

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, Dec. 5, 2019

Mayor Taylor and others in state receive AG Stein's Dogwood Award

Attorney General Josh Stein today announced that Highlands Mayor Patrick Taylor, Franklin Mayor Bob Scott, Casey Cooper,

CEO, Cherokee Indian Hospital, Cleveland County Sheriff Alan Norman, were recipients of the Attorney General's Dogwood

Award. These awards are given annually to honor North Carolinians who are dedicated to keeping
• See AWARD page 5

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TLC students get down with yoga after school

By Brian O'Shea

Instructor and Creative Director at Yoga Highlands, Rachel Kinback, visited The Literacy Council last week for a monthly after-school session of yoga, including stretching, breathing and stress management techniques; and of course, reading.

Students read The Thank You Book (Elephant and Piggie) by Mo Willems to Kinback, a story that follows Piggie's mission to thank everyone he knows but worries he'll forget someone.

"Rifting on the story and wanting to acknowledge all of our friends by name, we played a cooperative activity focused on the 'strength of the whole,'" said Kinback. "All the children, big and small, made a very long down-dog tunnel shape, lining up their bodies side-by-side down the length of the reading room,

• See YOGA page 10

Highlands Olde Mountain Christmas Parade is this Saturday, Dec. 7 • 11a-noon



Main Street from 5th to 2nd will be lined with spectators watching the annual Christmas Parade Saturday 11a to noon. Following the parade it's the annual Hymn Sing at First Presbyterian Church at 1p and the Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet at 4p. Santa will be in K-H Founders Park on Pine Street to hear Christmas wishes from noon to 4p pm on Saturday and the ice skating ring in the park will be open 1-10p Saturday and Sunday.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

New bank must take Entegra's place

By Brittney Lofthouse

Wells Fargo, Bank of America and PNC have all closed their Highlands locations, and now with the merger of Entegra Bank and First Citizens bank another is set to close. However, though Entegra and First Citizens have merged, which means the Entegra's Highlands location will eventually close, the terms of the merger dictate that the property must go to another bank.

So, Highlands residents will at some point have a new banking option.

In an announcement made Monday, the Department of Justice (DOJ) identified three current Entegra Bank locations that would need to be sold before the merger between First Citizens Bank and Entegra Bank can re-

• See ENTEGRA page 17

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Staying ahead of the curve

Creating a comprehensive plan this coming year that addresses sustainability issues should be a top priority. I support hiring a professional consulting company to guide the planning board, town staff and community stakeholders through this effort, a process that will shape a community vision as a guide for future decisions.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

I am aware we live in a rapidly changing, unpredictable world. Long-term planning may not be possible, but strategic planning to respond to unanticipated events and rapid change is needed. To folks who say they just want to keep Highlands the way it has always been, my response is that's not going to happen. And how exactly has it always been? In the not too distant future, major changes beyond our control will impact Highlands. As a community we need to have the mechanisms in place to respond.

The challenge will be to sustain and protect this beautiful natural environment, yet also create an economy that can support the needs of residents. The paradox is that

the more we want to build and develop as a means of expanding economic prosperity, the more we risk changing the social and natural environment. How many people can Highlands accommodate and still preserve this spectacular environment?

We may see glimpses of this dynamic already in play. On Black Friday the business district was completely full with no parking spaces available. What action should be taken? Build a huge parking garage like the ones in major cities? If so, how do we address resulting capacity issues? Already on Black Friday our rather small sidewalks were full, too. Do we expand existent spaces and infrastructure in order to have more and more people here? And, what will be the nature of retail stores a decade from now? Already some retail merchants have adopted the tactic of promoting products to potential customers who are simply walking down the sidewalks.

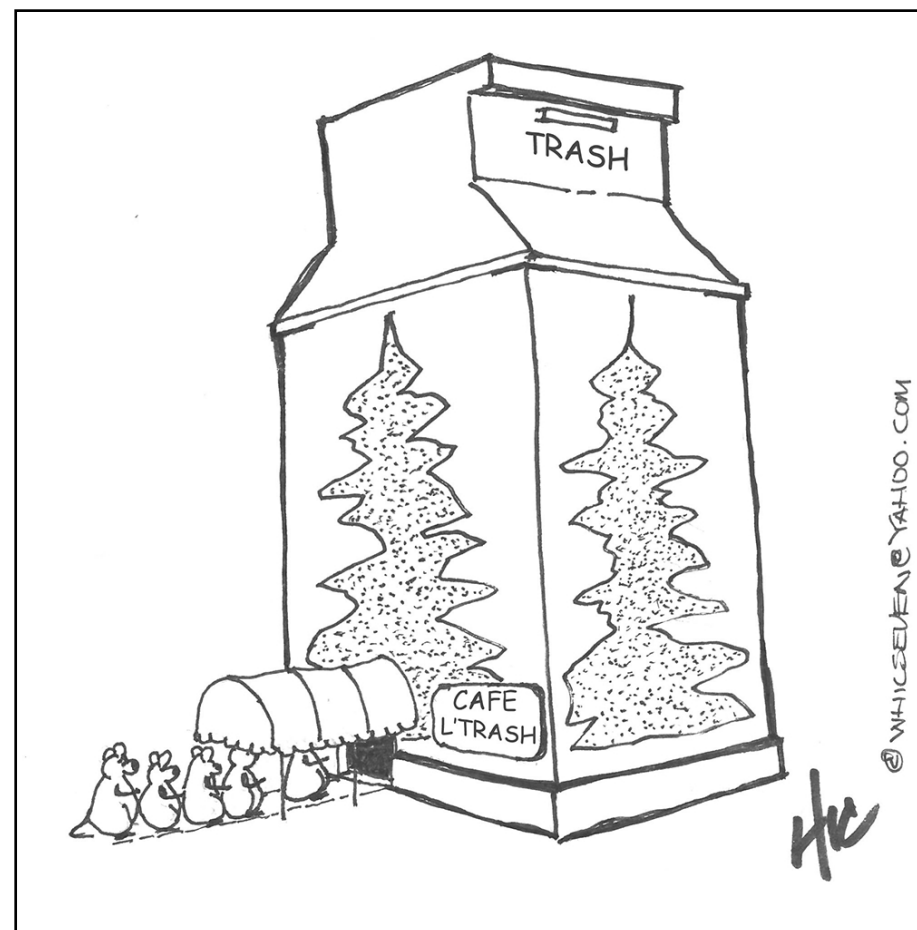
Other growth and change issues face Highlands. How will we meet energy demands, especially if the town expands? What form of energy will Highlands use by the end of the decade when the contract with Duke Energy is renegotiated, or will there be other options? How will the town and county manage solid waste disposal and recycling? How will we address workforce issues and related housing concerns? Or, will artificial intelligence and robotics change the entire dynamic of work and labor as we know it today? Please don't tell me that is wild speculation, it isn't. These changes and potential displacements are close at hand.

I look at the current concerns about healthcare and suspect a decade from now there will be major changes in medicine that we didn't see coming. Our fiber optic network could play a key role in delivering new services. The Washington Post just ran a story of remote, experimental cyber surgery being done in rural hospitals. Imagine an appendectomy being done at the Highlands Cashiers Hospital with a surgeon operating from Asheville.

So, as we start a new year, I believe it is imperative that we look toward the future. And by that I mean what lies ahead in just a few years, not just 30 years down. The future has accelerated.

Today incoming commissioner Marc Hehn and I are in the Essentials of Local Government class that is put on by the North Carolina School of Government.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• WEATHER •

| Thu, 5-Dec | Fri, 6-Dec | Sat, 7-Dec | Sun, 8-Dec |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| | | | |
| 53°F 32°F | 50°F 30°F | 47°F 24°F | 44°F 38°F |
| Plenty of sun | An afternoon shower | Sunshine and patchy clouds | Rain and drizzle |
| RealFeel® | RealFeel® | RealFeel® | RealFeel® |
| High: 58° Low: 25° | High: 51° Low: 36° | High: 51° Low: 32° | High: 43° Low: 25° |

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Highlands Newspaper

www.highlandsinfo.com

Phone: (828) 200-1371

Email:

HighlandsEditor@aol.com

Publisher/Editor: Kim Lewicki

Reporters: Brittney Lofthouse

Brian O'Shea

Digital Media/Circulation - Jim Lewicki

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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.



NEW ON MARKET: Absolutely stunning, fully furnished 3BR/3BA log home constructed with hand-crafted pine logs in downtown Highlands bordering Mill Creek! Walk to everything! The main floor has a master suite, master bath, and a private deck off of the master, large great room with gas log fireplace, beautiful kitchen with pantry, and a dining area. The upper level includes two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a large loft. Lower level has a bath, laundry, and a great room.

MLS# 92501 | Offered for \$1,175,000



HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN Excellent location for this newly renovated, one level, three bedroom/three bath home. It offers a large back deck and a detached, oversized two-car garage which could be turned into a guest cottage. Incredible private flat back yard with its own art studio. Landscaped yard is beautiful and perfect for pets and kids. Would make a great vacation rental. Conveniently located in town; walk to Main Street restaurants, shops, and venues!

MLS# 88180 | Offered for \$840,000

BIG BEAR PEN "Skyla" is the quintessential old Highlands "charmer." This lovely home offers five bedrooms and three baths. Upon entering the front door there is a beautiful masonry stone floor-to-ceiling fireplace in the living room/dining room with the old wormy chestnut walls and ceilings. A large open kitchen area opens to the wet bar and sitting area with another masonry stone fireplace. Walk through the woods to the little waterfall affectionately known as the Fairy Dell.

MLS# 92412 | Offered for \$785,000



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...AWARD continued from page 1

people safe, healthy, and happy in their communities.

Mayors Patrick Taylor and Bob Scott

"Mayors Patrick Taylor and Bob Scott were extremely helpful to my office and me as we worked to negotiate the best deal for health care in western North Carolina," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "My office conducted an extensive review of the Mission/HCA transfer and Mayor Scott and Mayor Taylor provided extremely helpful on-the-ground insight throughout that process. I appreciate their leadership in standing up to protect the people they serve and their health care."

Mayor Patrick Taylor has been the mayor of Highlands since 2013. He has also served as a magistrate of the North Carolina 30th Judicial District. Prior to that, he taught art at the high school and collegiate levels. He is also a highly regarded potter. Mayor Taylor has degrees from Valdosta State University and the University of Georgia.

"It is an honor to be a recipient of a Dogwood Award," said Mayor Patrick Taylor. "I was a part of the team that advocated for the interest of the small hospitals in outlying service areas during the recent Asset Purchase Agreement between Hospital Corporation of America and Mission Healthcare. Mayor Bob Scott of Franklin and Barrett Hawks of Highlands were important partners in this team effort. I appreciate the leadership and vision of Attorney General Stein and his staff in approving this major purchase with provisions that will insure continued healthcare access to the citizens of Western North Carolina. While there is still work to be done in developing health care access for all, this transaction was an important step and a model for the entire state."

A native of Greenville, SC, Mayor Bob Scott has lived in Franklin since 1967. He is a graduate of Western Carolina University, the FBI National Academy and Palmetto Military Academy, and the South Carolina National Guard's Officer Candidate School. He retired from the Western Carolina University Campus Police Department where he served as executive officer. Mayor Scott currently serves as a Director of the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

"I am humbled to receive this award," said Mayor Bob Scott. "However, I am receiving it on behalf of the men and women of Franklin, Highlands, and Macon County who stood with Mayor Pat Taylor of Highlands and Barrett Hawks of Highlands and myself, in making sure we were not short changed in the Mission/HCA deal. Also, my heartfelt thanks that General Stein stood with us and listened to our concerns."

Casey Cooper

"Casey Cooper is showing a strong commitment to keeping the Cherokee people safe and healthy day in and day out," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "I appreciate his work to further chronic disease prevention and health education."

Casey Cooper, BSN, MBA, FACHE, is the Chief Executive Officer of Cherokee Indian Hospital. Casey has devoted his career to American Indian health care. Throughout his tenure among the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Casey has worked as a primary care nurse, community health nurse, nurse educator, and nursing manager.

Sheriff Alan Norman



Mayor Pat Taylor with NC AG Josh Stein.

"Sheriff Alan Norman is doing important work to protect public safety in Cleveland County," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "From his commitment to keeping people safe from sex abuse to his tireless work to hold the dealers and traffickers who profit from people's addiction accountable, I appreciate his leadership."

Sheriff Alan Norman is currently serving his third term as Cleveland County's sheriff. A second-generation law enforcement officer, Sheriff Norman has worked in law enforcement for more than 35 years.

"It is a shame that sex offenders prey on our children and society," said Sheriff Alan Norman. "Both are our future and it is my job to make sure that the public is informed of sex offenders within Cleveland County. As long as I am Sheriff, we will continue to aggressively go after not only the street dealer, but all the way up the chain to the importer, in an attempt to make our community drug free, which lowers the crime rate. I humbly accept the Dogwood Award on behalf of the men and women I work with."

•BIZ/ORG NEWS•

Michaud named to FSU's 2020 Seminole 100 list



Last week, Florida State University, named Realtor and owner of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty a 2020 Seminole 100 honoree. The designation on the Seminole 100 list represents years of excellence and achievement in her professional career, and recognized that Michaud's company is one of the fastest-growing FSU alumni-owned or alumni-led businesses.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Meadows Mountain Realty embodies the brave and bold entrepreneurial spirit that thrives at Florida State University and Michaud's success will inspire a new generation of innovators and business leaders.



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Santa in the Park

Kelsey-Hutchinson Park

Dec 7: 12 - 4pm
After the Christmas Parade

Dec 14 & 21: 11am - 4pm

Breakfast with Santa
Highlands Methodist Church
Dec 14: 9 - 10am

Photo Booth open thru Jan 1



Christmas Parade

Main Street, Highlands

Highlands Olde Mountain
Christmas Parade

Saturday, December 7th
11am - Noon

Rain or Shiine



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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Ongoing

- Movies at the Playhouse Fri & Sat 1, 4, 7; Sun. 1 & 4; Tues-Thurs 1, 4, 7.
- Ice Skating at K-H Founders Park

– Thurs., 1-8p; Fri. & Sat 1-10p; Sund. 1-5p.
Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The Bascom is open Friday - Monday

Free hymn-sing after the parade at First Presbyterian Church



Everyone is cordially invited to a Christmas Carol Sing at Highlands First Presbyterian Church at 1pm on Saturday, December 7 after the Highlands Christmas Parade. Stell Huie will be the song leader with Angie Jenkins at the piano. If you enjoy singing familiar Christmas Carols, you will definitely want to make this a part of your Christmas tradition. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicapped accessible entrances are located on Fifth Street and on Church Street.

The African Children's Choir returns to CBC on January 24



The African Children's Choir will perform Friday at the Community Bible Church at 6:30 p.m. highlighting their new program "Just As I Am." The children melts the hearts of audiences with their charming smiles, beautiful voices and lively African songs and dances. The program features well-loved children's songs, traditional Spirituals and Gospel favorites. Concerts are free and open to all. A free-will offering is taken at the performance to support African Children's Choir programs, such as education, care and relief and development programs. No tickets. Donations appreciated.

10am-5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm). Visitors are welcome to enjoy the newly updated Story Walk Trail throughout the week.

• At the Highlands Recreation Dept. pool. Public Swim Monday-Thursday 11a-7p Friday and Saturday 11a-6p and Sunday 1-6p.

• Fibber Magee's Clothing Thrift Store on Laurel Street is open Tues.-Friday 10a to 4p and on Saturday from 10a to 2p.

First Mondays

• Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Mtg at 7p.

Mondays

• At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit classes with Tori Schmitt at 5:30pm.

Mon.-Wed.

• Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt 5:30-6:30.

Mon. & Thurs.

• The Joy Program at HUMC 11:30a to 1:30p. Includes a free lunch and a variety of programs and games. All seniors are welcome. For more info, call Kristy Lewis at 526-3376.

Mon. & Fri.

• Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:15-10:15 a.m.. All levels welcome.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

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

• Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

Mon., Wed., Thurs.

• Pickle Ball at the Recreation Department Gym 10:30am - 1pm

Tuesdays

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

• The Highlands Writers Group meets Tuesday, at 3pm in the downstairs boardroom at The Bascom. Writers at all levels of proficiency are welcome. For additional information, contact Bud Katz, 828-526-3190 or budandlynn@me.com.

• The Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30 am in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

Third Tuesday

• The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.

• Highlands Area Indivisible Group meets at 5 pm in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

Tuesday and Thursdays

• At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit with Tori Schmitt at 7:30am.

• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with many different styles of exercise at Rec Park.

Wednesdays

• At Community Bible Church, 5-5:30p - Dinner – Free (Donations Appreciated) 5:45-7p - G.R.O.W. Get Real on Wednesdays – Classes offered on money management, addiction, discovering your spiritual gifts and personality type, studying the bible, evangelism, parenting, marriage, grief, and more. All are welcome! Visit www.cbchighlands.com.

• Power Flow Yoga with Nalicia Allio a certified Yoga Instructor 12-1pm and 6:30-7:30pm.

First Wednesdays

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

3rd Wednesdays

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

Wed. & Fri.

• Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held in Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., at noon. And held six times a week in Cashiers at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rte

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

107, Cashiers. For meeting times in Cashiers go to website www.aawnc80.org or call (828) 349-4357.

- Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm at Rec Park.

Thursdays

- At the Nature Center. Free. Exploration Hike 2:30pm. Visit forests, streams, and other spots across our campus, experiencing unique habitats and honing your observation skills.

- Storytime at Hudson Library, 10:40 am. Open to the public

- NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15pm at First United Methodist Church Out Reach Center on West Main Street in Franklin Call Donita (828) 526-9510.

- Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt at 6:30-7:30 at the Rec Park.

2nd Thursdays

- Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

3rd Thursdays

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

- Highlands Town Board meeting at 7p in the Community Building on US 64 east and Poplar Street.

4th Thursday

- At the Hudson Library, Kids Zone LEGO Club. Intended primarily for kids in grades 1-5, LEGO Club allows creativity and STEM skills to develop together as kids enjoy making LEGO creations.

Thurs., Dec. 5

- Christmas Chorus Concert at Highlands School at 6:30p.

Fri., Dec. 6

- The Highlands Performing Arts Center and the Bascom, Visual Arts Center will present the next installment of Great Art on Screen: The Prado Museum, A COLLECTION OF WONDERS on Friday, at 5:30pm. Join us and your friends for the optional dinner afterwards at

Meritage. Please call to make your reservations: 828.526.1019 and be sure to mention Great Art on Screen. Tickets are available online: www.highlandspac.org or www.highlandspacperformingarts.com or at the door. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands

Sat. Dec. 7

- Annual Old Towne Christmas Parade 11a to noon on Main Street Highlands.

- Annual Christmas Carol Sing at 1 pm after the parade at First Presbyterian Church, Highlands.

- Santa in the K-H Park on Pine Street 4 p.m.

- Christmas Concert after the parade at 4pm featuring the Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet at First Presbyterian Church, Highlands.

- Parade Night Dinner at Half-mile Farm with Chef David Bancroft of Acre in Auburn who will bring cocktails and clas-

sic southern favorites. For reservations, call 828-787-2635

Sat. Dec. 14

- Breakfast with Santa at HUMC 9-10 a.m.

- Santa in the K-H Park on Pine Street 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

- Wreath Laying Ceremony at Highlands Memorial Park at noon.

Dec. 21

- Santa in the K-H Park on Pine Street 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Wed., Dec. 25

- Highlands Annual Christmas Dinner presented by H.A.N.D.S and Lakeside Restaurant 11a to 6p Christmas Day at Highlands Country Club. Adults \$50; Children under 12, \$15. Children 5 and under eat free. Proceeds benefit local nonprofits. Buffet features, turkey, ham, tenderloin, shrimp & grits and all the fixins'. plus desserts. Seating by reservation only. Call 828-526-9419.

Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet at First Presbyterian at 4p



The award-winning Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet will present a free concert at 4pm at First Presbyterian Church. The group is based at Western Carolina University. Since its founding in 1993, the Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet has entertained audiences in nine countries on three continents in venues such as Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and Shostakovich Philharmonic Hall. This concert of holiday favorites is sure to delight. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicapped accessible entrances are located on Fifth Street and on Church Street.

Great Art on Screen at PAC Friday night at 5:30p



The Highlands Performing Arts Center and the Bascom, Visual Arts Center will present the next installment of Great Art on Screen: The Prado Museum, A COLLECTION OF WONDERS on Friday, December 6 at 5:30pm. Celebrating the 200th anniversary of the storied Prado Museum -- one of the most-visited museums in the world. Hosted by Academy Award winner Jeremy Irons, this cinematic journey offers viewers a spell-binding experience, telling the story of Spain and beyond, through the works of Velázquez, Rubens, Titian, Mantegna, Bosch, Goya, El Greco, and more. Join us and your friends for the optional dinner afterwards at Meritage. Please call to make your reservations: 828.526.1019 and be sure to mention Great Art on Screen. Tickets are available online: www.highlandspac.org or www.highlandspacperformingarts.com or at the door. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands

Please join us during the holidays at
First Presbyterian Church of Highlands

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES AT 11:00 A.M.

ADVENT STUDY

Sunday Mornings

December 1 thru December 22

9:30 -10:30 A.M. in the Church Library

Advent 2019

Cynthia M. Campbell's book, *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*
is the focus of the study.

Rev. Dr. Curtis Fussell and

Rev. Emily Wilmarth, facilitators

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CAROL SING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

AT 1:00 P.M.

Come and sing Christmas Carols
in the Church Sanctuary after the Parade.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN BRASS
QUINTET CHRISTMAS CONCERT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

AT 4:00 P.M.

The program will include many
Christmas favorites in the
Church Sanctuary.

LESSONS & CAROLS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

AT 11:00 A.M.

with guest musicians
Linda Lancaster, Flutist,
Susan Brashier, Oboist &
Erin Hansen, Harpist

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

Immediately following
the 11:00 A.M. service

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21
LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE
An Ecumenical Blue Christmas
Worship Service
5:00 P.M.

The Blue Christmas service allows us to
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Jillionna Bailey-Plemmons
Candlelight & Communion Service
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2-years and under.

First Presbyterian Church of Highlands
Located at 471 Main Street
PO Box 548, Highlands NC, 28741; 828-526-3175; fpchighlands.org

...YOGA continued from page 1



Rachel Kinback with Yoga Highlands teaching the joys of yoga during The Literacy Council's after school program,

and one by one took turns routing for their fellow after-schoolers as they crawled through the tunnel of cheering supporters. This activity was super uplifting and required good communication and listening."

The monthly yoga sessions at TLC have been ongoing for two years, and last week's visit was the first at the nonprofit's new space in Highlands Plaza.

"Each child is unique and will gravitate to different aspects of the practice and thus different benefits will come to them," said Kinback. "For some of the kids, the stretching and making shapes with their bodies was their favorite part. For others, closing their eyes and speaking out the names of those they may have forgotten to thank today was sweetest."

Yoga Highlands Owner Ashby Underwood said the program is Kinback's way of strengthening the longstanding-community rela-

tionships and involvement she is known for in Highlands.

"One mission of Yoga Highlands is to educate through community service the benefits of yoga, which focus on personal well-being and self-esteem," said Underwood. "We believe that teaching children to take care of themselves is absolutely a form a literacy. To learn to recognize the signals that one's body is giving creates connection and inherent calm within a person. These are lifelong stress management and insightful skills."

Kinback said reaching students at an early age is the perfect time to introduce them to the practice of yoga.

"Connection to our body requires continual tending," she said. "It is a great skill to learn how to do well from a young age."

For more about The Literacy Council and it's programs, call (828) 526-0863



Kinback shows that yoga is all about stretching and connecting.

Images of the Annual Town Lighting in K-H Founders Park Sat., Nov. 30



The Silly Ridge Roundup Band entertained the crowds before and after Santa arrived.



The Highlands Community Chorus directed by Les Scott pause while Rev.W. Bentley Manning of the Episcopal Church reads the Christmas Story.



Santa and Mrs. Claus enthusiastically address the crowd.



Unfazed by the rain, children of all ages sang along with the choir.



The "Lost Boys" took refuge among the lights.

Photos by Kim Lewicki

Wildcat Cliffs CC



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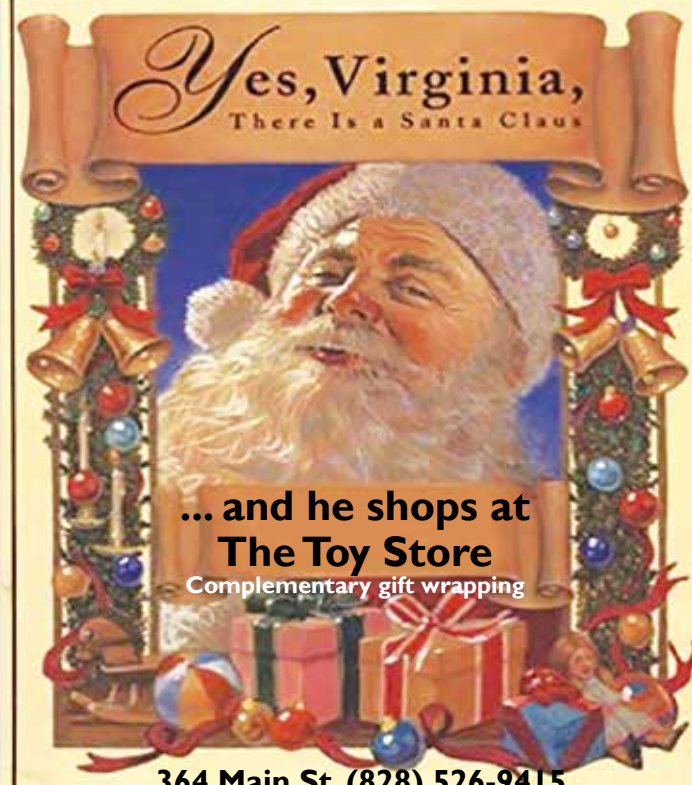


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Shadow Inventory: Time to Come Out!

In real estate terms, “shadow inventory” refers to sellers who want to sell but are waiting for a stronger market to put their homes on the market. Potentially



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tial sellers: that time is here!

Normally, I find myself at this time of year deleting old emails, addressing Christmas cards and thinking of New Year's resolutions. Not this year! This year is a foreshadowing of a strong sales year ahead in 2020.

The housing market on the Plateau has made a steady recovery over the last few years. Two thousand nineteen has been our company's best year ever in 19 years! If you polled most real estate agents on the Plateau, I bet that most would concur.

Historically, however, presidential election years are flat at best which applies to next year. Housing market predictions for 2020 and beyond run the gamut from



Jody Lovell
highlandssothebysrealty.com

optimistic to pessimistic. For example, Zillow predicts there will be a housing recession in 2020. They blame monetary policy for this; the market has been expanding rapidly, but it is due for a correction.

Going out on a limb with my crystal ball, I do not believe the local real estate market will feel that recession in the next few years unless there is a major catastrophe in the world. Even when one occurred on 9/11, we sold a huge number of homes that fall because buyers searched the globe for a safe place to live.

My prediction is that home prices will continue to rise slowly on the Plateau due to limited supply with an increasing demand for this beautiful spot on the planet.

As we still have three weeks to finish the year, it is premature to give a wrap on the entire year so stay tuned for final numbers, but “best year ever” sums it up even without future numbers!

Thank you to all of our friends, clients and colleagues for their support over the two decades of supporting each other and enjoying this wonderful life on our beloved Plateau. May you have a happy, healthy holiday season with loved ones and sail into a prosperous New Year!

• Jody and Wood Lovell own Highlands Sotheby's International Realty with over 20 brokers serving the Highlands/Cashiers and Lake Toxaway Plateau. Celebrating their twentieth anniversary in 2020, they are the top-producing firm in Highlands for the sixth year in a row and a market leader for the entire twenty years. Call them to help you with any of your real estate needs at 828-562-4104 or 828-526-8300.

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•WORD MATTER•

American Innovation on Display

Now that we're up to our navels in the holiday season let's consider what these days and weeks really mean. For some, it's about gratitude, reflection, our personal faith, special time with family and friends. Good stuff.

For others, it's about food, football, and presents.

Then, there are those for whom the holidays amount to some year-end orgy of wretched, Bacchanalian excess. Perhaps the poster illustration for these particular folks should be the Turducken.

If you're among the few who've never encountered this unimaginable example of gluttony, grab your Tums or Pepto and strap yourselves in. It's going to be a bumpy, artery-clogging, culinary ride.

If you haven't worked out the portmanteau, a Turducken is a deboned chick-EN, stuffed inside a deboned DUCK, stuffed inside an also deboned TURkey. Turducken. Some, for whom even this is not enough, will add some version of traditional bread-based stuffing, sausage, a partridge (literally), and who knows what else. This Frankenstein of fowl can then be braised, roasted, grilled or barbecued. Nauseous yet?

While not his personal brainchild, the Turducken was popularized by Chef Paul Prudhomme, proprietor of the eponymous restaurant in New Orleans' fabled French Quarter. Maurice, Louisiana brothers and butchers, Junior and Sammy Hebert, concocted the creation at the behest of a customer, who, I note without comment, brought in his own "ingredients." They then hired a surgeon – a SURGEON – to employ his trusty ten-blade scalpel to commit the deboning. The good doctor considered embellishing the recipe by adding a pork or veal roast! One of the Hebert brothers said, "No, not necessary." Props to him.

I know you think I'm making this stuff up. Sadly, I. Am. Not!

When did our appetites grow to such heights or, I should say, sink to such depths as to consider that a twenty-pound turkey, by itself plenty of protein for a table of twenty hungry people, must suffer the gastronomical indignity of being stuffed, not with traditional stuffing, but with other flightless fowl?

I'm sure that properly dressed and spiced, a turducken might actually taste good, but... why? Just ... why? Who needs



Bud Katz

such a ... concoction?

For more years than I can recall I presided over the Thanksgiving meal in our family. I discovered, early on, that success was not something to be tinkered with. Once, I strayed from my trusted recipe for stuffing. It's a simple, bread-based, celery and onion mixture, the "secret ingredients" of which are cheap, fresh white bread and about a pound

of full-strength, salted butter. The only spices called for are sage, salt and pepper, and precious little of those. One year, don't ask why, I felt the urge to add a dash of thyme. The reaction from veteran attendees was swift and certain.

"What have you done?" "Why have you messed with perfection?"

Why, then, did some otherwise, I'm sure, decent people – these Bayou butchers – arrive at the decision to debone and then stuff a chicken into a duck, and then to stuff the resulting ducken-thing into some unsuspecting turkey so as to create not only a new word, but probably a hundred or so new points onto our bad cholesterol number?

By now I'm sure you're asking yourself, what has gotten into Bud? Word Matter is typically a thoughtful examination of important issues relevant to our lives. Why is he going on and on about this ... Turducken thing? Here's why.

On a recent trip to Asheville, my wife and I were moving northeast on U.S. 64 when we came up behind one of those expensive, bus-sized recreational vehicles lumbering towards Brevard. It was a very nice RV. The RV was towing a new, also very nice, full-sized pickup truck. Maybe an F-150 or even an F-250, because in the bed of the pickup truck sat one of those very nice EZ-GO golf carts; you know, the ones which have become standard accessories within retirement communities in the Sunshine State.

My wife was the one who made the connection.

"Look, honey," she said, it's an automotive Turducken!"

An automotive Turducken. A golf cart inside a pickup truck pulled by an RV. I won't attempt to invent a word for this gas-guzzling, gallons-to-the-mile thing. Okay, I will. An R-Vuckart? I don't know.

I'm just glad there were no bicycles hanging on the golf cart.

And then, there's the chicken, in the duck, in the turkey. The REAL Turducken.

I ask you, have we no shame?



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- How the Grinch Stole Christmas, by Dr. Seuss

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ALL ABOUT BOOKS

• THE INK PENN •

Finding Books via FaceBook

I suspect most of my readers would agree that Facebook can be a huge time-suck. You vow to take a quick look, and before you know it, an hour has passed. For me, that would be time much better spent reading a book, writing a column, or continuing to work on my next book.

Still, I can't help myself, and I've found one big benefit to FaceBook beyond the delights of connecting with high school and college friends—discovering new books. We've all read about Facebook algorithms and how the munchkins that run the site choose what to show us. Well, the munchkins show me plenty of dog and cat videos and pics because I can't resist clicking on those, but I also see tons of posts about books.

I stumbled across a British readers group called Book Connectors and through them



Kathy Manos Penn

have discovered all kinds of books I never would have heard of. Most of these books are available only from Amazon, not from my local library, either because they're written by British authors who haven't made it big in the USA or they're earlier titles in a series.

One thing leads to another, and because I often google these titles and wind up on Amazon, I've started getting FaceBook ads

about other British books. And, of course, after checking Amazon, similar titles appear in my regular Amazon emails. It's never ending.

I order most of these British books as e-books, and one series I enjoy is the Inspector Hilary Greene saga by author Faith Martin. I'm on book five of seventeen and was addicted long before I made my visit to Oxford last year. Now I get a further kick out of recognizing towns and street names in this series set in an around Oxford.

I also downloaded book one in the Martha Gunn series by Priscilla Masters. The main character is a coroner who resides in Shrewsbury in the Cotswolds, and though I didn't make it to that town when I was in England, I'm enjoying recognizing names of neighboring towns I did visit.

• See INK PENN page 19

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...ENTEGRA continued from page 1

ceive final approval.

According to Entegra Bank CEO Roger Plemmons, the DOJ identified three branches -- two in Macon County and one in Jackson County -- that need to be sold prior to obtaining clearance for the merger.

Plemmons said neither Entegra nor First Citizens had input as to which three branches would be identified.

The Letter of Agreement, (LOA) which was entered on Monday, requires that the Parties divest three Entegra Bank branches located in Western North Carolina: Holly Springs (30 Hyatt Road, Franklin, NC), Highlands (473 Carolina Way, Highlands, NC) and Sylva (498 East Main, Sylva, NC) -- collectively referred to as the "Divestiture Branches" or the "Divestiture" -- and enter into a sale agreement for the Divestiture Branches with a buyer approved by the DOJ (the "Divestiture Buyer") prior to the close of the merger. That buyer must be another bank.

Plemmons said in Highlands, because there is already a First Citizens Bank location, divesting the Entegra branch will allow a new bank to come into the community.

Entegra and First-Citizens Bank & Trust Company (First Citizens Bank) announced at Entegra's 2019 Annual Meeting of Shareholders earlier this year, that Entegra's shareholders voted to approve First Citizens Bank's previously announced proposal to acquire (by merger) Entegra and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Entegra Bank.

Banking customers will not see any significant changes as a result of the merger until summer of 2020. Even after the merger is finalized, Entegra Bank will continue operating as such for several months. Plemmons said that it will also likely be a while before the three branches being sold as a result of the merger will have an approved buyer and will undergo a transition.

According to Plemmons, current banking customers who want to stay at their branches and switch banks to whomever purchases the three branches will not have to first transition to First Citizens and then to the new buyer. Instead, the two transitions will occur simultaneously, allowing banking customers to either switch to First Citizens or to whatever company purchases the three ranches.

Furthermore, Entegra employees have to be given the option to work at the new "mystery" bank or move to First Citizens.

The Parties and the DOJ want all employees at the Divestiture Branches to stay with their branch and continue to serve customers as usual through the consummation of the Divestiture.

In fact, the LOA prohibits the Parties from transferring employees such as branch managers, assistant branch managers, or loan officers away from any Divestiture Branch. In accordance with the LOA, the Parties will provide information to help facilitate the transition of Divestiture Branch employees to the Divestiture Buyer, and the Parties hope that all Divestiture Branch employees will be employed by the Divestiture Buyer.

Plemmons said employee retention is an important aspect of the process, as the new buyer of the Entegra properties would want customers to be greeted with familiar faces, even if the name of the bank changes.

Once a buyer is approved, Plemmons said that a press release will be sent out.

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Comfort, comfort now my people

Mark 1: 1-8, 2 Peter 3: 8-15a

By Chaplain Margaret Howell
Holy Lutheran Church, ELCA

The first line of Isaiah 40:1 always gives me goosebumps:

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.”

Oh, How I love this chapter of Isaiah!

It is the voice of hope, of love, of compassion---all the things we long for and may feels a shortage of in these cold dark days of approaching winter.

While these passages from Isaiah may apply immediately to the Israelites in exile, it is also prophetic, call for a focus beyond to the redemption not just of Israel in that time and place but all of creation forever.

The Christmas portion of Handel’s “Messiah” is full of these Isaiah passages. They are rich, poetic and among some of the most memorable portions of the Bible. They start out with words of comfort and assurance to Israel, then moves on to prophesying the coming of the new Elijah---John the Baptist and his message of repentance and redemption of all people as a promise from God.

This ties in beautifully with 2 Peter. In this letter Peter is assuring his flock that God has put into motion the saving of all creation through the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, and that we are to wait and trust that His timing will be perfect.

There’s a well worn story about a man who prayed to God every night for great wealth. For years the man prayed to no avail. Finally, one, evening, while he was praying God spoke to him. “What is it you wish” my son?” Asked the Lord. The man went on at length about how much he needed money, and that he knew that the Lord could answer his prayers. The Lord said “Yes, I have heard your prayers, my son, but remember that with the Lord, one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years like one day.”

The man then asked the Lord, “Father, are you going to fulfill my request?”

The Lord smiled and answered him, “Yes, my Son, in one day.”

If you have children in your life, you know that asking them to wait for something takes tact and patience. No one likes to wait, because in our culture we are conditioned to make use of every minute and waiting seems like a waste to us. We are a quick –fix culture, and waiting does not come gracefully for us. But I’m telling you, waiting is good for us. We might fidget and fret at first, but if you ever have to wait long term, like for healing from a serious illness, or the birth of a child, after you’ve tired of fretting, you begin to be aware of other things---the place were you are at that moment, the people around you, and then you might even begin to think a bit more deeply about what it is you are waiting for. And at last, you begin to be aware that you are not waiting alone. God waits with us.

Isaiah writes “ The grass withers, the flower fades; but the world of our God will stand forever.” (Isaiah 40:7b,8)

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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

Choir 5p

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 9:09, 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.

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

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

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

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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

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

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

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Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

...INK PENN continued from page 16

The good news is that my library has some of the later books in this series, so after a few more Kindle downloads, I can switch to paper.

Another Kindle boxset I'm enjoying is the Beatrice Stubbs series. I'd seen it mentioned in Book Connectors and then started getting ads about it. The icing on the cake was when an author friend who lives in France recommended it. The Amazon description reads, "Beatrice Stubbs of Scotland Yard: detective inspector, metaphor mixer and stubborn survivor. Battling crime by day and her own demons by night,

the question remains: justice or the law?"

As in all experiments, not all of the books I've tried have been winners. I only made it through book one and part of book two in Rebecca Tope's 16-book Cotswold Mysteries series. Despite the pleasantly familiar towns and settings, the plots didn't grab me. Still, if there are sixteen books in the series, others must see something in them.

I've just realized that all of these books have strong female protagonists. Lest you think me sexist in my reading habits, please be assured I've read plenty of mysteries with

men as the lead characters. The DCI Banks series by Peter Robinson come to mind. I've read all 25, in order of course, and am eagerly awaiting the next one.

Enquiring minds would like to know. Have you ever read a book because you saw it on Facebook?

• *Kathy is a Georgia resident. Find her books "The Ink Penn: Celebrating the Magic in the Everyday" and "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch" at Books Unlimited in Franklin and on Amazon. "Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch" is also available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at ink-penn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.*

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Oct. 19. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Oct. 19

• At 1:50 a.m., a public disturbance was reported in the Entegra parking lot on Carolina Way.

Nov. 10

• At 2 a.m., a motor vehicle theft and damage to property was reported when a vehicle was taken without permission.

Nov. 22

• At 11:45 p.m., Zachary James Warman, 28, of Glenville, NC, was arrested for DWI and driving while his license was revoked. He

was issued a \$1,500 unsecured bond. His trial date is Dec. 31, 2019.

• At 12:02 p.m., officers received a report of a shoplifting incident a Potpourri 2 on Main Street where sunglasses valued at \$259 were taken.

Nov. 23

• At 3:55 p.m., officers received a report of a shoplifting incident at Silver Eagle on Main Street where a Damascus style knife valued a \$100 was taken.

• At 7:18 p.m., James Wells Lowery, 36, of Highlands, was arrested for shoplifting.

• At 7:33 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Foreman Road.

Nov. 24

• At 2:30 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Main Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Nov. 20.

Nov. 20

• At 11:25 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers FD.

Nov. 23

• At 8:14 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shortoff Lane,

• At 8:09 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Persimmon Lodge Road.

Nov. 24

• At 1:16 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Split Rail Row.

• At 3 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Crescent Trail.

Nov. 26

• At 4:55 a.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Cherry Tree Lane.

Nov. 25

• At 10:40 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shortoff Lane.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 18

As we celebrate the double Advent of our Lord—his coming as a babe into the world and his coming into the world again as Good Shepherd how will gather up all his sheep, we are reminded that waiting is not a waste of time--- it is a journey to where we will all be on the morning when Christmas and Easter become one and the stars fall from the sky.

Peter writes,

"In accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and new earth,

where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by Him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of the our Lord as salvation." (2 Peter 13-15)

For, as Isaiah writes" He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep."

Blessings for a peaceful Advent and a joyous Christmas.

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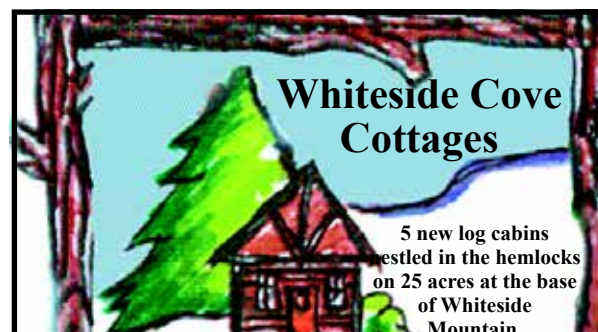
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