main level with carpet in the bedrooms and slate tile in the bathrooms. Enjoy outside living on the huge back deck which has both open and enclosed areas for relaxation and taking advantage of our perfect climate. Only minutes to Main Street by car or minutes to Mirror Lake by foot. This home also has great potential as a rental with its proximity to town and everything Highlands has to offer. Whole home generator.

**MLS# 88541 | Offered for \$565,000**



**HIGHLANDS FALLS CC** Mountain views can be seen from this well-maintained 3BR/3.5BA home located in Highlands Falls Country Club where membership is OPTIONAL. Open floor plan, loft, plus a room upstairs for office/den or extra sleeping quarters, stone fireplace, wood floors in main area, vaulted ceilings, cul-de-sac location. HFCC provides 24-hour manned, gated security. If you choose to become a club member, amenities include an 18-hole beautiful golf course, croquet courts with a pavilion and fireplace, swim and tennis center, clubhouse with indoor and outdoor dining, a fitness center, and fishing.

**MLS# 89575 | Offered for \$499,000**



**HIGHLANDS FALLS CC** This lovely villa has a wonderful screened porch plus two open decks for enjoying cool summer evenings. The great room has high vaulted, beamed ceiling with a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace and handsome wood floors. This home was custom built and features include a larger master bath with jetted tub, separate shower, and dual vanities. Home owners are members of two HOAs - Highlands Falls Community Association and the Laurelwood Neighborhood HOA. Social or Golf Membership in HFCC is available with approval but not required.

**MLS# 89398 | Offered for \$495,000**



**PANTHER MOUNTAIN** Nestled next to the national forest, this home is located on Panther Mountain. Enjoy the peace and quiet while sitting out on the back deck enjoying the view. You will fall in love with the coziness, charm, and privacy this home has to offer. This home has an updated floor plan, neutral colors, whole house generator, and towel warmers are a few of the upgrades.

**MLS# 89224 | Offered for \$459,000**



**BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY**

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**HIGHLANDS FALLS CC** Adorable cottage has an older pedigree but has been updated with the addition of a large master suite plus a lower level which features a family room and additional guest quarters. The main level features an updated kitchen with a breakfast bar and opens to the great room with stone fireplace. Large deck with view of Shortoff Mountain. Offered completely furnished and ready to enjoy.

**MLS# 89050 | Offered for \$445,000**

**CHESTNUT HILL** One level living with a living room and a den separated by a see-through fireplace. The kitchen is open to the living room and has SS appliances and granite countertops. The bedrooms are large, each with a private bath and the master has a walk-in closet. All exterior home maintenance provided by the HOA including roofs and siding plus road, landscape maintenance, water and sewer. Beautifully furnished.

**MLS# 89650 | Offered for \$359,000**



**COLD SPRINGS** This wonderful home is great for a family. The front yard is perfect for children or pets and the back covered deck is large and welcoming. The master boasts a fireplace, a walk through closet, and a large bath with double vanities, separate tub, and shower. Another bedroom suite is on the lower level along with a wine storage closet and a sauna.

**MLS# 89105 | Offered for \$450,000**

**PINES** Great large family home close to downtown Highlands. Home has 5BR/3BA with 3BR/2BA on the main level. Separate kitchen and living room, along with 2BR/1BA on the lower level. Great for an apartment, mother-in-law suite, or rental as it has its own entrance. Beautifully landscaped outdoor space in a quiet community on a level lot. Exterior building could be used as a guesthouse or workshop.

**MLS# 88586 | Offered for \$365,000**

**HIGHLANDS** This all on one level 3BR/2BA home features wood floors, beautiful furnishings, and a location that is only 6 minutes by car to the center of downtown. A peaceful deck overlooks the back yard and the wooded view. In a small neighborhood of four homes, this home has easy access off Highway 106. Attached two-car garage with plenty of storage. Immaculately maintained and perfect for year round home or rental income.

**MLS# 87965 | Offered for \$335,000**



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## ...FORUM continued from page 2

lands. Angel in Franklin or Mission in Asheville are now the only options for surgeries.

"After waiting three hours for an ambulance, I then had to endure the 35-minute ride down the mountain in the ambulance, only to wait another two hours for the on-call surgical team to reconvene at Angel.

While waiting for an ambulance in Highlands, the ER doctor was fuming ... begging for transport ... and said if he at least had an ER surgery unit in Highlands, I could have been in and out.

"The point is, Warren Cabe, EMS director of Macon • See FORUM page 7

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## ...FORUM continued from page 3

County can only do so much with the fleet of ambulances he has at his command, taking care of a county the size of Macon. For instance, due to mountainous terrain it takes two hours to drive from Highlands at the eastern end of the county to Nantahala at the western end.

"Five years ago, when Mission closed the surgery unit, Highlands was a different place. Now there are more full-time residents than ever before, second-home residents staying 6-8 months and visitors staying Thursday through Sunday year-round.

"All of these people are potential patients. Not to mention those in Cashiers.

"My primary care physician said people usually only have to wait an hour and half for an ambulance – which I say is still too long, and that doesn't include the 35-minute drive down the mountain.

"If we can't have an ambulance at our disposal up here on the top of this expensive, affluent mountain town, then we at least need an ER surgical unit for "little" surgeries which could be manned with on-call personnel, just like at Angel, if necessary.

"Furthermore, the lack of dependable ambulance service is now affecting the real estate industry, which besides tourism, fuels Highlands' economy, which in turn fills Macon County's coffers.

"A man came to my office and told me that three of his friends, who bought into Highlands years ago, are selling and leaving because now that they are older and more in need of dependable hospital services, they aren't available without traveling long distances. When they bought in, they were.

"Something needs to be done.

"Perhaps you can help in some way.

"When Mission closed the surgical unit, it did so because it said there wasn't enough

business. So, it was obviously a money thing.

"However, HCA has lots of money and Highlands and Cashiers are different places now.

"Perhaps you could stipulate that for communities in Western NC like Highlands and Cashiers where ambulances have to navigate curvy, mountain roads in all kinds of weather to get to a surgical unit ... and if there is a hospital in those communities capable of housing an ER surgical unit ... HCA should make it operational.

"It would be a win-win. Citizens would have better access to healthcare and small, rural hospitals could become a financial asset to HCA which would likely guarantee their long-term existence.

"This would alleviate the load for the EMS departments' ambulance fleet in rural, mountainous counties and would endear people to HCA and their local hospital."

AG Stein responded to my letter saying such feedback ensures he hears the full range of issues and the correspondence will be included in his file to assist in the thorough review of the proposed acquisition.

On Nov. 27, Mission Health responded to my Oct 17 letter saying everything regarding my case was done by procedure. That though the HC Foundation purchased the ambulance, it was "to ensure those in their homes in Macon County wouldn't need to experience extended wait times to reach emergency care."

The changes we need at H-C Hospital involve – on some level – the reinstatement of services; particularly an ER surgical unit which would clearly bring money in, alleviate at least some of the stress put on the Macon and Jackson counties EMS ambulance fleets and most importantly, would ensure needed services at our local hospital for the citizens of both Highlands and Cashiers.



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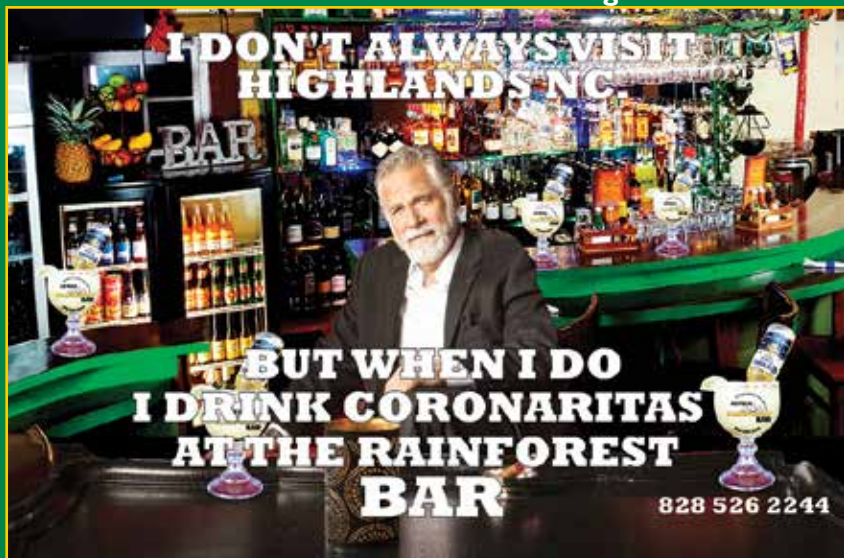
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# • OBITUARY •

## George Elliott Siek



George Elliott Siek, Sr., 88, passed away Friday, November 30, 2018. He was born August 10, 1930 in Hartford, CT, the son of the late Hilmer and Dorothy Merkel Siek. Mr. Siek was raised in West Hartford and then attended Indiana University where he received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management.

After serving in the US Army he moved to Largo, FL in 1956. Mr. Siek opened a Recreational Vehicle parts and supplies distribution business that covered the state of Florida. After 32 years in business he retired and moved to Highlands as a fulltime resident. Mr. Siek opened the Museum of American Cut and Engraved Glass on Chestnut Street in High-

lands on May 5th of 1996. He had a passion for this art and was an avid collector himself. He served as the museum curator for over 21 years until it closed in October of 2017.

As a member of the Masonic Lodge for 57 years, he was raised to the degree of a Master Mason. He was also an active member of Highlands United Methodist Church.

Survivors include a daughter, Beth Siek, Psy.D. of Tampa, FL, sons, George E. Siek, Jr. (Alicja) of Lake Wylie, SC, Danny Siek (Trese) of Franklin, NC, David Schaller (Leel) of Sorrento, FL and John Schaller of Harber Springs, MI; grandchildren, Jena Siek, Brittany Siek, Jordan Siek and Mackenzie Siek all of Char-

lotte, NC; Abbey Siek and Garrett Siek of Franklin, NC; Dakota Siek of Lake Wylie, SC and Mackenzie Sanders of Pineville, NC; Debbi Presley Siek, a special family member and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 34 years, Bonnie Siek. He is also preceded in death by two brothers, H. Gerard Siek, M.D. and Richard A. Siek.

A funeral service will be held at 1 p.m. Friday, December 14, 2018 at Highlands United Methodist Church, with Rev. Randy Lucas officiating. The family will receive friends from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. prior to the service.

A joint graveside service for Mr. Siek and his late wife Bonnie will be held Wednesday January 24, 2019 at Highlands Memorial Park.

Online condolences can be made at [bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://bryantgrantfuneralhome.com). Bryant Grant Funeral Home is serving the Siek family. He will be deeply missed.

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

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# • LETTER •

## A cross on a Christmas tree is unheard of

It's the most wonderful time of the year — to be offended.

Leave aside the well-meant arboreal advice and the culture-war kerfuffle and ask the obvious question: When has anyone, ever, put a cross on top of their Christmas tree? Surely, it's almost always a star — the Star of Bethlehem. Or secondly, an angel.

As an arch reactionary, I am sorry that the town caved in to a small faction who seem to know what makes them mad but know nothing about the history of Christmas or how it's been celebrated in Highlands.

My first job was working at my mom's Christmas Tree shop in Highlands, c. 1978. Nobody ever asked for a cross to put on top of their tree.

When I worked on the conservative editorial and arts pages of a large national newspaper, I reviewed books and museum exhibitions exploring the history of Christmas in the U.S., and also contributed calendar listings focused on Christmas celebrations around the country. I don't recall a single cross-capped tree. I'm not claiming it has never happened, just that it must be very, very, rare. Let peace return to our town.

South Carolina author William Gilmore Simms (who was in awe of our "high lands" plateau) described the healing powers of the season in his 1852 plantation novel "The Golden Christmas:" "Everybody was becoming amiable. Care was kicked under the table, and lay crouching there, silent and trembling, like a beaten hound, not daring to crunch even his own bones aloud."

Stuart Ferguson  
Chicago



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# • HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

## Ongoing

• Movies at the Playhouse: Fri. & Sat.: 1, 4 & 7pm; Sun.: 1 & 4pm; Mon. & Tues.: 1, 4 & 7pm

## Through Dec 30

• At The Bascom, interweaving Southern Baskets. The art of basketry, including examples of Native American works and fine art baskets.

## Thurs., Dec. 13

• HCP's free Holiday Program at PAC at 7 p.m.

• Town Board meeting at 7 p.m. in the Community Building.

## Sat., Dec. 15

Highlands Wreaths Across America at noon at Highlands Memorial Park at 12 Noon There will hold a brief ceremony followed by volunteers laying wreathson all gravestones of our Veterans at Highlands Cemetery. Please come and park at the Community Building by the town baseball field and shuttle buses will take you to the cemetery. Shuttles start at 11am. Shuttles will stop before noon and then resume until 2pm to take you

back to your vehicle.

## Mon. Dec. 17

• HCP presents its free annual holiday program of music and readings at the Cashiers Library on Monday, December 17, at 7 p.m.

## Sat., Dec. 15

• At PAC, Verdi's La Traviata Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street.

## Thurs., Dec. 20

• Highlands Community Choral will present "An Appalachian Christmas" concert at 5PM in the HUMC sanctuary. A reception follows the Sunday concert.. Cost is free.

## Sat., Dec. 22

• Gift Wrapping Station fundraiser planned for Shop with a Cop from 10a to 2p at the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building

on the Georgia Road. All the bows and wrapping paper you need for the holidays will be provided and Santa's elves will be ready to wrap your Christmas presents. The event is free and donations will be accepted with all donations going to Shop with a Cop. Santa will also be stopping by and will be taking pictures for a donation to Shop with a Cop.

## Sat., Jan. 5

• At PAC, Alleluiah by Alan Bennett at 1 p.m. Live via Satellite Series featuring the National Theatre (London.) with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street.

## Sat., Jan. 12

• At PAC, Cile's Adriana LeCouvreur, at 1 p.m., Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door

or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street.

## Sat., Jan. 19

• At PAC, Antony & Cleopatra by Shakespeare, at 1 p.m., Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street.

## Sat., Jan. 26

• At PAC, The Tragedy of King Richard II by Shakespeare. at 1 p.m., Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands.

## Sat., Feb. 2

• At PAC, Bizet's Carmen, Live via Satellite featuring the Met-

ropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street,

## Sat., Feb. 29

• At PAC, I'm Not Running by David Hare. at 1 p.m. Live via Satellite Series featuring the National Theatre (London.) with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands.

## Sat., March 2

• At PAC, Donizetti's La Fille Du Régiment. Live via Satellite featuring the Metropolitan Opera (NYC) at 12:55 with a pre-opera discussion 30 minutes prior. Tickets are available online: [www.highlandspac.org](http://www.highlandspac.org), at the door or by calling: 828.526.9047. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands.

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Monday, December 17 at 7 pm, Cashiers Library

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# • BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

## Mountain Lake Rentals and Landmark Vacation Rentals are joining forces

Debby Hattler, owner of Mountain Lake Rentals (MLR), is pleased to announce that effective January 15, 2019, they will be joining forces with Landmark Vacation Rentals (LVR) to become one of the largest vacation rental firms on the Plateau.

The MLR office will relocate to LVR's offices at the Crossroads in Cashiers. Ron Hensley, Rental Manager, will also move to Landmark Vacation Rentals effective

January 2019 working closely with Ken Perry, LVR Rental Manager. Mandi Cantrell, Linda Barden, Christy DeRose, Scott Tavernier and David Morgan make up the remainder of the LVR team.

LVR provides state of the art marketing, individualized attention to detail and local and knowledgeable reservationists.

Hattler said "making the move to transition Mountain Lake Rentals to Landmark Vac-

ation Rentals is the best fit for all our owners and I'm confident of a seamless transition."

Carol Wilson, General Manager of Landmark Realty, and the team at Landmark Vacation Rentals are pleased to welcome new owners to the LVR family.

For more information please call 828-743-9234 or 828-743-0510.

**Pictured from left are Carol Wilson, Landmark General Manager, Ron Hensley and Debby Hattler**



## ...LITERACY continued from page 1

and spoke to LCs need for more space.

Its new home has more than 5,000 square feet of open space, and will hold much larger programs than could have ever been offered before.

Jeff Weller of Summit Architecture generously donated his services to design the new space which will feature a state-of-the-

art computer lab, expansive areas for the after-school programs, space for adult workshops, quiet individual tutoring rooms, an expansive reading room, and a security system.

Lupoli Construction has very generously agreed to help with the project as well and renovations will begin at the beginning of 2019.

During the next few months while the building is being renovated, The Literacy Council will hold its programs at Highlands Rec. Park. The Literacy Council's administrative offices will temporarily be moved to the former Twigs office in Highlands Plaza. Students will be bussed to the Rec Park just as they were bussed to The Peggy Crosby Center.

"We are so excited to be moving to our new building," said Bonnie Potts, Executive Director of The Literacy Council. "There is a very large need in our community for free educational services and we are thrilled that we will be able to accommodate more students and grow our programs. We are very grateful to the Peggy Crosby Center for their years of support."

New programs will include adult workshops such as a finan-

cial literacy class and a nutritional workshop. Financial literacy will teach participants how to create budgets, pay off debt, and save for the future. Nutritional literacy will focus on healthy eating habits and how to prepare quick and healthy meals.

For more information about The Literacy Council's move, please contact Bonnie Potts at [bpotts@maconcliteracy.org](mailto:bpotts@maconcliteracy.org).

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*The Blue Christmas service allows us to grieve the losses, to acknowledge our pain, and to take comfort in God's abiding love and care for us. Everyone is welcome to attend this ministry of our local churches.*

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# • BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

## The Highlands Literacy Council is leaving PCC

Changes are occurring at the Peggy Crosby Center (PCC). As a reminder, the Mission of PCC is to provide affordable office space to organizations offering community services.

This month the Literacy Council of Highlands (LCH) will be leaving PCC for a larger space that better suits LCH's ongoing mission and operations. PCC and LCH have been together for 20 years; and LCH's departure is sad for PCC, but very gratifying that a tenant-partner is growing to serve more Highlands residents.

PCC and LCH have been meeting and discussing LCH's space needs since March. This led to proposals that PCC hoped would allow LCH to remain at PCC. However, LCH has determined that they require larger and more flexible space than this 70-year old building can achieve. LCH is expanding the number of people they are serving and desires to allow their clients (espe-

cially the students) a more relaxed, less formal environment than can be attained in a multi-tenant property.

LCH requested that PCC give them a six-month lease to July, 2019. PCC operates on an annual break-even budget, keeping rents as low as possible for all tenants. Losing tenants mid-year would cause PCC to have to re-evaluate the rents we charge all PCC's tenants. PCC did offer LCH a one-year lease for 2019, as PCC does all tenants. One year leases are uncommon in real estate properties; but PCC feels this is part of its mission, allowing tenants to expand or contract annually as needs change. This does create financial risk for PCC, but is important in achieving our mission.

If PCC has vacant spaces requiring construction, PCC needs the renovations to occur in the winter when Highlands' contractors are more available to timely meet construction deadlines. This

allows PCC to have spaces ready quickly and replace lost income as soon as possible.

When PCC realized that LCH's best alternatives would not include PCC, its Board developed plans that will not require PCC to raise rents. These plans could be implemented in January, 2019 or 2020. LCH has decided to move this year.

PCC is allocating \$65,000 of reserves to renovate LCH's spaces and absorb rent loss. Hopefully this is a worst-case scenario. Meanwhile, PCC's other planned and unapproved projects are on hold until PCC has better knowledge of funds availability.

PCC has been proud to have LCH as a tenant-partner and to serve an organization which serves others in the ways LCH has and will. Based upon rents LCH has been paying, PCC believes it has been LCH's biggest supporter. PCC determined it has been saving LCH in rent and other costs at

least \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year.

If you know of organizations who have space needs, please have them contact PCC at (828)526-9938. PCC needs to refill the LCH spaces very quickly.

Thanks to the Literacy Council of Highlands and all PCC ten-

ant-partners for creating the PCC community. Please join all of us in wishing the Literacy Council of Highlands continued success in serving the Highlands community.

— Ellis N. McIntyre PCC Board Chair

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Sat., Dec. 15th ..... 10am - 4pm  
Sat., Dec. 22nd ..... 10am - 4pm

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...SNOW continued from page 1



The roof of the lumber shed collapsed under heavy snow Sunday. — Photo by Brian O'Shea

downed power lines and stuck vehicles.

The traffic lights at 4th and Main streets were damaged when a tree limb broke off and hit them on the way down, causing them to hang precariously.

Nix said NC DOT fixed them Monday.

The most visible destruction is at the Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street and the lumber shed behind Reeves Hardware where heavy snow caused "mayhem" just like on the Allstate commercial.

According to PAC Director Mary Adair Trumbly the destruction and collapsed porte cochere will be cleared away in time for the Highlands Cashiers Players Holiday Program tonight, Thursday.

According to Cindy Trevathan, on the Building Committee of the PAC Board, their insurance agent has been contacted and plans to rebuild are in the works.

"After talking to our architect Paul Schmitt, our plan is to repair it incorporating the new de-

sign so work on it won't be done twice," she said.

As per the architectural plans for the new complex, the porte cochere will be a little higher and a different shape.

Jim Luke, manager of Reeves Hardware said they are still assessing damage.

"This happened Sunday. No one was in it. At this point, there is no timeframe on repairs," he said.

Like the PAC, the structure in the building lot behind Reeves was scheduled to be completely renovated this coming year.

Temperatures are rising during the day now, so the snow and ice are melting but once night falls and temperatures drop below 32 degrees there are icy roads to contend with in the morning.

Macon County Schools were closed or delayed Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday due to forecasted snow and icy roads in the morning which meant buses couldn't run.

— Kim Lewicki

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## ...BLUE ZONES continued from page 1

selling author. He founded Blue Zones to put the world's best practices in longevity and well-being to work in people's lives. He and his doctor brother Tony envision Blue Zones across the country and the world.

Mayor Pat Taylor first brought up the subject in his "Mayor on Duty" column a

few months back. He heard Dan Buettner speak at a League of Municipality meeting and the concept inspired him.

Sally Taylor, ex-Highlands School art teacher and wife of Mayor Pat Taylor, introduced the philosophy to commissioners asking only that they allow her to take the

steps to investigate what it would take for Highlands to make the grade – and to agree to Phase 1 which is sitting for a 2-hour presentation by Buettner.

Phase 1 won't cost the town anything – she has been donated the funds for Buettner's speaking fee. Phase 2 includes a two-day examination of Highlands to see where improvements can be made which is

where funds from the town would be needed if the town chose to implement Blue Zones suggestions.

Sally said she isn't sure what the group would suggest for Highlands because she and the mayor said Highlands is ahead of the game compared to other areas. There are sidewalks throughout town, the Green-

•See BLUE ZONES page 17



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- How the Grinch Stole Christmas, by Dr. Seuss

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# ...BLUE ZONES continued from page 16

way, hiking trails, a vibrant spiritual community and places to exercise, play and gather.

"But this is just a lifestyle adopted by the whole community ... whose benefits are measurable," said Sally. "There is an increase in well-being, lower health care costs, improved productivity in people because they feel better, and people are motivated by friends and family. Our community could become an innovator in preventative health."

According to Buettner, when community comes together, it creates permanent changes which can be measured by the Gallop Healthwise Well Being Index. However, at least 25,000 people are needed to participate - which is why Sally is reaching out to communities beyond Highlands envisioning a Blue Zone region to include Franklin, Cashiers and Sylva.

Metrics used to judge happiness include residents having trust (in their police, neighbors, and local government); good walkability and people-friendly design (sidewalks and safe streets); access to nature (parks, open spaces, trees); civic engagement; clean environment; access to affordable dental care; access to healthy food; and high rates of healthy behaviors (restrictions on smoking, less drug abuse, less obesity).

Specifically, Blue Zones Communities put family ahead of other concerns, they smoke less, are semi-vegetarianism where the majority of food consumed is derived from plants; moderate alcohol intake, espe-

cially wine; there is constant moderate physical activity which is considered an inseparable part of life; social engagement where people of all ages are socially active and integrated into their communities; engagement in spirituality or religion; and legumes are commonly consumed.

According to Dr. Clark with the HC Hospital Foundation, a potential stakeholder in the movement, this lifestyle leads to longer lifespans and less healthcare costs.

- Kim Lewicki

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# •CATSPEAK•

## Princess Puddin's search for snuggle spots

With the temps cooling down, it was time for me to search for the best winter snuggle spots. Heaven forbid I be unprepared for cold weather. When the temps are warm, I can be found in plain sight stretched out on the wood floor or atop the back of Mum's recliner, where I can swish my tail across her face while I look out the front door. For cooler temps, I need new spots.

If the mood strikes, I may recline on one of the couches, and I may even curl up in one of the kitty beds perfectly positioned in the middle of each one. Frankly, I much prefer to lie between the kitty bed and the couch pillows, though Mum is never happy with that scenario. "Puddin'," she fusses as she picks me up and places me in a round fleece bed, "Why can't you get in your bed?" She doesn't seem to understand the attraction of lying on a clean couch cushion, and she's none too pleased when I hop right back onto the couch.

I know all about couches and kitty beds, so I did my Goldilocks act to find additional snuggle spots. Mum says a girl can never have too many shoes; I say a kitty can never have too many snuggle spots.

The first one I tried was a kitty size basket next to the hearth. I spent lots of time there last winter when the wood burning stove was going. It's nice and toasty, and it's ideally positioned so I can lift my head to see Mum, Dad, and Lord Banjo. When I know all is well, I drop my pretty kitty face back into snooze position for another few hours, unless of course I notice someone head for the kitchen or Mum go to her office, where the kitty treats are hidden.

Next, I found a new perch in a basket of comfy throws hidden at the end of a couch. It took Mum a while to find me, I guess because I've never before settled there. Mum doesn't give up easily, though, so my new spot was soon discovered. I've gone back to it a few times, but I'm not yet sure it's a keeper.

The third spot was the large metal log holder on the hearth. For some reason, it's decorated with paintings of rabbits. "Why rabbits?" I've asked, but I've yet to get an answer. "Mum," I've meowed, "It would be way better to have kitties on it or even dogs," but again--no response.

The metal container is usually filled with lumpy, uncomfortable logs, so I've never tried it before. Right now, it's filled with newspapers and some fun brown packing paper. I do love packing paper, especially the big twisted pieces that come in the Amazon boxes that seem to arrive daily. When a box full of twisted paper stays in the kitchen a few days, I burrow deep into it and purr.

It turns out the log holder is not a good spot because it shakes, rattles, and rolls when I climb in, and Mum hears the metal against the stone hearth. Okay, Okay, it doesn't really roll. No matter, it's hard to enjoy a snuggle spot when it's noisy. Still, it was fun to give it a try. For now, I've deemed my two comfy baskets, my kitty beds, and Mum and Dad's laps the best cold weather choices. But a gal can always change her mind, right?

*Princess Puddin' Penn resides in Georgia with her dad, her mom Kathy Manos Penn, and her canine brother Lord Banjo. Please send comments, compliments, and questions to [inkpenn119@gmail.com](mailto:inkpenn119@gmail.com). She appears in "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch," a book that can be found on Amazon, at Books Unlimited in Franklin, and at Mountain Paws.*

## Proverbs 3:5

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

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Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

### CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

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

Wednesdays - Supper at 6 p.m.

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10:45am: Child. Program, 10:45am: Worship Service

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

### EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

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Eucharist Rite II. Childcare available at 10:30

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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 5p

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

Wednesdays: Choir: 6p

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Johnson

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

# • PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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Sundays: Worship: 11

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Sun.: Bible Study 10a; Morning Worship 10:45a., Evening

Worship, 6p. Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

### HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

### SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

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

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

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Sun.; Tues: Community Supper 5:30 followed by Bible Study.

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Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

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### WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

# • WORD MATTER •

## Let It Snow

As I write this there's nearly a foot of snow on the ground in our little enclave east of town. The typically twenty-foot rhododendron separating our home from the Nantahala National Forest have been brought to their knees by the wet, heavy downpour. Our driveway is impassable, thanks to a neighbor's tree, which saw fit to throw its branches up in surrender, secure in the knowledge, no doubt, that more snow is on the way.



**Bud Katz**

very little on our calendars that can't be moved to a day, date or time when conditions are more hospitable. For those Highlanders who must work, get to school, attend appointments with doctors, or with friends, or entertain relatives who want a taste of what we who live here have all the time, with all due respect, please do not underestimate the importance

of paying attention to the conditions and the environment.

For those visiting the plateau, if you don't have to go out during a significant to major snow event, don't go out. Often, there's ice underneath all that beautiful snow and I don't care what you're driving, no set of wheels is a match for ice. Just like those of questionable intelligence who decide a Category Three hurricane is a good time to break out your boogie board and ride some twelve to 15-foot waves, skiing or tobogganing down a hill or road that might or might not have speed bumps built into it promises to put a real damper on your Sunday afternoon.

This particular winter weather event doesn't rise to the level of a blizzard, but then again, by Sunday night it wasn't over. The 'Weather' tab on the website for the Highlands Newspaper, [www.highlandsinfo.com](http://www.highlandsinfo.com), told us at least another couple of inches of the white stuff is heading our way Monday before giving way to rain, and then sunshine will render our world more friendly to all.

Those of us who are blessed to live here understand that winter weather is part of the price of admission. We tend to not mess with Mom Nature. We let her do as she will and then either deal with or simply enjoy whatever she decides to deliver.

Winter, formally, at least, is still nearly two weeks away. Welcome to our little slice of heaven.

Last year, on this very same weekend, we enjoyed ... no, that's the wrong word, experienced a similar seasonal event. Each year since we became full time residents of Highlands we have experienced at least one snow event that rendered even our beloved Subaru Outback, if not useless, then unnecessary, because we aren't going anywhere.

Thanks to advances in meteorology television weathercasters seem to be able to more accurately predict when, where and how much snowfall, rainfall, winter mix-fall is going to, well, fall. This gives us ample time to prepare by, as the missus likes to put it, provisioning, from Bryson's, Ingles, or wherever else we need to head to obtain whatever is necessary to feed us and her beloved backyard birds.

Oh, yes, dear readers. Again, as I write this, Mr. and Mrs. Redbird, a glorious eastern Towhee, two or three nuthatches, titmice, Carolina chickadees, and a whole gaggle of slate-colored Juncos are feeding from pieces of pottery set atop mounds of snow on the back deck. I'd call them a distraction, but they're actually, in no particular order, a hoot, cackle, chirp and twitter. It's as if they've convened a meeting of the local chapter of their POA just to keep us amused between the momentary power blips, interruptions of our satellite delivered television and the ability of our Internet provider to keep our connectivity up and running.

After nearly forty years of living in Florida, where serious bad weather events, hurricanes, for example, are typically louder, harsher and way more destructive, with the arrival of a foot of snow we get to enjoy a whole other level of beauty, quiet and peacefulness here among the trees, shrubs and yard litter. Of course, occasionally that yard litter comes in the form of the previously mentioned downed tree, which sometimes decides to knock down power lines, or otherwise disturb us from the, let's call it quietude of a winter weather event.

Of course, we're lucky. As retirees there's



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**IN TOWN**, Three bedroom/two bath home in Mirror Lake area. FURNISHED. \$1400. not including utilities. Yard and screened porch. Annual lease. NO pets. No Smokers. Chambers Realty & Vacation Rentals 828-526-3717. (st. 10/11)



**VACATION RENTAL**: In-town Highlands 3bd/3ba. \$420 nightly. Visit our web site for more details, 29brockcourt.wordpress.

com/ or call Chambers Agency 828-526-3717. Open year-round. (st. 11/21)



this beautiful 3 Bed/3 Bath Contemporary house in town. Chef's kitchen huge living area, French oak floors, wood burning fireplace, screened in porch, hot tub, bonus room above 2-car garage. Downstairs level is large living area that can be used as a studio apartment, full bath w/ claw foot tub, wine cellar and patio. \$2800 month or \$2500 month for just the main level only. House in Order Property Management, Virtual Tour on Houseinorderpm.com (828) 484-1571



**659 HOLT RD, HIGHLANDS, NC.** Lease this beautiful 3 Bed/2 Bath home on Atlanta side of Highlands minutes from town. Open floor plan, gas fireplace, sunroom and deck, washer/dryer, 2 car garage \$2000 month, House in Order Property Management, Virtual Tour on Houseinorderpm.com (828) 484-1571 (12/26)



**556 SHORTOFF RD. HIGHLANDS, NC.** For rent 3 bed/1bath bungalow, laundry room w/storage, generator, garage state maintained road, 3 miles from Highlands on Cashiers side \$1300/month. Houseinorderpm.com 828-484-1571. (12/26)

**SOUTHERN BELLS RESTAURANT** on Cashiers Road for lease. Experienced restaurateurs only. Call 706-782-6252. (st. 5/3)

**FALLS ON MAIN** — Up and Down units available. Call 706-782-6252. (st. 5/3).

# • LEGAL NOTICE •

18 SP 99

## NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NORTH CAROLINA, MACON COUNTY

Under and by virtue of a Power of Sale contained in that certain Deed of Trust executed Tucker-Joyner Properties and guaranteed by Harold J. Joyner to Smith, Thompson, Shaw & Manause, PA as Trustee in the amount of \$555,000.00, payable to Capital City Bank and secured by a Deed of Trust dated January 10, 2005 and recorded in Book G-29, at Page 1578, Macon County Registry, North Carolina.

Default having been made of the note thereby secured by the said Deed of Trust and the undersigned, Scott D. Neumann, having been substituted as Trustee in said Deed of Trust, and the holder of the note evidencing said default having directed that the Deed of Trust be foreclosed, the undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at the courthouse door of the county courthouse where the property is located, or the usual and customary location at the county courthouse for conducting the sale on December 14, 2018 at 10:00 AM, and will sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described property situated in Macon County, North Carolina, to wit:

Being all of: Lot 1, containing 1.27 acres, Lot 2, containing 0.92 acre, and Lot 3, containing 0.81 acre, together with that certain 0.59 acre parcel located above Lot 1 and 3, containing 0.81 acre, together with that certain 0.59 acre parcel located above Lot 1 and designated as "Park Area" on plat referenced herein, all of Highlands Gorge and further shown and described on a survey dated May 16, 2005, prepared by Benjimim a. West, RLS, and recorded Card 4508, Macon County Registry, together with the join, non-exclusive right to the use of easements shown on said plat, and the additional 50-foot access easement conveyed to Grantor herein by deed recorded in Deed Book W-25, Pages 1438-1440, Macon County Registry.

\*The general description of the property is provided for convenience but is not guaranteed; the legal description in the Deed of Trust controls.

A cash deposit (no personal checks) of five percent (5%) of the purchase price, or Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00), whichever is greater, will be required at the time of the sale. Following the expiration of the statutory upset bid period, all the remaining amounts are immediately due and owing. THIRD PARTY PURCHASERS MUST PAY THE EXCISE TAX AND THE RECORDING COSTS FOR THEIR DEED.

Said property to be offered pursuant to this Notice of Sale is being offered for sale, transfer and conveyance AS IS WHERE IS. There are no representations of warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at, or relating to the property being offered for sale. This sale is made subject to all prior liens, unpaid taxes, any unpaid land transfer taxes, special assessments, easements, rights of way, deeds of release, and any other encumbrances or exceptions of record. To the best of the knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the current owner(s) of the property is/are Tucker-Joyner Properties, LLC.

An Order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to G.S. 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but no more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in the notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination [NCGS 45-21.16A(b)(2)]. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

If the trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason, the sole remedy of the purchaser is the return of the deposit. Reasons of such inability to convey include, but are not limited to, the filing of a bankruptcy petition prior to the confirmation of the sale and reinstatement of the loan without the knowledge of the trustee. If the validity of the sale is challenged by any party, the trustee, in their sole discretion, if they believe the challenge to have merit, may request the court to declare the sale to be void and return the deposit. The purchaser will have no further remedy.

**Scott D. Neumann**

**P.O. Box 2020**

**535 N. 4th Street**

**Highlands, NC 28741**

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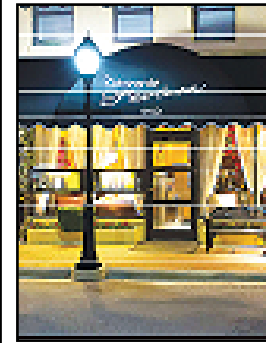
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