

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Jan. 25, 2018



The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. complex on Oak Street.

HF&R is preparing for the future

By Kelsey Reidle

On the heels of its busiest year ever, Highlands Fire and Rescue will soon ask the Town of Highlands to accommodate its future growth, in the form of a new fire station. It's expected to be a costly — and necessary — expense, but one that will carry the department decades into the future, said Highlands Fire & Rescue Chief Ryan Gearhart.

It's an idea that the department has been kicking around for the past three to four years,

but the discussions have recently gained traction since HFR enlisted the help of Stewart-Cooper-Newell Architects, P.A., of Gastonia to begin developing a plan to construct a new station, either in the department's current location on Oak Street or elsewhere.

Each option comes with positive and negative points. If the new station is built in place of the current station at 322 Oak Street, the department would need to find another place to stage equipment and trucks during demolition and

construction, Gearhart said.

But options for vacant property in Highlands are limited. One obvious option would be to replace the nearby Highlands Playhouse, which is owned by the Town of Highlands, with a new fire station, but officials are not ready to list that — or any property — as a serious option.

"If that's the direction the Town wants to go, then that's completely up to them," Gearhart said. "There's other property around

• See HF&R page 7

3 Dems are vying for Meadows' seat

Meet them Thursday, Feb. 1 at Hudson Library

On Feb. 1 the three democratic candidates running for the U.S. House of Representatives, District 11 N.C. will be guests at the Indivisible Meeting at the

Hudson Library from 5-7 p.m. Candidates Dr. Scott Donaldson, Phillip Price, and Steve Woodsmall will give individual presentations followed by a question and answer

period.

Each candidate will likely touch on topics near and dear to all citizens: Climate Change & the

• See DEMOCRATS page 7

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Citizens petition the town to do something about bears and garbage

A couple of months back, Cynthia Strain with the B.E.A.R. Task Force spoke during the public comment period of the Town Board meeting requesting the board take action concerning Highlands' bear problem.

The problem is the garbage

bears get into via open dumpsters, residential garbage cans or bags of garbage left on top of dumpster lids.

Raiding garbage receptacles and spreading trash across the plateau is a growing problem, one

• See GARBAGE page 6

Planning Board gets first look at changes to come

The face of Highlands is set to change, yet again.

At Monday night's Planning Board meeting, plans in the works were finalized and others presented for the first time.

Owners of Vivace on S. 4th Street have purchased the Wells Fargo building next door and will be expanding the business south along the street.

The three facades — two of which were the bank — will be connected by a canvas awning that will stretch the length of the property.

The entrance to the shop will be the current entrance; a bench will likely block the old bank entrance.

A large display window on the far end of the old bank building will match the display window in the original store.

Board members got a first look at Highlands Dive on Carolina Way — already affectionately called High Dive or The Dive.

Owners Thomas and Kay Craig are renovating the old Lost Hiker but also purchased the lot

• See CHANGES page 5

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

What it takes to be 'qualified'

The first Highlands Town Board meeting of the year is tonight at 7 p.m. at the Highlands Community Building next to the ball field. Surprisingly, the agenda is rather light.

One item will be to surplus a police vehicle and the acquisition of a used van so officers can transport traffic barricades and signs for special events. Several police vehicles have already been surplused in recent weeks. Funds from these sales will significantly offset any cost incurred with the used van acquisition.

The board will also review the policy for accepting streets for town ownership and maintenance. This policy will become a part of the Town Utilities Manual that has just undergone a reorganization and an update.

Many folks have noticed that Main Street parking has been full many days during January, a period when employee parking restrictions are not in place. I will lead a discussion concerning this issue and seek board direction as to whether the town should extend these restrictions all year.

The board will also have a discussion concerning the Town Christmas Tree.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

Some people believe it may be time to explore other options about placing a larger tree at a different location in the park.

Kevin O'Donnell of NOVA Energy will provide an update on the Duke coal ash fees. He has been working on a formula for the monthly costs.

Please join us at tonight's meeting. As always, we will begin the meeting with a public comment period.

It has been a busy time for several of our town staff. The Town Manager Josh Ward has been attending training sessions for town managers that are conducted by the North Carolina School of Government. His last session will be this spring where he will then acquire North Carolina certification for town managers. Josh currently holds state certification for zoning. He will continue to maintain that certification through continuing education. Our current Town Planner also holds the same certification, so we have two people qualified in this critical area.

Our former Town Clerk, Rebecca Shuler who is now our financial director, is working on state certification in municipal finance. At the same time, she is maintaining her town clerk state certification. Our new Town Clerk Gibby Shaheen will be attending training for certification through the School of Government beginning February. Our Town Clerk is also trained and knowledgeable about utility finances and accounts receivable.

•See MAYOR page 3

• HIC'S VIEW



whicseven@yahoo.com

What dogs ponder

Highlands Newspaper

Toll Free FAX: 866-212-8913

Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Publisher/Editor: Kim Lewicki

Copy Editor: Glenda Bell
Digital Media - Jim Lewicki
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265 Oak St., P.O. Box 2703,
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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 1/26		Saturday 1/27		Sunday 1/28	
	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight	Daytime	Overnight
Temp	50 F	25 F	46 F	40 F	49 F	24 F
RealFeel	52 F	24 F	46 F	36 F	45 F	36 F
Winds	4 g 7	3 g 5	3 g 5	3 g 4	4 g 7	5 g 7
T-Storms	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Rainfall	0	0	0	0.48	0.32	0
Snowfall	0	0	0	0	0	0

For Real-time Weather and the Extended Forecast, go to • www.highlandsinfo.com and click on Weather

• OBITUARIES •

Mary 'Lorraine' Vinson Talley



Mary "Lorraine" Vinson Talley, 81, of Highlands, passed away on Tuesday, January 16, 2018.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Dan Vinson and Clyde McClure Vinson. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by two sons, Barry Eugene Talley and James Randall Talley and sister, Carrie Vinson Speed. Lorraine was a member of Highlands United Methodist Church.

She is survived by her beloved husband of 59 years, James Edward Talley; two daughters, Beverly Talley of Franklin and Becki Talley Bryson and husband Mike of Highlands; three siblings, Olan Vinson and

Virginia Vinson Bryson both of Highlands and Marlene Vinson of Bryson City; two grandchildren, Jason Paul Johnson and Ryan Michael Bryson and two great grandchildren, Rylee Lynn Bryson and Laney Marie Bryson.

A Graveside Service will be held at Highlands Memorial Park at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Highlands UMC, Gordon Center, PO Box 1959, Highlands, NC 28741.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

•See OBITUARIES page 8

• LETTER •

Angels among us

Dear Editor,

About nine months ago, my friend entered the Eckerd Living Center at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. And, so, I started to visit him regularly. I must admit, at 80-years-old, this was my first visit to a rehab place, a skilled nursing center or an extensive care facility.

While visiting my friend and some new friends, listening and observing, I noticed a very skillful staff that went about their daily tasks enthusiastically, professionally and with an "I love you!" attitude.

Often, they seemed pulled from all sides – handling tasks most of us would run to avoid – but never did I see anyone lose their composure or patience.

I learned a lot from these visits and they helped me to grow but mostly I learned there are angels among us.

J. Butch Woodward
Cashiers

• THANK YOU •

From the Webb Family

The family of Doris Elizabeth Webb wants to thank all well-wishers for all the prayers, food, and compassion during their time of need. God Bless each and every one of you.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

Our police, firefighters and public works staff are always in continuous training and certification mode. Almost every position in town government has significant training, licensure or certification requirements. The simple days of hiring and filling positions are long gone.

Our town auditors, Martin and Starnes, encourage us each year to cross train personnel in multiple positions, especially in regard to budgetary matters. It is a

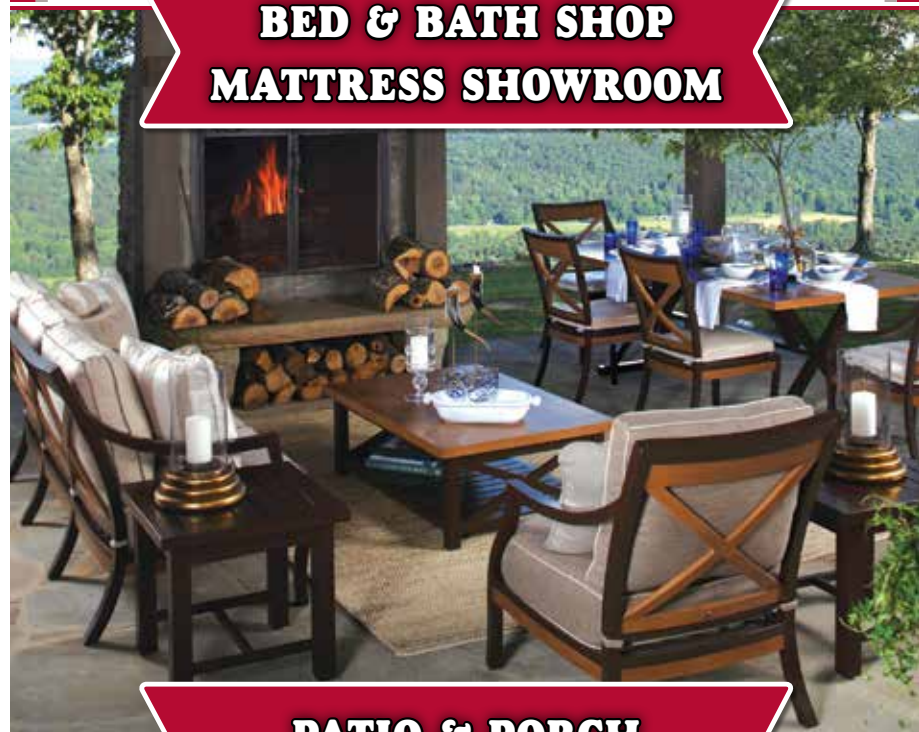
challenge for a small town, but we continue to make progress in meeting this objective.

On a lighter note, let me declare that Highlands will not "shutdown" the way Washington has recently done. We have been in operation for well over a century and will continue to serve the residents of Highlands. Our town employees are dedicated to staying on duty come hail, high water, hurricanes and snow blizzards!

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• MILESTONES •

Talbot leaves HCP in good hands

In July 1995, Highlanders Sara Mayer, Carol Lucas, Jerri Talley, Jean Morris and April Hershey each put up \$100 to support their vision of a community players' theater in Highlands. Debuting with three plays -- Steel Magnolias, Dearly Departed, and A Thurber Carnival -- Highlands Community Players was born (HCP).

This group of year-round citizens who loved to act attracted like souls who have consistently delivered quality entertainment during the fall, winter and spring when for a long time there wasn't much to do in the evenings in Highlands.

In the summer of 2008, the Highlands Community Players joined forces with folks in nearby Cashiers, to form Highlands Cashiers Players keeping the acronym HCP.

Actor, director, Virginia Talbot was one of loyal members of the company, but after 23 years, she has made her final curtain call.

Talbot has worn all the hats in the organization ap-

pearing in 20 plays, directing 14 of them and handling public relations.

As an HCP board member, she has helped navigate the company that has always offered incredible productions known for its scenery and flawless, funny, endearing and thought-provoking presentations.

Early on, when still Highlands Players, their hilarious dinner theatre productions were most welcomed during cold winter weekends. Patrons were presented with a full-course meal, usually in the Community Building, followed by a fun-filled comedy.

"Virginia exemplifies the word volunteer" said HCP President Adair Simon. "She was always ready to pitch in and help doing anything our shows needed. She could do it all."

She was a big part of HCP's annual



Virginia Talbot

Photo by Marty Boone

free "Christmas Reading" which has become a heart-warming gift to the community.

"Virginia is the consummate perfectionist; no detail is insignificant," said recent HCP board member Michael Lanzilotta.

Prior to making Highlands her home, in the Tacoma/Seattle area she had a 20-year career in public television, teaching on-air courses in various subjects, writing, producing, and directing films and TV programs, two of which were awarded Emmys.

She later served as an instructor of gifted students and as director of Outdoor Education for a school district near Tacoma.

Though she has made her last curtain call with HCP, she will continue to volunteer at the Hudson Library, sing with Mountain Voices chorus in Franklin, and hike with the Over-the-Hill Hiking club.

The mission of the Highlands Cashiers players has always been to elevate the cultural environment of Highlands and its environs by offering first-rate theatrical productions; to seek out and develop the ample theatrical skills of the Highlands residents of all ages; and, to foster the camaraderie of participants in theatrical productions.

Break a leg, Virginia!

— Kim Lewicki

Bazans say 'good-bye' to Highlands



This week the Bazan family said good-bye to Highlands to relocate to Washington state to be close to family – namely their new grandchild. There will be one less face at the table at Buck's where this group meets daily for coffee and lively discussions.

...CHANGES from page 1

next door to expand into a full-service bar/restaurant. Big proponents of in-town living, they have included two apartments upstairs on the backside of the building – one, one-bedroom and one two-bedroom.

The lots on Carolina Way are zero-lot line – side by side. The lot the Craigs purchased to expand the structure is currently used as a driveway between the vacant lot next to Meritage and the old Lost Hiker. It will obviously cease to be a travel-way.

The plan meets all the requirements for parking and seating. They have the required 12 parking spaces on site which allows them 36 seats. In addition, as per the town's Unified Development Code there are also 11 available spots within 300 feet of the restaurant which are open to all.

The plans for the Park on Main Restaurant in Wright Square which will be where Ruka's is now, have been

• See CHANGES page 7



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...GARBAGE continued from page 1

that needs addressing, say citizens.

The Town Board listened, but so far no action has been taken.

Now a Bear Protection Petition at the Business Spot is being signed in hopes that commissioners make a move to alleviate the problem.

"We need to take action soon to reduce the garbage in town and in our neighborhoods," it reads.

Suggestions include bear proof garbage cans for residents and business owners – perhaps mandated and possibly subsidized -- and possibly taking some sort of legal action when dumpster lids aren't fastened shut.

As of Monday, Jan. 22, 31 people had signed the petition – many with comments.

"As a part-time resident, I would love to see a 24-hour option for small quantities of garbage that we could use on our way out of

town," wrote one person.

The town addressed this issue some time ago by allowing people to use the dumpster at the Rec Park to dispose of household garbage in between scheduled garbage pick-ups.

Still, inconsiderate, lazy people sometimes leave their bags of garbage on top of the dumpster instead of opening the lids and putting it inside. This makes garbage easy pickings for crows and bears.

Another petitioner said "A hasp lock

on a dumpster is not too much to ask. This should apply to residential containers and the town should make it a rule."

The garbage along streets – particularly Oak Street – is evidence that bears and likely dogs and even crows know where to get their next meal. There are three dumpsters the length of Oak from Third to First streets.

"Bear-proof garbage cans should be mandated and a sliding scale could be used

• See GARBAGE page 8

• HS SPORTS •

with Kedra McCall

You win some; you lose some

This week high school played Robbinsville and Rosman. No team was able to pull out a win over Robbinsville. JV girls lost 61-26 and JV boys lost 47-13. Varsity girls lost 47-34 and varsity boys lost 65-49.

Both girls teams pulled out a win over Rosman but both boys came up slightly short after hard fought games. JV girls won 39-24 and varsity girls won 54-34. JV boys lost 45-40 and varsity boys lost 64-51. Their next home game will be tomorrow, Friday, January 26th. They will play Hiwassee Dam starting at 4 pm.

Middle school teams did not have any games this week. Their next games will be the Tri-State tourney starting on the 29th. They play at home at 2 on Saturday against Eagle Ridge

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Highschool cheerleaders.

..HF&R continued from page 1

town, but it's just a matter of purchasing it. If you have to purchase the land as well as build the facilities, that's a lot of money."

A primary driver for the project, Gearhart says, is the increased workload on the 28 volunteers and two full-time employees at HFR. The chief, alongside Assistant Chief Robbie Forrester, are the department's only two full-time employees. Volunteers receive an hourly rate for their services, but are often called away from their day jobs to respond to medical calls and alarms.

But with a full-time staff — six to eight full-time firefighters, two to a shift, either on 24-hour or 48-hour shifts — response times would drop and volunteer time would be used more efficiently, Gearhart said.

HFR responded to 699 calls in 2017, up from 627 in 2016. Firefighters responded to five more structure fires and 21 more "miscellaneous" fires in 2017, according to Town records. But despite the type of call, it may be the time of day at which they occur that necessitate around-the-clock staff. The plan would drastically change the way volunteer time is utilized, particularly in a time when employers are hesitant to let key employees clock out a moment's notice.

The chief recalled a moment from last year's annual department banquet, where he cited statistics from 2016.

"I mentioned at our dinner that we had over 500 calls that year, and some of our retired guys were looking at me like, 'Are you serious?' Because when they were on, they were running around 100 calls a year," Gearhart said. "It's just evolved, and we're keeping up with it, but at the same time, a lot of the calls are coming in after hours, from 4 p.m. to midnight."

He said additional help during the day and at night would save HFR volunteers from having to respond to false alarms and medical calls, since most could be handled by a team of two people. Even structure fires can make immense progress with just two people who can respond quicker than a larger response team that takes twice the time to arrive on scene, he said.

"If you have two people there, you

...CHANGES continued from page 5

tweaked a bit.

The owners had purchased the building adjacent to Ruka's on the west side. Living quarters are upstairs but now the bottom will be used as part of the restaurant instead of a business. The restrooms originally planned for the main restaurant building will be moved to the new part.

Architect Jeff Weller, who was there

can start flowing water and possibly even get a good knock-down and save the house," said Gearhart.

In addition to providing bunk space for around-the-clock staff, the new station would also be outfitted with modern necessities such as a clean air system to remove toxic air from equipment and trucks, and an extractor — essentially, an industrial grade laundry system designed for fire stations — to help remove cancer-causing chemicals from turnout gear.

"We can wash our turnout gear now, we have a washer and dryer, but an extractor would do a lot better," Gearhart said.

A new building would also be more energy efficient, he said.

The project, which would take around 18 months to complete, would likely require an increase in the Highlands fire tax, which at one cent, is the lowest in the county, Gearhart said, adding that it's too early to assign a budget line item to the building.

"But I feel like the taxpayers deserve to have more coverage," he said. "At night, it would cut down on response time, having two people already at the station versus volunteers having to first come to the station and then go out to the call."

The staff increase might also have a positive impact on area property owners' insurance rates. That is, they could decrease. The ISO is a company that sells fire risk-analysis information to insurance companies, and rates each geographical area on a 10-1 scale, with 1 being the best. Property inside Highlands city limits are rated 4, while those outside town limits — with 5 miles — are rated at 5.

"We might be able to knock it down another notch if we had full-time service," Gearhart said.

Meanwhile, the department will, however, be asking the Town of Highlands Board of Commissioners for a new tanker truck to be included in the 2018-2019 budget, but Gearhart says it would take about a year to receive the truck.

"We try to keep up with the times, and I think for a long time we were behind," he said. "We played catch-up for several years, and we're right there now, but it's costly."

speaking on all Monday night's presentations, said the number of seats won't change in the main restaurant, but without the restrooms, the arrangement will now be more spacious.

The entire structure — Ruka's and the building next door — will be painted to appear as one entity.

• See CHANGES page 8

...DEMOCRATS continued from page 1



Dr. Scott Donaldson



Phillip Price



Steve Woodsmall

Environment, Energy, Healthcare, the Second Amendment, Improving Schools & Empowering Parents.

Each candidate's website covers these topics in depth. Go to www.scottdonaldsonforcongress.com, price4wnc.org and www.woodsmallforcongress2018.org

According to their websites, the three candidates are family men who echo each others views in many areas. Affordable comprehensive healthcare is paramount to each of them, for instance. Each believe the needs of citizens in the 11th district are not being met by Republican incumbent Mark Meadows.

What voters will have to decide during the primary election on May 8 is who has the acumen, persona, polish and drive to go up against Meadows and best represent the 11th District in Washington.

Meadows is running for his third term; each term is two years.

Since he took office four years ago, Meadows has evolved from a small-town Realtor to the head of the Freedom Caucus and has acquired all the spit and polish needed to wear that hat. Unfortunately, to make an impact on voters and to be "heard" in Washington, such a transformation is often necessary.

Dr. Scott Donaldson from Henderson-

ville, is a urological surgeon who believes healthcare is an inalienable right. As a scientist he doesn't believe climate change is a hoax and as a hunter he is profoundly concerned with protecting the environment of WNC. He believes America should be energy independent; out from under the yoke of corporate interests.

Phillip Price is a small business owner who has lived and worked in most of the counties in the 11th District during his 30 years in Western North Carolina. His three children attend NC public schools, he is a hunter, fisherman, and carpenter. He says he understands the struggles of mountain families. He wants to protect WNC values, its mountains and its people.

He also believes in the Affordable Care Act without which he and his family would have no health insurance, he said.

Steve Woodsmall has a history of service. He is a career US Air Force officer, and retired at the rank of Major. He is a member of the Transylvania County Planning Board and is a Professor at Brevard College.

Woodsmall holds a PhD in Organization & Management, a Master's degree in Business Administration and has worked in government, corporate and community action organizations.

— Kim Lewicki

The Metropolitan Opera

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...OBITUARIES

continued from 3



THE DRY SINK
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The Dry Sink Main Street Highlands, NC

Neville Wymer Wilson, 87, of Highlands passed away Sunday, January 21, 2018. A native of Macon County, he was the son of the late Herman and Dona Rogers Wilson.

He was employed by the U. S. Forest service in law enforcement and fire and timber management. He was a U. S. Army veteran serving during the Korean conflict. He was Worthy Patron Order of Eastern Star seven times; Past Master of Blue Ridge Lodge; a member of Smoky Mountain

...GARBAGE continued from page 6

to subsidize the cost of the cans," was another suggestion.

Petitioners see securing garbage receptacles as a way of protecting bears and the environment.

"Continue to aggressively protect our bears and wildlife by bear-proofing cans," said one petitioner. "All rental homes must have bear proof cans."

Mayor Pat Taylor said the issue isn't an easy one to solve.

"I can think of several questions the Town Board would

Shriners and a Royal Arch Mason. He was a member of First Baptist Church Highlands where he was a Deacon and Worship Greeter.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Kathleen Rogers Wilson; daughter, Ethel Coffeen of Highlands; sons, Terry Wilson and Wade Wilson both of Highlands; sister, Barbara Drodick of Highlands; brothers, Morris Wilson, Joe Wilson and Steve Wilson all of Clayton, GA; grandchildren, Lee Coffeen and Corey Wilson (April) and great-grandchildren,

have to address. For starters, who would enforce such regulations, and how much are the taxpayers and residents willing to pay for such initiatives?" he asked. "Would these regulations totally solve the problem given there are many residences adjacent to the town that could continue to attract bears to the area if those folks did not follow the town's lead?"

Citizens plan on presenting the petition to the Town Board soon.

— Kim Lewicki

Neville Wymer Wilson

Henry Neville Wilson and Benjamin Michael Sullivan.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by a brother, Duane Wilson and a beloved daughter-in-law, Janis Wilson.

A memorial service will be held Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 3 pm at First Baptist Church of Highlands with Dr. Mark Ford officiating.

The family will receive friends Thursday from 1-3 pm prior to the service at the church.



In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to "Dooley's Kids" at First Baptist Church of Highlands, 220 Main Street, Highlands, NC 28741 or Shriners Hospital for Children, 950 West Faris Road, Greenville, SC 29605.

Online condolences may be made at bryant-grantfuneralhome.com. Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Wilson family.

...CHANGES continued from page 7

Though previously pre-approved, the Highlands Overlook Cottages subdivision off Big Bear Pen Road needed to be heard again because all the engineering plans are now ready and have been signed off by Town Engineering Lamar Nix.

The eight-acre subdivision will include nine lots all at least three-quarters of an acre which surround a common area in the middle.

A variance will be needed to build-out the subdivision as planned because the grade of the first 150 feet of road at the entrance off Big Bear Pen has to be 15.45%. The town's maximum is 14%.

Architect Jeff Weller said due

to the lay of the land and the underlying rock, there was no way to get that portion of the road to 14%. The roadway is in compliance everywhere else in the subdivision.

He also said that Highlands has very strict grade regulations. "Most municipalities allow 18% and even 20%," he said.

Due to Highlands topography, years ago, commissioners established grade restrictions to minimize erosion.

The Planning Board unanimously OK'd all four plans. The next steps involve varying degrees of special use permits, variances and in some cases a final OK by the Town Board.

— Kim Lewicki



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If you have been thinking of selling, do it now. The winter allows buyers more time to search online and if we peak their interest – with a great website - they will make a trip to come see a listing.

What has made the difference, you might ask, so I will give you my opinion.

With more than 300 weddings in Highlands each year,

the exposure to our lovely town – for many who have never visited before - cause them to fall in love with us, as I did 24 years ago. What's not to love? Mountains that surround and beckon you, waterfalls that depict nature's best, cool temps in the summer, gentle snows in the winter, restaurants that rival the best anywhere in the country, divine shopping, playhouses and performing art centers that entertain to your heart's content, and a fine arts center that allows beginners to grow at their own pace.



Pat Allen
Pat Allen Realty Group
828-200-9179
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As I previously wrote back in the fall, if your home is priced right, well-maintained, and has great curb appeal, it will sell now. A full-time broker, who is aware of true market value, and lives and breathes real estate on a daily basis, can help you accomplish your goal. We still have stagnant inventory that was priced wrong from the beginning and has increased overall days on the market for our MLS listings statistics. That helps no one.

Zillow's zestimates confuse buyers with no regard for loca-

tion and inaccurate data. We, as good brokers, have to explain that Highlands and the surrounding area's locations, whether mountain views or on water, add to the value and are priced accordingly. Many tax appraisals are still inflated and should not be an indicator of the selling price of your home. So you see, a full-time broker who sells throughout our area can determine the value of your home and get it sold.

As a new year begins, there's no better time to sell than now. Call any of our professional brokers if you want to buy or sell. It's still not too late to get a great value and our brokers can guide you in the right direction. I always think resale when working with buyers and take that into account when show-

ing homes or land to secure your piece of mind. Buying or selling can be stressful and we always strive for a win-win situation.

Life is fragile, as I experienced with the sudden death of my husband eight months ago. Live now, love now, and make every day count. Living in Highlands – with its small town atmosphere - offered comfort in so many ways. The outpouring of love and sympathy was amazing and I realize what a special place this is to live. We are seeing more and more people moving here full-time and I totally understand why.

I wish you all a great new year filled with love, good health, and knowledge of what matters most in life.

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



A Biblical Perception of God

Highlands Central Baptist Church
Pastor Dan Robinson

A Biblical perception of God could well be the greatest need among Christians and subsequently the church. Everything else, does indeed, flow from that perception. It is possible (after all) to make God in our own image. When this happens, we approach God on the basis of what we think He is like. This image of God can have its origin in church tradition, a dominant male figure or interpretation of Scripture (to name a few).

However, God's holiness, His "Otherness," His total and just separation from us (were it not for Jesus), and His overwhelming, consuming and muting presence are Biblical expressions of a Holy God which are foreign to many. We are both cultural and soulish. Because of that, our perception of God must fit that criteria.

Our culture is thoroughly humanistic (man-centered) and polytheistic (embracing many gods). This heresy enables one to worship a god who is all about them and to add to that as many expressions as necessary (polytheism) which makes them feel OK in His sight. This philosophy frees one from blushing at sin, humbling oneself, disgust at one's flesh nature and/or guilt and conviction over one's passivity and lukewarmness.

In this rubric, God exists for *my* purposes rather than vice-versa. This god is a contemporary "with-it" god who moves with the times. This god is a cultural god. He is regarded as little more than a genie in a bottle. The Biblical requirements of transformation, Lordship, repentance and brokenness are therefore regarded by this person as unnecessary. Since Humanism is all about me, then it is I and not God who is at the center of my world.

But "oh" for a Biblical perception! One that would cover me with trembling. With an overwhelming "What-if-ness" What if He won't listen? What if He won't accept me...forgive me? But indeed, the Biblical God will do all that! Listen! Accept! Forgive! But these things we've taken not only for granted but indeed as entitlement! We say with a well rehearsed flippancy "O Lord; Forgivmee-my-sin: The misspelling is deliberate. It underscores our casualness about our own sin. We seldom weep over it. And we don't always turn from it after we confess it. We trade on His promises for our assurance of gaining heaven and missing hell – rather than being broken-hearted that we've grieved and ignored Him.

A Biblical perception radically changes all of this. I become touch-sensitive to the slightest nuances and nudges of His Spirit. His slightest turning away from me; His grieving over my thoughts and actions stop me

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965

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

Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7

Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting: 7 p.m.

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers

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Mon. 6p Bible Study & Supper at homes

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

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

Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

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Pastor Jim Kinard

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

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

Wednesdays – Supper at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School

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

10:45am: Worship Service

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

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

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Thursdays: Holy Eucharist Rite II.

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Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor

220 Main Street, Highlands NC 28741

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Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Prayer Mtg 6:15 pm; Ch. 5p

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

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

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

Wednesdays: Choir: 6p

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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Sundays: Worship: 11

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Pastor Dan Robinson

670 N. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)

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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.

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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• HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CONCEPTS •

The Many Health Benefits of Yoga

When some people think of yoga, they imagine having to stretch like a gymnast. That makes them worry that they're too old, unfit, or "tight" to do yoga. The truth is you're never too old to improve flexibility. Yoga has been practiced for more than 5,000 years, and currently, close to 11 million Americans are enjoying its health benefits. It is a transformative, therapeutic and balancing practice with postures that are accessible to most people and adaptable to most abilities. The series of yoga poses called asanas work by safely stretching your muscles. This releases the lactic acid that builds up with muscle use and causes stiffness, tension, pain, and fatigue. In addition, yoga increases the range of motion in joints, and also increases their lubrication. The outcome is a sense of ease and fluidity throughout your body.

Yoga stretches not only your muscles, but all of the soft tissues of your body. That includes ligaments, tendons, and the fascia sheath that surrounds your muscles. And no matter your level of flexibility, with regular practice you will most likely see benefits in a very short period of time. In one study, participants had up to 35% improvement in flexibility after only eight weeks of yoga. The greatest gains were in shoulder and trunk flexibility. Yoga postures, or asanas, help you:

- Improve circulation, flexibility and mobility
- Establish better body mechanics to prevent injuries
- Correct maladaptive movement patterns that cause bad posture, discomfort or pain
- Balance your physical and mental energy levels to improve overall health
- Release emotionally-charged holding patterns lodged in the physical body
- Enhance emotional well-being, which in turn improves your physical health

Some styles of yoga, such as ashtanga and power yoga, are more vigorous than others. Practicing one of these styles will help you improve muscle tone. But even less vigorous styles of yoga, such as Iyengar or hatha, which focuses on less movement and more precise alignment in



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poses, can provide strength and endurance benefits. Many of the poses, such as downward dog, upward dog, and the plank pose, build upper-body strength. This becomes crucial as people age. The standing poses, especially if you hold them for several long breaths, build strength in your hamstrings, quadriceps, and abdominal muscles. Poses that strengthen the lower back include upward dog and the chair pose. When practiced correctly, nearly all poses build core strength in the deep abdominal muscles. With increased flexibility and strength comes better posture. Most standing and sitting poses develop core strength. That's because you're counting on your deep abdominals to support and maintain each pose. With a stronger core, you're more likely to sit and stand "tall." Another benefit of yoga is the increased body awareness. This heightened awareness tells you more quickly when you're slouching or slumping so you can adjust your posture.

Most forms of yoga emphasize deepening and lengthening your breath. This stimulates the relaxation response -- the opposite of the fight-or-flight adrenaline boost of the stress response. Because of the deep, mindful breathing that yoga involves, lung capacity often improves. This in turn can improve sports performance and endurance. Regular attendance at yoga classes will also help you become:

- Less stressed out, calmer and more peaceful
- Less depressed, tense and/or anxious
- More in touch with your inner Self -- body, mind and spirit
- Better connected to your Spiritual Source
- More aware of your life's purpose (and offer you strategies to fulfill it)

Even beginners tend to feel less stressed and more relaxed after their first class. Some yoga styles use specific meditation techniques to quiet the constant "mind chatter" that often underlies stress. Other yoga styles depend on deep breathing techniques to focus the mind on the breath. When this happens, the mind calms. Among yoga's anti-stress benefits are a host of biochemical responses. For example, there is a decrease in catecholamines, the hormones

produced by the adrenal glands in response to stress. Lowering levels of hormone neurotransmitters -- dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine -- creates a feeling of calm. Some research points to a boost in the hormone oxytocin. This is the so-called "trust" and "bonding" hormone that's associated with feeling relaxed and connected to others.

Perhaps one of the most studied areas of the health benefits of yoga is its effect on heart disease. Yoga has long been known to lower blood pressure and slow the heart rate. A slower heart rate can benefit people with high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Yoga was a key component to the heart disease program designed by Dean Ornish, MD. This was the first program to partly reverse heart disease through lifestyle and diet rather than surgery. On a biochemical level, studies point to a possible anti-oxidant effect of yoga. And yoga has been associated with decreased cholesterol and triglyceride levels as well as a boost in immune system function.

As yoga has become more popular in

the West, medical researchers have begun studying the benefits of therapeutic yoga. This is also called integrative yoga therapy or IYT. It's used as an adjunct treatment for specific medical conditions, from clinical depression to heart disease. Yoga benefits other chronic medical conditions, relieving symptoms of asthma, back pain, and arthritis. Most worldwide clinical studies are happening outside of the U.S. But even the NIH has funded clinical trials on yoga and its health benefits for insomnia and multiple sclerosis. Some studies have suggested that yoga may have a positive effect on learning and memory. Other researchers have been studying whether yoga can slow the aging process, increase a person's sense of self-acceptance, or improve energy levels. Go to any yoga studio and listen to students after class. Some will even tell you that yoga can help improve marriages and relationships at work. The only way to be certain of all that yoga can do for you is to try it for yourself and see!

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The Highlands Police log entries from Jan. 1. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Jan. 1

• At 7:15 p.m., officers received a report of a lost wallet at a gas station.

Jan. 6

• At 7:30 p.m., officers responded to a one-vehicle accident in the Sky Pie Pizza parking lot.

Jan. 12

• At 3:45 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on South Street.

Jan. 13

• At 11:04 p.m., Patrick James Segraves, 18, of Scaly Mountain, was arrested for larceny of property. He was issued a \$500 secured bond. His court date is Jan. 30.

Jan. 14

• At 3:05 p.m., officers received a report of breaking and entering and larceny from home on US 64 west where a Reddy Heater valued at \$380 was taken.

Jan. 15

• At 2:33 p.m., officers received a report of someone driving a vehicle with no insurance and displaying a fictitious tag at NC 28 and Clear Creek Road.

Jan. 16

• At 9:15 a.m., officers responded to a call of an unattended death of natural causes of Mary Loraine Talley, 81, at her home on US 64 west.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. log from Jan. 5.

Jan. 5

• At 7:27 p.m., the dept. was first responders to a residence on Buckberry Road..

Jan. 6

• At 1:32 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Edwards Creek Road.

• At 2:44 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Clubhouse Trail Road.

• At 7:30 p.m., the dept. responded to a power line fire on Bonnie Drive.

• At 8:49 p.m., the dept. stood by at Zachary Field for the MAMA helicopter.

• At 1:49 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Happoldt Drive.

Jan. 7

• At 7:18 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cook Road.

• At 10:34 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Smallwood Ave.

Jan. 9

• At 10:21 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at Old Edwards Lane.

• At 5:25 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Foreman Road.

Jan. 10

• At 1:16 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a resi-

dence on US 64 west.

Jan. 11

• At 12:35 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on N. 5th St.

• At 1:30 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pierson Drive.

Jan. 12

• At 10:29 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on N. 5th St.

• At 12:04 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Main Street.

Jan. 14

• 2:19 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Dept.

Jan. 15

• At 11:28 p.m., the dept. investigated the source of smoke on Horse Cove Road.

Jan. 16

• At 9:06 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on US 64 west.

Jan. 17

• At 4:13 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Webbmont Road.

• At 5:22 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Dept.

Jan. 18

• At 9:58 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Center Drive.

• At 12:34 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Lake Court.

Jan. 19

• At 4:32 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Flat Mountain Road.

Jan. 21

• At 11:01 a.m., the dept. investigated the source of smoke on Horse Cove Road.

• At 1:56 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pine Street.

• At 3:59 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Pine Street.

• At 6:14 p.m., the dept. tended a vehicle fire on NC 106.

Jan. 22

• At 7:25 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Cole Mountain Circle.

Wednesday Lenten Lunch & Worship at HUMC

Wednesdays Feb. 14-March 21

Beginning Feb. 14, join HUMC for a weekly soup/sandwich lunch and brief worship message in the Faith and Fellowship Center – each Wednesday during Lent at noon. Everyone is invited. Donations accepted.

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The Real Estate business is multi-faceted and we typically wear many hats. You'll serve alongside our team of Brokers as we

service our Clients with excellence. Along the way you will learn new things. In fact, if you've thought about embarking upon a Real Estate career and practicing Brokerage, this position is a great way to find out if it's right for you before investing the time & money it takes to become licensed.

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IN YOUR HOME. Learn simple techniques & recipes to make fresh foods taste delicious, as you save money and improve your health! Call Medea Galligan, MS Nutrition, Health Coach at 828-989-9144 and leave your name & number to schedule your class.

HIGH COUNTRY PHOTO/KEVIN VINSON: scanning photos, slides & negatives to CD or DVD for easier viewing. Video transfer to DVD. Everything done in house. Leave message at 828-526-5208. (st. 8/24)

HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HANDI-MAN - Can fix anything inside or out. Carpentry, painting, pressure washing, lawn care, hauling. Free Estimates. References. Call Tony. 828-200-5770 or 828-482-0159. (4/5)

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...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from 10

dead in my tracks. I then hold my tongue or my anticipated little cleverism. That which would highlight me -- center on me -- project me and my witticisms are all anathema to me. His smile (not the smile of others) is my first passion. His quieting Presence resulting from His approval fills and satisfies my hunger. Knowing that God could assign me to hell forever and still be perfectly just and loving in doing so -- but yet doesn't because of what Jesus did for me, fills me with an awe and respect for God for which I could only wish to find the right words to express my forever gratitude.

The result of knowing this God of the Bible through His Son Jesus Christ is not a hampered life of legalisms. It is rather a sweet and holy life of wholeness, humor, holiness, transparency authenticity, simplicity and peace. These things are both inevitable and expectational in the life of one who by Grace seeks and responds to the God of Scripture.

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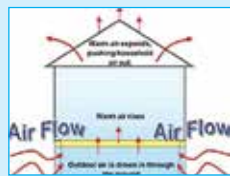
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