

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

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Thursday, Feb. 7, 2019

Game on to make proficiency in math and reading even better at Highlands School

Late last week, a somewhat alarming document was sent home with students in five schools in the Macon County

School system.

It describes an improvement plan labeled 'TSI-AT' which is short for Targeted Support & Improve-

ment Additional Targeted Support.

This plan is now in place so the schools can improve student

•See PROFICIENCY page 14

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WNC schools seek local control of calendar

By Brittney Lofthouse

School districts in Western North Carolina have been grappling with calendar issues ever since the NC General Assembly changed the state's school calendar laws to mandate the annual start and end days.

Under the control of the General Assembly, school calendars across the state are required to begin and end on specific days, which causes problems in the western portion of the state as WNC gets more winter weather than other areas of North Carolina. Snow days and make-up days often split school semesters and have students taking end-of-semester tests after the winter break, which means they can be out of the classroom for weeks before sitting down to take tests.

The Macon County Board of Education has once again

• See CALENDAR page 8



Highlands senior athletes were honored during Friday Senior Night's basketball games at Highlands School. From left are Samuel Hawkins, Drew Chalker, Mattson Gates, Logan Houston, Destin Gearhart, Chase Sullivan, Abby Olvera, Betty Garcia, Hannah Holt, Hunter Collins, and Jake Billingsley.

– Photo by Brian O'Shea

Highlands shows its spirit at 'winning' Senior Night basketball games

By Brian O'Shea

It was an action-packed and emotional Senior Night on Friday, Feb. 1 as Highlands junior varsity boys and varsity girls basketball teams won solid victories over Blue Ridge, with Highlands varsity boys following suit winning 50-31.

Highlands Head Coach Brett Lamb said going into Friday's

game they knew they were going to need to shut down Blue Ridge Noah Pressler's penetration and Levi Taylor on the boards to walk away with the win.

"I think our boys handled Blue Ridge's game plan of slowing the game down and took advantage of our speed at times, our defense, and rebounding," said Lamb. "We were

able to speed the game up in the second quarter and take a lead we never relinquished."

Lamb said winning Friday's conference game means if Highlands wins the next two conference games, they will be tied for the regular season championship and the conference tournament

•See SENIOR NIGHT page 5

5th graders gear up for annual Charleston trip

By Brian O'Shea

Fifth-graders at Highlands School are looking forward to making the annual trip to Charleston, S.C. this March. Activities throughout the three-day field trip tie into the students' science and history curriculums.

The trip includes a walking tour of Charleston and seeing its landmarks and historic buildings, visiting a naval and maritime museum including the USS Yorktown, an ecological water cruise, and a historic plantation.

"This is a great opportunity for all of the students to see a new place," said 5th-grade teacher Angela Swain. "Many of the topics we learn about during the school year can now be applied outside of the classroom and the kids can

•See CHARLESTON page 9

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Roadworks discussion with NC DOT

Last week I met at Town Hall with Brian Burch, the NCDOT Division 14 Engineer. Also at the meeting was Wesley Grindstaff, the division road maintenance engineer and Steven Buchanan the division traffic engineer. Chief Harrell joined us to share his law enforcement perspective.

Several topics related to roads and traffic on the plateau were covered, but our primary focus was developing a plan to curtail the increasing number of tractor-trailer trucks on the Gorge Road. Two changes will address the problem.

First, in the coming months new warning signs will be installed at the truck turnaround in Franklin and on Main Street in Highlands between 3rd and 1st Streets. Warning signs already exist at these locations, but the new ones will have flashing lights to get the attention and direct truckers. The lights will only be activated by trucks of a specified length. Regular vehicles and pickup trucks will not activate the lights.

The second effort will be to review and



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

improve the current ordinances and laws regulating Gorge Road truck traffic. These modifications will improve violation enforcement. Current laws can confuse drivers, especially the wording on the existing signs.

We also discussed improving the intersection just past the Ugly Dog where Satulah Road, South Street and NC 28 come together. DOT engineers will develop a new design, maybe a small traf-

fic roundabout. It will be shared with town leadership to determine support to move forward toward funding. Now, I hope folks won't think this project will happen immediately. If the town told DOT they supported the plan, it would take several years to fund this probably million-dollar project.

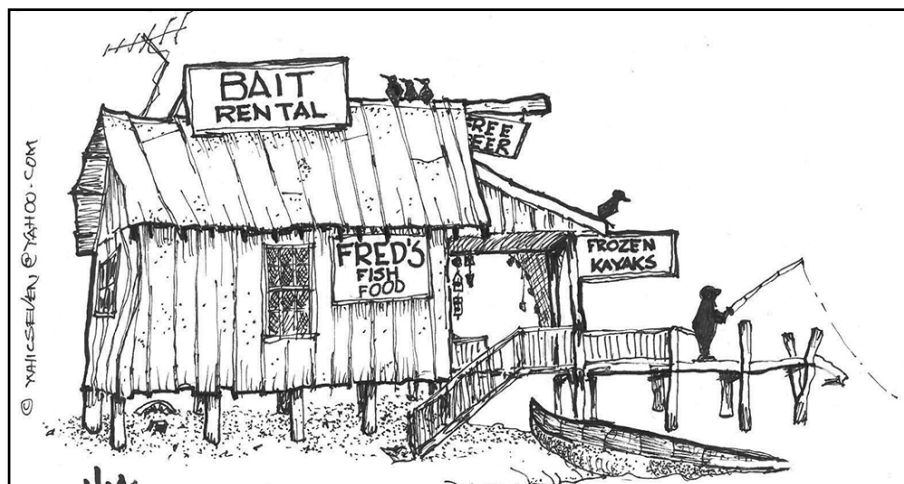
Wesley Grindstaff and I discussed the storm debris still on the state roadways. I was assured state crews would clean up the roads, but they, like our town crews, were "snowed under" from the December storm. The town road department will assist anyway it can, but we simply do not have the equipment resources the state has.

Recent criticism implies that debris removal has been too slow, and that town leadership will do nothing about it. I take exception to those critiques in that I am committed to maintaining Highland's beautiful appearance. I personally pick up trash on the road throughout the year, and under my leadership the spring cleanup of the Gorge Road has been expanded to all the major corridors. I would never be content for the town to leave debris on the roadways.

As I have recently stated, the road debris will be removed, but it will take time. Since the storm, our small street crew of five has spent as long as a week just cleaning up a single neighborhood. For the most part, the debris has to be loaded on a truck and deposited in a landfill.

As I have stated before, if a tree on private property falls onto the road right-of-way, workers will only remove the part in the roadway. The property owner is responsible for removing the remaining tree. Our current efforts may still appear to be rough. Like every year, crews will return in late winter and early spring to clear ditches and trim rhododendrons and remove trash.

• HIC'S VIEW •



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• LETTER •

I forgot about rotary!

Dear Editor,

I left a Community Coffee sponsor off the thank you listing in my recent Letter to the Editor! Thank you Rotary Club of Highlands for your delicious refreshments and hosting (in June) of our Hudson Library program, Community Coffee.

Can a mistake be made to work in everyone's favor? Not only have I the opportunity to thank this sponsor all by themselves and offer my apologies, I can lend this advice to you the reader: when you think you have proofed your writing sufficiently, do it one more time!

Thank you also to our plateau media (Highlands Newspaper, The Highlander and WHLC) for their public service to our community in keeping us all informed.

Karen Hawk
Hudson Library

• WEATHER •

Friday 2/8		Saturday 2/9		Sunday 2/10	
Daytime	Overni ght	Dayti me	Overni ght	Daytime	Overni ght
51 F	25 F	48 F	24 F	43 F	35 F
48 F	29 F	52 F	26 F	45 F	29 F
7 g 11	6 g 10	4 g 7	3 g 5	4 g 6	3 g 5
0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%
0.03	0	0	0	0	0.14
0	0	0	0	0	0

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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.



HIGHLANDS IN-TOWN Located so close to Main Street in Mount Lori, this one level home has a lovely courtyard to greet you. The great room has a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace and opens to an open back deck or a great screened porch. The kitchen is well-appointed and allows the cook to interact with guests. This is a great value - in town and low maintenance.

MLS# 89168 | Offered for \$450,000



HIGHLANDS FALLS CC This home has an older pedigree but has been updated with the addition of a large master suite plus a lower level which features a family room and additional guest quarters. The main level features an updated kitchen with a breakfast bar and opens to the great room with stone fireplace. The back deck is large and is the perfect spot to enjoy the view of Shortoff Mountain.

MLS# 89050 | Offered for \$445,000

HIGHLANDS FALLS CC This villa overlooks the 6th fairway at Highlands Falls Country Club and also looks out to the national forest. This is the only unit in the Club Villas with a garage. There are two bedrooms and two baths on the main level. The adjacent owner vaulted the ceiling in the great room and it looks amazing. The lower level which has two other bedrooms and a family room that is accessed from outside.

MLS# 89700 | Offered for \$425,000



VZ TOP Totally and beautifully renovated to the nines, these owners have left nothing undone. Quality is evident everywhere, from the artistically designed kitchen with tray ceiling, all new cabinets and appliances, granite countertops in kitchen and baths, even heated floors in the master bath. New wood floors, new bedroom carpets, all new windows and sliding glass doors, under counter lighting in the kitchen. This unit is mid-level, an easy walk from the street and all on one level.

MLS# 87951 | Offered for \$399,000



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...SENIOR NIGHT continued from page 1

will determine the #1 seed for state in their conference.

Highlands will lose seven seniors next year and Lamb said they will be sorely missed.

Highlands next plays away against Nantahala on Feb. 8.

Girls Varsity

Highlands girls varsity basketball team came out fired up and ready to play against visiting Blue Ridge during Highlands' Senior Night on Friday. Highlands won the night with a final score of 51-30. Highlands Head Coach Jake Page said things started off slow, but the girls focused up and got the job done.

"We started out very sluggish," said Page. "We seemed a bit uptight. In a rival game like this, emotions are high especially on Senior Night, but once we settled down we started to run our offense and get out in transition, we got going. I thought our defense was OK. I thought our girls really focused on helping each other out and started to move their feet to stay in front of them in the second half. It was a good win against a very scrappy, good Blue Ridge team."

Page said Blue Ridge fought hard and is always a challenge when the two teams meet on the court.

The victory was bittersweet for Highlands seniors Hannah Holt and Abby Olvera, having played multiple sports throughout their athletic careers at Highlands School, Friday was their last home basketball game.

Highlands is 8-12 overall; 2-2 in conference. Highlands next plays away at Nantahala on Feb. 8.

Junior Varsity

Highlands junior varsity boys basketball team may have felt the energy in the air at home on Friday for Senior Night because they came out strong and maintained a significant lead throughout the game against Blue Ridge with a final score of 41-25.

Highlands Head Coach Bryan Dearth said given their record of 12-4, the win over Blue Ridge guaranteed 1st place in the regu-

• See SENIOR NITGHT page 6



Highlands senior Abby Olvera shoots a jump shot from the field against Blue Ridge on Friday.

— Photos by Brian O'Shea



Above: Highlands senior Mattson Gates gets the bucket and the whistle. Right: Highlands senior Hunter Collins slam dunks the ball and nets himself a technical for his efforts for hanging on the rim against Blue Ridge on Friday at Highlands' Senior Night. Highlands won 50-31.

Below: Highlands senior Jake Billingsley puts his body into it going for the basket while Blue Ridge Jaydon Parris goes for the stuff.



...SENIOR NIGHT continued from page 5

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Highlands senior Hannah Holt splits Blue Ridge's defense and drives to the basket on Friday. Highlands won 51-30.

— Photo by Brian O'Shea

lar season.

"We played a good game; Blue Ridge tried to hold the ball and slow the game down, but we were disciplined and played good defense and converted on offense; we also hit a couple outside shots that helped put us over the top," said Dearth.

The two rival schools have a mutual respect, but things tend to get more intense anytime these two teams hit the court.

Dearth said he looks forward to the next time Highlands plays Blue Ridge on Feb. 15 at Blue Ridge for its Senior Night.

"We always enjoy playing Blue Ridge; it's always a good game and the gym is always full," said Dearth. "We look forward to playing them again in two weeks."

Highlands next plays Cherokee away on Feb. 11.

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• WORD MATTER •

Don't Let This Slip Away

I was fortunate recently to watch a program on HBO about two legendary newspapermen who worked in New York City from approximately the mid-1960s through the first part of the 21st century. (Jimmy) Breslin and (Pete) Hamill: Deadline Artists chronicles the careers of self-described street kids who became two of the most important voices of the last great era of American journalism.

Breslin, who passed in 2017, was from Queens. He saw himself as a reporter; he called the word, journalist, a "highfalutin college word." He was the everyman who viewed the world through the black and white lens of the haves and have-nots. His was the voice of the underdog, and in that time in that place there were plenty of those. In truth, pretty much anytime and everywhere there are plenty of underdogs.

Hamill, 83 at this writing, is Brooklyn-born and raised. He never got to finish high school but was as naturally gifted a wordsmith as Willie Mays was at playing center field. His columns were works of literature, poetry even, as opposed to being simply words on newsprint expressing the opinion of the writer.

Both were sons of lower middle-class Irish immigrants. Hamill idolized Breslin. Breslin tolerated Hamill. Both were essential components of a uniquely American ideal known as the "free press." Hold onto those words, my friends, lest they disappear like the early morning mist, before your very eyes.

It saddens me, as someone who worked in and with the news business for much of my adult life, that we live in a time when the book on America's great daily newspapers may be well into its final chapter.

Toward the end of the documentary the filmmakers posted a truly shocking statistic. In 1988, the New York Daily News, the tabloid both Breslin and Hamill called home at times, had 400 reporters and editors. Thirty years later, in 2018, the number was 45. What this means, and what it portends for generations yet to fully mature and understand, is that the gathering and reporting of "local" news, the news that means the most to most Americans, is literally in the process of disappearing.

Now, in certain small, tight, extraordinarily powerful circles, I have no doubt



Bud Katz

loss of this critical component of American democracy since our nation's inception, when it finally happens, will not be missed. For the rest of us, it still, collectively, constitutes the single greatest check on abuse of power by the inherently powerful; those we elect, the American oligarchy, the hidden hands of exploitation and the tightened fists of control.

The freight train of change that brought us into the digital age, while bearing gifts such as the Internet, cable entertainment shows masquerading as actual news, computers in every home, smartphones in every pocket and purse, and connectivity substituting for personal interaction, is also unfortunately responsible for the diminution of news – real news – and along with it, the creation of an uninformed and in great part apathetic American public.

I understand all too well that every generation, as it passes into irrelevance, obscurity, and old age, tends to lament the loss of certain aspects of life to the "new and improved" world of the next. Elvis put an end to big bands and stationery vocalists. Superstores brought about lower prices for everything from food to, well, everything, but brought about also the end to what we prosaically used to refer to as mom-and-pop retailers. Cars got lighter, faster, safer, and more technological, but in a few short years they'll also have reduced the need for anyone to actually drive them.

Progress is sometimes hard to measure but its impacts can cause one to shake one's head in some combination of frustration and confusion.

If you're among those, like your humble columnist here, who attempt to understand a world changing at a pace way to quickly for comfort, perhaps you shouldn't watch Breslin and Hamill: Deadline Artists, on HBO. It left me lamenting the coming loss of something so vital, so significant, so essential to our democracy.

Or, you could tune in, as I did, nod your head in knowing and understanding, as I did, then pick up and support your local newspaper, even if it's being delivered, not necessarily to your front porch but to your computer and smart phone, or free on the street. Hang on to it, tightly, because the future isn't only coming, it's here, and you can choose to be informed, or not.

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...CALENDAR continued from page 1

joined other school districts in WNC in passing a resolution to be sent to the state asking the General Assembly to return local control of the school calendars so individual districts can do what's best for their students.

In 2004, the North Carolina General Assembly seized control of setting school calendars and imposed a one-size-fits-all mandate on how school calendars are to be set. The current calendar structure includes a start-date of no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26th and an end-date of no later than the Friday closest to June 11th.

Not only does the state calendar mandate make testing difficult for students, but it makes the public education school calendar fall out of line with local community college calendars such as Southwestern Community College.

Often times, students take classes at both high school through the ITV system and SCC and the different schedule causes problems with that practice because the second semester for high schools starts two to three weeks later than community colleges and universities.

Superintendents report that the calendar misalignment makes it nearly impossible for high school students or recent winter

graduates to take courses at a nearby community college or university during the second semester.

In addition, exams for Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes are given on the same day nationwide, and the current calendar law shortens the amount of time North Carolina's students have to learn the material before the test day.

Highlands Principal Brian Jetter supports local control of the calendar for a multitude of reasons including ensuring students can test before the winter break and so high school students can align their schedules with local community colleges and universities.

Jetter also noted that students who graduate high school early – in December – won't be hindered by the different calendar schedules if local control was permitted. He said there will be a reduced impact of summer learning loss, too, which is a problem created when the lengthy summer calendars were established and students were out of the classroom for longer.

With little flexibility built into the calendar, scheduling make-up days is extremely challenging. In addition, fall sports and band begin Aug. 1 of the new school year so schedules for extracurriculars don't coincide with the state-mandated school calendar.

With adoption of the resolution, the Macon County Board of Education requests the NC General Assembly restore local control of school calendars to best meet the calendar preferences of the families, educators and businesses in the community while allowing for innovative experimental approaches to improved student achievement.

Over the years and out of necessity, Macon County and other districts across the state have used a loophole in the state's school calendar law.

For the last several years, Macon County has extended the length of the school day by 20 minutes to allow for more flexibility in scheduling. With 20 minutes added to each school day, Macon County Schools meets the minimum hour requirement standard set by the state and can therefore have more flexibility to work around snow days and to get testing done before the winter break.

According to Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin, if the state were to return control of the calendar to local districts, he believes the school days could be shortened again.

"If the calendar law is amended, we would consider how to best organize the school day to maximize student learning and achievement," said Dr. Baldwin. "I would be in favor of reducing the length of the school day."

North Carolina House of Representative Kevin Corbin introduced legislation last year in support of local control of the calendar and says he plans to do the same again this year.

"I intend to re-introduce a local control bill this session," he said. "I truly believe this is not an economic development or vacation issue, it's an education issue. Even though the Senate has already made the statement more than once that it will not hear any bills regarding calendar flexibility, I'm going to introduce it anyway because I promised that to my four counties and I will do what I said I was going to do."

Winter fun in Highlands is on

Highlands ice skating rink at K-H Founders Park on Pine Street is open Thursdays 1-8 p.m. Friday and Saturday 1-10 p.m. and Sundays 1-5 p.m. - weather permitting through March 3rd. The cost is \$5 and includes skates. Coffee, hot chocolate and water are available for \$1.

- Photo by Brian



...CHARLESTON continued from page 1

see how the real world and school connect.”

Highlands School 5th-grade teacher Maci Lequire has never been to Charleston and is thrilled for herself and her students to get to see the city firsthand.

“There are so many educational aspects of this trip that are beneficial for the kids,” said Lequire. “The ghost tour covers lots of historical points, and we are also going on walking tours of the town and a tour of the USS Yorktown. My social studies class has been discussing culture, traditions, and regions, and we will cover the Civil War before our trip, so that hopefully the students will have plenty of background knowledge for these expeditions. Mrs. Swain teaches science, and the botanical gardens and ecological trip are going to connect well to the curriculum.”

In total, 30 students, 16 chaperones, and two teachers will be making the six-hour bus-trip down south. Swain said it never gets old seeing the students’ reaction to the various stops made along the way.

“The city is beautiful -- the old buildings and charming streets,” said Swain. “But the best part is seeing how excited the students are about every place we visit!”

For many 5th-graders at Highlands School, the trip to Charleston will be their first time visiting the port city.

“I’ve never been but my cousin went once and said it was a blast and there was a ghost tour,” said 5th-grader Olivia Korbin. “I’m not scared, but maybe there’s more to Charleston than we know, maybe I’ll learn more about ghosts when I go there.”

It will be Yuri Montejo’s first trip to Charleston and she is excited to mix business with fun.

“I’m excited because I can see and experience new things,” said Montejo. “And you can learn and have fun at the same time.”

It costs over \$500 per person to make the trip, and area businesses and the community are doing what they can each year to make this possible through

hosting fundraisers, donating a portion of a night’s proceeds to the trip (Kilwins and Pizza Place in Highlands), or donating items for auction at the Winter Concert back in December. Through the efforts of area businesses, Swain said the cost per student to attend the trip was offset by a fourth.

“A huge thank you to our ever-giving, amazingly generous community,” said Swain. “I grew up here and have a lot of pride in our little town, but I am still pleasantly surprised and shocked at how much businesses and individuals are willing to help! It truly takes a village to raise children and what an incredible village we live in!”

Lequire has been at Highlands School for two years and is moved by how much the community supports the school.

“I would like to say how blown away I am at the support given from parents and local businesses,” she said. “As a Franklin native, I am very new to this community and I have been consistently surprised at how giving and supportive they have been for our trip.”

Manager of the Spice and Tea Exchange Rachel Lewicki grew up in Charleston and was happy to donate a private cooking class to be raffled off to help the cause.

“Charleston has a special place in my heart because I was born and lived there until I was 10,” said Lewicki. “I grew up playing in all those areas they’re going to see and they’re amazing.”

She added that it’s good for kids to take a break from the rou-



Students in Angela Swain’s class holding up items donated by area businesses to be raffled off to raise money for the trip to Charleston.
Photos by Brian O’Shea

tine and experience something new.

“I think it’s important for kids to get off the mountain and get a diversified experienced,” said Lewicki. “Charleston is full of so much rich history and these kids just soak it in.”

Anna Herz donated several items from her shop Annawear in Highlands for the raffle to raise money for the trip.

“I think it’s probably educational to get out and see the world,” said Herz. “Plus, it’s Highlands School and my kids went there. I’m happy to help.”

Owner of Highlands Mountain Paws Mia Nelson donated several items for pet lovers and said it is worth it for the students to experience visiting a new city.

“I’ve never been there but I’ve heard it’s an awesome-historic

city and I guess you can walk everywhere,” said Nelson. “They (Charleston) has beaches, flatlands, and urban areas, why not go? There’s so much to see and do, it’s going to be a great experience.”

Why do 5th-graders go on this trip each year? Swain said it’s a send-off from Elementary School

before entering Middle School.

“We viewed this as a fun and educational way for these students to ‘graduate’ to middle school,” said Swain. “A last hooray! It is a great bonding experience for the students and also for the parents that go!”

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Students and 5th-grade teacher Maci Lequire sell baked goods at the Winter Concert to raise money for the annual trip to Charleston.

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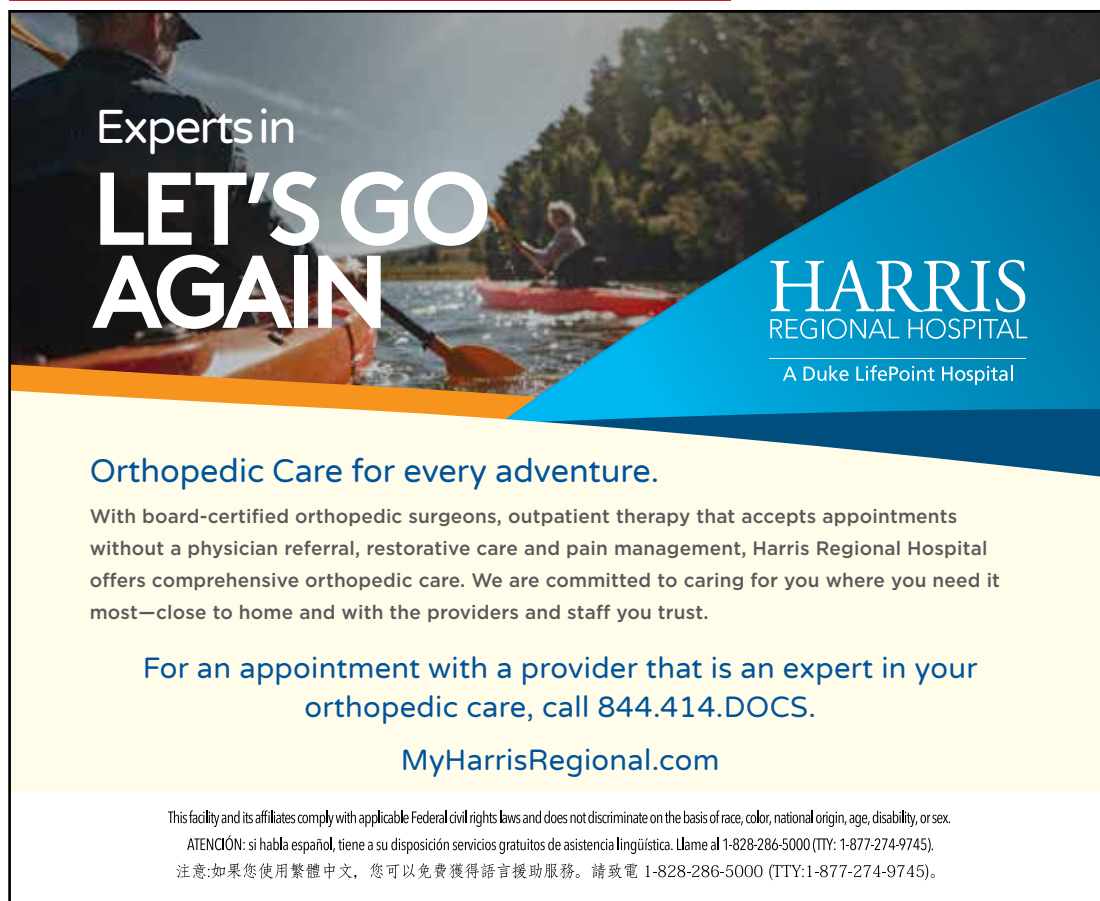
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 FT. •

Dreaded Due Diligence and Earnest Monies!

Buyers and sellers – especially in North Carolina – don't really understand due diligence so I will try to explain.

In 2011, the real estate commission implemented a policy of due diligence, better known as an "investigative" period of time that must be agreed upon by buyers and sellers as part of the Offer to Purchase contract. This period allows the buyers to have a home inspection, septic inspection, survey, consultation with a builder to determine remodeling costs and any other evaluations they desire. The due diligence period expires at 5 PM on the last day stated on the contract...be sure your broker alerts you of this important date, because if not, your earnest money will be forfeited and becomes non-refundable at that point.

The buyers can terminate the contract at any time during the due diligence period for ANY rea-



Pat Allen
Broker-in-charge
Pat Allen Realty Group
Cell: 828-200-9179

son and the earnest money will be refunded to them.

The selling broker should advise a time-line knowing how long it will take to get the requested due diligence items completed. If a loan is involved, it will usually take around 45 days to be approved by the lender. Sometimes the sellers will agree to extend the due diligence period for a short time if needed, but not always. So as a buyer, be diligent in getting your investigative items completed in a timely manner. Your broker is there to help you accomplish this.

As you can see, sellers want the shortest amount of due diligence

time because essentially their property is taken off the market, although brokers can still show their property and bring a back-up offer if the original offer falls through.

Many brokers feel that showing a home during the due diligence period may be a waste of their time and so they proceed

to show buyers other options instead. Due diligence seems to be unfair to sellers because the buyers can terminate the sales contract for no reason at all.

There is an option in North Carolina for a due diligence fee to be paid directly to the seller once an offer is accepted and becomes a contract.

The due diligence fee is non-refundable to the buyer if the buyer terminates at any time. You might ask why anyone would pay a due diligence fee? One example would be if there were multiple offers on a property. If you added an option fee, this may give you a better chance of having your offer negotiated first and, therefore, possibly accepted.

Earnest money is "good faith" money that is intended to assure the seller that the buyer is seriously interested in the property upon which he or she has placed an offer.

Earnest money is held in an escrow account and if the buyer terminates during the due diligence period the earnest money is fully refunded.

There is an option for additional earnest money to be offered to the seller after the due diligence period is complete. Brokers find this to be a desirable option to use when negotiating offers, especially in cases when the original earnest money offering was low.

A good broker can assist with all of the above issues, ensuring you a low-risk experience, and hopefully a pleasant experience, resulting in a win-win for all parties involved.

• *Pat Allen is owner and Broker-in-Charge of Pat Allen Realty Group, an independent firm and a member of Leading Real Estate Companies of the World®. She can be reached at 828-200-9179 or at pat@patallen-realtygroup.com. Visit her on the web at www.patallenrealtygroup.com or stop by the office at 295 Dillard Road in Highlands.*

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

NOTE

- Sign Up now for Macon County Spring Soccer. For information, call the Reck Park at 828-526-3556.
- The Rec Park is now taking teams for the Spring Men's League Basketball league through February 1st. For any

other information contact Lester Norris or Maxine Ramey at 828-526-3556.

Ongoing

- Movies at the Playhouse – NEW SCHEDULE – Fri. & Sat. 1, 4, and 7 p.m.; Sunday 1 and 4 p.m.; NO MOVIES MONDAY; Tues., Wed., and Thurs. 1, 4, 7 p.m.

Winter Pool schedule

- **Lap Swim:** Monday-Friday 6-10a. 6 lanes and Monday-Thursday 3:30-7p. 1-2 lanes (shared Pool) and Saturday 10-11a 2 or 3 lanes.
- **Adult Swim:** 18 years plus Monday-Friday 11:30-1:30p no lap lanes and Saturday 10-11a shared with lap swim. Available Equipment: water weights, adult pool noodles, fins, water jog belt & kickboards.
- **Public Swim:** Monday-Thursday 3:20-7p Saturday 11am-6pm, Sunday 1-6pm and Sunday 1-6p.
- **Water Aerobics:** 18 years plus Monday-Friday 10:15-11a.
- **Aqua Dance and Fitness:** Monday 5:30-6:30p.
- **Baby and Me class:** Ages 6 month-3 years Friday 5:30-6p.
- **Movie Night:** all ages First Friday night of every month. Pool opens at 6:30 and movie starts at 7p. Call for movie title and prices
- **Pool Parties:** available Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings 6-8p. Call the pool at 828-526-1595 if you have any questions concerning the pool.

Harry Potter Family Day/Night at Hudson and Cashiers libraries Thurs., Feb. 7

If you're a Muggle who wants to learn your way around Diagon Alley, or you've ever been considered for a position in the Ministry of Magic, visit the Highlands' Hudson Library or the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library for Harry Potter Family Day/Night Thursday, February 7.

In Highlands, The Bascom, will help host an unforgettable Harry Potter Kids Zone event. The fun kicks off at 3:30 PM on Thursday.

At Harry Potter Kids Zone, the wonder of J.K. Rowling's unforgettable stories will be explored and, most excitingly, the next generation of readers will be introduced to the unparalleled magic of Harry Potter. At Hudson Library, young wizards, witches and Muggles will be treated to an afternoon of magical games, readings from favorite Harry Potter books, and Harry Potter art projects! It all begins when the Sorting Hat decides



who will be in which house.

This is a first Harry Potter Book Night for Cashiers and it's set for 5-7 p.m. Thursday. It will be an event-filled night full of the wondrous magic J.K. Rowling so expertly created in her books.

Cashiers participants, who are encouraged to arrive dressed as their favorite Potterverse character, will discover a party in full swing, complete with snacks, games, crafts, readings and trivia challenges. At the core of the event is a deep appreciation for the Harry Potter books, which have a rabid fanbase that stretches around the world, and even a few realms beyond.

As Hermione Granger says in Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, "When in doubt, go to the library!" But there's no doubt about this: Harry Potter Book Day/Night celebrations at area libraries will be magical, bookish fun for the entire family!

Tickets are \$10 / \$2 off on Tuesdays.

• The Bascom has gone to winter hours. We will be open Friday - Monday 10am -5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm). The Bascom galleries and shops will be closed Tuesdays - Thursdays. Admin offices and The Dave Drake Studio Barn are open normal business hours. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the newly updated Story Walk Trail throughout the week.

Monday - Saturday

• At the Bascom, 10am - 5pm, Sunday 12pm - 5pm: Open Studio in The Dave Drake Studio Barn. For more information call 828-526-4949.

• At the Bascom, Art By Appointment private ceramic classes in The Dave Drake Studio Barn. For more information call 828-526-4949.

Monday - Friday

• At the Bascom, You Too Can Raku by appointment class in The Dave Drake Studio Barn. For more information call 828-526-4949.

First Mondays

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

Mondays

• At the Bascom, 10am - 1pm: Studio Alive drawing group, For more information call 828-526-4949.

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 Tricia Smith at 828-338-8167.

Mon.-Wed.

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

• Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:30-10:30 a.m.. All levels welcome.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

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

• 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 Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30a in the Meeting Room in the back of Hudson Library,

• The Highlands Writers Group meets to read, workshop, or to just share information on writing, every Tuesday, 3pm-5pm, in the downstairs board room

at The Bascom, 323 Franklin Road, Highlands, For more information, call 828-526-3190.

Tuesday

• At the Bascom, 3pm - 5pm: Writers group. For more information call 828-526-4949.

2nd and 4th Tuesdays

• OccupyWNC meets at the 7pm in the Sneak E. Squirrel Community Room (1314 Main St., Sylva. Visit www.occupy-wnc.org or call 828.331.1524

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.

Tuesday and Thursdays

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

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.

• Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm at Rec Park.

Thursdays

• Storytime with Miss Deanna 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 Outreach Center on West Main Street in Franklin Call Donita for more info (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

• Highlands Area Indivisible group meets at 5 p.m. at the Highlands Hudson Library.

• 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 AREA EVENTS •

1st and 3rd Thursdays

• Indivisible Highlands, a non-partisan activist group meets at the Hudson Library at 5p. For info call 770-823-0601

Fourth 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.

First Fridays

• **At the Rec Park Pool.** Movie Night - all ages First Friday night of every month. Pool opens at 6:30p and movie starts at 7 p.m. Call for movie title and prices. For any other information call 828-526-1595.

Friday - Monday

• At the Bascom, 10am - 5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm): Free Admission to exhibition spaces and SmArt Space for children. For more information call 828-526-4949.

Saturdays

• At The Bascom, Pottery Sale in the barn from 10a to 5p.
• Scrabble at Hudson Library from 1-4 p.m. Bring board if possible. All are welcome. 727-871-8298.

• The Bascom Knitters on the Terrace at The Bascom from 10 am until noon or downstairs in The Bascom Library room.

• At the Bascom, 10am - 12pm: Community Knitters group. For more information call 828-526-4949.

Sundays

• Live Music in OEI's Hummingbird Lounge 8 p.m. to close with Paul Jones.

Through March 10

• At The Bascom, SOUNDWAVE, Western Carolina University MFA and InkSpace BFA Exhibition. For more information, call 526-4949. **Through Feb. 24**

• At The Bascom, hear + there, a collaborative installation by The Bascom's Winter Artist Residency Program. For more information, call 526-4949.

Thurs., Feb. 7

• Harry Potter Family Day at Hudson Library in Highlands 3:30-5:30 p.m. Harry Potter themed fun of all kinds.

• Harry Potter Family Night at the Albert Carlton Cashiers Community Library from 5-7 p.m. Participants, who are encouraged to arrive dressed as their favorite Pottermore character, will discover a party in full swing, complete with snacks, games, crafts, readings and trivia challenges. At the core of the event

is a deep appreciation for the Harry Potter books, which have a rabid fanbase that stretches around the world, and even a few realms beyond.

Fri., Feb. 8

• At The Bascom, from 4 - 6p: Public Reception for The Bascom's two newest exhibitions: SOUNDWAVE and hear + there, FREE. For more information, call 526-4949.

Sat. Feb. 9

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous hike at Coweeta Hydrological Lab on the Ridge Trail to Dyke Gap, elevation change 950 ft., with good views of Albert Mtn., returning down Cunningham Branch to Shope Fork and Coweeta office complex. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 9am, drive 16 miles round trip. Call Leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

• Democratic meeting in The Hudson Library Meeting Room from 5: -7 pm. Appetizers and Wine. A back-room political meeting to create a Democrat Manifesto (For what do we stand? And to formulate the principles from which all policies would come)

Feb. 13 and 20

• At The Bascom, from 10am - Noon or 3:15 - 5pm: February Youth Pottery: Wheel thrown bowl with slip pattern, Ages: 8 and up, \$60. For more information, call 526-4949.

Feb. 12, 14, 19, and 21

• At The Bascom, February Resident Artist Series (Making and using molds from plaster, clay, or whatever we can find. For more information, call 526-4949.

Wed., Feb. 13

• Project SEARCH will hold an information session night at Mission Hospital, 1 Hospital Drive, Room 5205, in Asheville, on at 6 pm. Project SEARCH is a partnership between Mission Health, The Arc of North Carolina, A-B Tech, NC Vocational Rehabilitation, Vaya Health and the NC Council on Developmental Disabilities. The program offers a one-year internship for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Its goal is to help the students, who range in age from 18 to 30, achieve their goal of securing meaningful, competitive employment. This session is a one-hour introduction and determination of candidacy appropriateness. Speakers will include Tim Bleckicki, Mission Health Project SEARCH instructor, and the job coach, as well as current and past interns, and representatives of program partners.

There's a Q&A at the end for parents and students. For questions, please contact Tim Bleckicki at tbleckicki@arcnc.org or 828-254-4771 or visit <https://arcnc.org/project-search-asheville>.

Fri., Feb. 15

• Senior Dinner at 12 noon at The Highlands Recreation Department. For any other information contact Lester Norris or Maxine Ramey at 828-526-3556.

Sat., Feb. 16

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 3-mile hike with some ups and downs along the way to Yellow Branch Falls, one of the most scenic falls in western SC, 60 ft. high with dark rocky ledges over which the water falls (some say) like icing on a chocolate cake. Meet at Cashiers Rec Park at 10am, drive 50 miles round trip. Call leaders Mike and Sue Kettles, 743-1079, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

Feb. 22-28

• Book Fair at Highlands School in the media center. Preview Day will be the 21st, students can make wish lists during this time. Grandparent's Day is February 22, during lunch, and the late night will be the same night as Science Fair (28th).

Sat., Feb. 23

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 6-mile hike, elevation change 520 ft., from Warwoman Dell to Martin Creek Falls on a lovely leisurely section of the GA. Bartram Trail. Meet at Smoky Mtn. Visitor Center at 9am, drive 15 miles round trip. Call leader Mary Stone, 369-7352, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous 9.2-mile hike, elevation change 800 ft., on the Cataloochee Divide in the Smoky Mtn. Nat'l. Park to the Appalachian Highland Science Learning Center, with beautiful views along the way. Meet at Waynesville Ingles at 9 am, drive 30 miles round trip (100 miles from Franklin) Hike is limited to 15. Call leader Keith Patton, 456-8895, for reservations.

Sat., Feb. 24

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4.5-mile hike in the Smoky Mtn. Nat'l. Park, elevation change 500 ft., along Deep Creek (with two waterfalls along the way), then cross over to Sunkota Ridge, and return to Deep Creek. Meet at Dillsboro Huddle House at 10am, drive 40 miles round trip. Call leader Jody Burtner, 828-788-2985, for

• See EVENTS page 14

Live via satellite from National Theatre of London 'I'm Not Running' Feb. 9

The Highlands Performing Arts Center will present the National Theatre of London's production of I'm Not Running, Live via Satellite on Saturday, February 9 at 1pm. I'm Not Running is an explosive new political drama exploring personal choices and their public consequences, written by Academy Award-nominated writer David Hare. Pauline Gibson is a junior doctor, who becomes the face of a campaign to save her local hospital. She's thrust from angel of the National Health Service (NHS), to becoming an independent Member of Parliament.



In the Houses of Parliament, she crosses paths with her university boyfriend, Jack Gould, a stalwart Labour loyalist, climbing the ranks of the party. As media and public pressure mounts on Pauline to run for leadership of the Labour party, she faces an agonizing decision...

Tickets are available online: www.highlandspac.org

org or at the door. All Students are admitted FREE of Charge, Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, NC

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...PROFICIENCY continued from page 1

achievement in a particular sub-group – that being Students with Disabilities (SWD). There are more than 730 students identified in this group in the Macon County School system.

But the comprehensive improvement plan will be applied to all students grades 3-8 due to new standards mandated by the state for the 2018-'19 school year.

North Carolina was required to identify schools for targeted support and improvement and in Macon County that ended up being the Students with Disabilities group in five schools – East Franklin, Franklin High School, Mountain View, Highlands School and Union Academy. In addition, Union Academy will also need to improve its graduation rate.

“The TSI-AT is a federal accountability measure – one single measure and not an overall reflection of Highlands School. But all students are expected to improve,” said MC School Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin. “While the other subgroups met the federal requirements, SWD did not.”

However, as per state mandate, proficiency goals across all spectrums for students in grades 3-8 were increased for the 2018-2019 school year.

“New and more rigorous standards were adopted with school year 2018-'19. As

you can imagine, it was even difficult for students with disabilities to meet the old standards because the standards for non-disabled students are the same as SWD,” said Baldwin.

The TSI-AT program comes with federal money which can be used to increase proficiency across all spectrums.

“Federal resources accompany the findings of this report and will support us in meeting the requirements set forth,” said Baldwin. Ultimately, TSI-AT is a way for us to improve the services that we provide all our students.”

As a TSI-AT school, Highlands School was required to develop a comprehensive plan that specifically addresses how the school will improve student achievement and it includes ways the district will monitor and support progress.

This includes: classroom management, standards-aligned instruction, professional learning communities, instructional leadership, recruitment and retention of effective teachers, support for grade-to-grade transitions, implementation of a tiered instructional system, date-driven decision making, student support services and family and community engagement.

New standards this school year require
• See PROFICIENCY page 17

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ALL ABOUT BOOKS

• INK PENN •

A Must Read for Southerners

I don't often read memoirs, but a friend recommended Lee Smith's "Dimestore: A Writer's Life," and I felt obliged to give it a try. I'm glad I did. I've read many of her novels and chuckled when I read in her memoir that she began writing stories when she was nine years old. The opening of the chapter titled A Life in Books brought back fond memories for me, not because I wrote as a child, but because I, too, was a voracious reader:



Kathy Manos Penn

where she grew up. No one ever mistook me for a tomboy, so I don't have that trait in common with her, but I did read beneath the covers with a flashlight, another scene she describes. And I smiled at her list of childhood books, so many of which I read, too. I think I missed Pippi Longstocking, but I did read the Hardy Boys and Nurse Cherry Ames. How many of those ring a bell for you?

If you haven't yet discovered Lee Smith's novels, reading Dimestore will send you down that path. If you prefer to begin with a novel, I recommend "Oral History" and "Family Linen," two of her earlier works, or her 2003 New York Times bestseller, "The Last Girls." Though I seldom re-read books, I may have to go back to a few of hers to see whether they read differently now that I know more about the author.

• 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 inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.

I was a reader long before I was a writer. In fact, I started writing in the first place because I couldn't stand for my favorite books to be over, so I started adding more and more chapters onto the ends of them, often including myself as a character. Thus the Bobbsey twins became the Bobbsey triplets, and Nancy Drew's best friends, Bess Marvin and George Fayne, were joined by another character named Lee Smith — who actually ended up with Ned Nickerson! The additional chapters grew longer and more complicated as my favorite books became more complicated — Heidi, Anne of Green Gables, and Pippi Longstocking, for instance.

I suspect her parents called her a bookworm, though she was also an adventuring tomboy who climbed trees and roamed the mountains of Grundy, VA

2019 Kindergarten Orientation Days

Cartoogechaye Elementary

Friday, April 12: 9 a.m.

East Franklin Elementary

Friday, April 12: 8:30 a.m.

Highlands School

Tuesday, March 12: 10 a.m.

Iotla Valley Elementary

Friday, April 5: 8:30 a.m.

Nantahala School

Friday, April 5: 9:30 a.m.

South Macon Elementary

Friday, April 26: 8:30 a.m.

Movies at the Playhouse

NEW SCHEDULE

Fri. & Sat. 1, 4, and 7 p.m.;

Sunday 1 and 4 p.m.;

NO MOVIES MONDAY;
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Tickets are \$10 / \$2 off on Tuesdays.



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Here is my spin on a Valentine's Day tradition, incorporating chocolate, roses, champagne and strawberries. Enjoy!

Drunk In Love Strawberries

- 1 lb of strawberries
- 2 cups of champagne
- 2 oz of either TSTE Dark Cocoa Sugar, or Rose Sugar

Directions:

1. Place strawberries in a bowl, cover with champagne and refrigerate for an hour.
2. Drain strawberries and lightly dry them.
3. Roll in one or both, of our custom sugars.





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MOVE IT, MOVE IT, MOVE IT!

There are many reasons people do not exercise. When asked why they don't incorporate fitness into their lives, the most prevalent answers are:

"I don't have time, I can't afford a gym membership, the weather has been terrible," etc., etc.

The real reason for most people is that it is just not enjoyable! You can bet that if exercising gave us immediate gratification as does eating a piece of chocolate, enjoying a sizzling steak or drinking a beer or a glass of really fine wine we would do it in a minute.

I personally have been involved in serious exercise since 1977. I love having worked out because the results are fantastic, especially since I am 65 years and still able to function as a much younger person. On the other hand I really do not like the actual act of exercising. How is that for honesty from a professional exercise physiologist?

What if exercise was as much fun as watching a movie, going to a play or watching an exciting sporting event. We would be finding the time. Wouldn't we?

For the many of you who will not take the step toward formal exercise then I suggest you become proactive and find other ways to incorporate movement into your daily life.

If you spend part of your year away from our tranquil mountains, then maybe you could turn a shopping trip to the mall into an undercover exercise session by walking briskly past the stores for 20 minutes nonstop before you actually buy something. You could do the same thing at Ingles by walking up and down every aisle three or four times and then start your shopping. When in town, walk Main Street in Highlands from Mountain Fresh to Wright Square briskly and sit and stand a few times at each bench you pass along the way. This would incorporate a lot of healthy movement into your life.

Let's begin with a local campaign. In addition to saving the whales let's

Save the caddies too! Just think how



Hank Miller
828-305-9713

much exercise walking 18 holes or nine even would be without sitting most of the time in a golf cart.

If exercise is fun or mixed with fun more people will do it.

I have a fond memory from childhood of playing catch after dinner. It was always something to look forward too. Sometimes I would get to play with my dad and other times with friends. Catch was always fun and a way of

life for many of us in our childhood, especially during the summer months when the sun was out past 8pm.

As a trainer, I am a big believer in the benefits of tossing a medicine ball. Ask any of my clients? A medicine ball is a soft ball weighing on average from 2 to 16 pounds. For most of us over age 50 a 5-pound ball is more than enough to get a good amount of exercise. It is a wonderful idea for a husband and wife or a couple of friends to have fun, play catch and get exercise all at the same time. In just a few moves you can gain flexibility, core exercise, muscle toning and a bit of cardio.

For some less fit people, a great way to start is to get a playball from Walmart or Dollar General and get tossing. I would like to see couples and or friends all across America take up playing catch daily for fun and health.

To help you get started I put together a short instructional video with my wife Lynne. View it by going to my website thebestexerciseforseniors.com then scroll down to the bottom of the home page and click on the button titled: Couples Fun Medicine Ball Game.

Get going, get started, move it!

• Hank is a local fitness trainer specializing in the age 50 and over population. He is certified by The American College of Sports Medicine as an Exercise Physiologist and is a licensed NC Massage Therapist specializing in Therapeutic Stretching. Send comments to: hank@thebestexerciseforseniors.com



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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

HCA Healthcare completes purchase of Mission Health

HCA Healthcare (NYSE: HCA), a leading healthcare provider with 185 hospitals and approximately 1,800 sites of care in 21 states and the United Kingdom, today announced it has completed the purchase of Mission Health, a six-hospital system in Asheville and western North Carolina, for approximately \$1.5 billion.

"The team at Mission Health has been nationally recognized for providing high-quality patient care, and we're excited that they've joined HCA Healthcare," said Sam Hazen, CEO of HCA Healthcare. "We're looking forward to investing in western North Carolina and helping ensure Mission Health's 133-year tradition of caring for communities throughout the region continues for many years."

Mission Health, recognized as one of the nation's top 15 health systems by IBM Watson Health in six of the past seven years, is now a new operating division of HCA Healthcare.

"We are very pleased that this transaction has now closed so that Mission Health can continue to focus on caring for the people of western North Carolina," said Ronald A. Paulus, MD, Mission Health's President and CEO. "This is a tremendous

win for the people and communities that we serve, and one that may be judged by history as a positive inflection point for the communities we serve. We've not only provided for the long-term sustainability of high-quality healthcare and secured special protections for our rural communities, we've also created the largest per capita foundation in the nation to address the social determinants of health. I believe the Dogwood Health Trust has the potential to impact health status in a way never before imagined in America. I look forward to seeing results, both for western North Carolina, and as a model of what might be for many similar communities."

Benefits and highlights of the transaction include the following commitments:

HCA Healthcare will build a 120-bed inpatient behavioral health hospital in Asheville.

HCA Healthcare will build a new replacement hospital for Angel Medical Center in Franklin, N.C.

HCA Healthcare will complete the new state-of-the-art Mission Hospital for Advanced Medicine in Asheville.

In addition to the new behavioral health hospital, replacement hospital and new tower, HCA Healthcare will invest \$232

million in capital in Mission Health facilities.

HCA Healthcare will create a \$25 million Innovation Fund focused on improving healthcare service delivery and spurring economic development.

Mission Health will adopt HCA Healthcare's more expansive charity care policy.

HCA Healthcare is providing assurances that certain healthcare services will be maintained.

"From early on, we were confident that HCA Healthcare shares Mission Health's focus on high-quality, patient-centered care and is the right and best choice to help ensure our continued success," said Mission Health Board Chair John R. Ball, MD, JD. "We are excited to see how the resources, scale and expertise of HCA Healthcare can

help enhance Mission Health's rich legacy.

"The Mission Health team of physicians, clinicians and support services are deeply committed to providing access to high quality, compassionate care, which is part of what makes this alignment a good cultural fit," said John W. Garrett, MD, Vice Chair of the Mission Health Board. "We look forward to seeing how Mission's nationally recognized quality and safety practices benefit from HCA's national scale."

HCA Healthcare and Mission Health entered into exclusive discussions March 21, 2018 and signed a definitive agreement August 31, 2018. The North Carolina Attorney General's Office approved the transaction January 16, 2019. Today's acquisition brings HCA Healthcare's total number of hospitals to 185.

...PROFICIENCY continued from page 14

a desired percentage of proficient students on the NC end-of-grade math tests in the spring of 2019 to be 90% for grade 3, 80% for grade 4, 97% for grade 5, 65% for grade 6, 75% for grade 7 and 75% for grade 8.

The desired percentage of proficient students on the NC end-of-grade reading tests in the spring of 2019 is 80% for grade 3, 90% for grade 4, 90% for grade 5, 80% for grade 6, 80% for grade 7 and 85% for grade 8.

According to the letter sent home last week, achieving higher achievement levels all around, will require work from staff, families and students.

STAR Math and Reading benchmarks are being used to assess students on objectives in the NC Common Core in grades 3-8 and teachers will analyze data by objective and by individual student.

Students will be identified for intervention in both subject matters if needed.

As part of the TSI-AT initiative, parents and their children are asked to be aware of the new academic expectations set for this school year. They are encouraged to make sure their children are pre-

pared and attend school each day and that parents monitor their children's homework.

"This doesn't diminish anything that Highlands School has accomplished. It helps keep the focus on students with disabilities and we will help those students succeed," said Baldwin. "We will use the additional resources that are provided as a result of this information and ranking to help all of our students achieve academically."

According to GreatSchools.org, Highlands School is rated above average in school quality compared to other schools in North Carolina. Students perform above average on state tests, have above average college readiness measures and are making above average year-over-year academic improvement.

In 2018, US News ranked Highlands School 28th out of 500 schools within North Carolina and 1,092nd out of 24,000 schools in the National Rankings and it earned a silver medal. Schools are ranked based on their performance on state-required tests and how well they prepare students for college.

— Kim Lewicki



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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



Love Bears All Things

Chaplain Margaret Howell
Holy Family Lutheran Church:
ELCA

A Lutheran Sunday school teacher, having just read aloud 1 Corinthians, 13:1-13 was testing the children in her Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven by faith, hope and love.

She asked them, "If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into Heaven?"

"NO!" the children answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?"

Again, the answer was, "NO!"

Now she was smiling. Hey, they're getting it, she thought! "Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?" she asked.

Again, they all answered, "NO!"

She was just bursting with pride for them. "Well," she continued, "then how can I get into Heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD."

Martin Luther wrote, "If there is no laughter in heaven, I'm not going."

Another droll soul once said, "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans."

The Epistle for today is one that I hear at nearly every wedding I have attended.

We all know "Love is patient, love is kind and so on...."

Of all of Paul's letters, this one and the letter to the Romans are his finest.

Romans speaks about grace and the love of God as a gift, obtainable only by faith, made possible by Christ, through the Holy Spirit.

Corinthians 13 is a guidebook on living a grace-filled life, the core of which is love.

Some theologians like to point out the different kinds of love, namely agape love and filial love.

But Paul doesn't split hairs here. The love he speaks of is the embodiment of all the many aspects of love. Divine love, love of family, love of spouse, love of neighbor and harder to swallow, love of enemy.

In Luke 4: 21-30, Jesus is set upon by his own neighbors who don't cotton to the notion of God's promises being for all people, even pagans and gentiles.

It truly is a "kill the messenger" moment.

Admit it, we sometimes get our feathers ruffled when people we don't think deserve it do well.

The bully from high school who is a today successful businessman. The politician who denigrates people of different skin color and nations.

Proverbs 3:5

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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.

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Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

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

Wednesdays - Supper at 6 p.m.

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.

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Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor

220 Main Street, Highlands

Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am

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

Choir 5p

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors

526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Adult Ed.: 9:30a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

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

Wed.: Choir: 6p

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

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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Worship/Communion: 10:30

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Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11, Choir: 6 p.m.

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

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212

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

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Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from 18

And what about family? Just about everyone I know has a branch of the family tree that has some rotten fruit hanging from it. Many of us are grateful that the holidays have passed and we are no longer expected to put up with toxic relatives.

Yet, even so, when a crisis strikes, the family bands together and takes care of whatever needs taking care of.

My sister, Helen is one of God's angels put here on earth. She has, from childhood, been the kindest most compassionate person I have ever known. She is my hero.

Her capacity to love is astounding.

She gives of herself to family and friends, even when the going gets tough.

She has rushed to my side many times in times of trial.

I love my sister more than anyone on this earth.

Not close as children, our bonds have grown and strengthened in adulthood.

As I sat in that hospital room and watched her mother-in-law grieve over the loss of her sister, it stabbed at my heart. She has lost 2 sisters in less than a month.

I couldn't even begin to imagine the heart-ache she must have been feeling.

If you love deeply, you will grieve deeply.

I was humbled to be asked to preside at the funeral services by my family.

Is a small gift which I was happy to give. I feel honored to be able to speak the words of love and hope to those who longed to hear them. I know people in my own family who are not believers. It is beyond my comprehension. How can you love fully, give of yourself fully, without the gifts that grace and faith in Christ bring?

It is a mystery.

Love bears all things, believes in all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

In Christ we are free to love abundantly, to love those near and dear but also to love and service those who might not be our favorite people.

In great adversity, faith, hope and love abide, these three: and the greatest of these is love.

Death and grief, as powerful as they are though, cannot conquer love. We know that from Easter morning. Love never ends.

• OBITUARY •

Donald Franklin Reynolds Sr.

Donald Franklin Reynolds, Sr., 78, of Highlands, NC and Bradenton, FL, passed away unexpectedly on January 26th, 2019 in Bradenton. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at Christ Anglican Church in Cashiers, NC on a future date to be announced. Father Jim Murphy of Christ Anglican Church will be officiating. Burial will be at Highlands Memorial Park, Highlands, NC.



erty, served as Superintendent of Construction at Kanuga Conference Center, and owned Brunswick Paint Centers. He was actively involved and served on the Board of Brunswick Co. Homebuilders Association. He joyfully served his Church on the vestry as Jr. Warden. He was an avid pet lover, woodworker, craftsman, music lover, sports enthusiast and most of all, he loved traveling around the USA.

Donald was born in Wadesboro, NC on Sept. 19th, 1940. He is a graduate of Wadesboro High School and attended Appalachian State University. Business and family life took him from the beautiful coastal town of Southport, NC to the majestic mountains of Highlands, NC. He always had an infectious love of life which carried him a long way and uplifted so many others as well.

"Buck" was married 58 years to his sweetheart, Virginia Oneta Bell of Lincoln, NC on June 25th, 1960.

"Dandy Don" was a serial entrepreneur founding and operating a building supply store, motel, and restaurant. As a NC Licensed General Contractor, he developed residential and commercial prop-

"Poppy" (as he was lovingly named by his daughter-in-law), is survived by his wife, Oneta Bell Reynolds, their beloved son, Donald F. Reynolds, Jr., and his wife Denise, Sisters Margaret Reynolds Riggins and Frances Reynolds Hawk, loving Niece & Nephews and many Cousins, Friends and his beloved Church Family.

He is preceded in death by his dear parents, Rev. Eddie Franklin Reynolds & Mildred McCrae Reynolds. Memorials may be made to Christ Anglican Church, PO Box 2461, Cashiers, NC 28717. The family of Donald Franklin Reynolds, Sr. wishes to thank the Manatee Co. EMS, doctors, nurses & entire staff at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center for the excellent care and compassion provided to us during this most difficult time.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



On January 22, Dr. John Baumrucker gave a brief history of the Highland Bolivian Mission. Pictured with him is Mary Adair Trumbly. The mission's most recent project has been to provide wheelchairs to people in need around the city of Santa Cruz, Bolivia. So far over 1,000 wheel-





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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Jan. 30, 2019.

Jan. 30

• At 5:20 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bob Zahner

Road.

Jan. 31

• At 3:58 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm set off by a waterflow problem at

a location on W. Church Street.

• At 5:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a mutual aid call from the Satolah FD but it was cancelled.

Feb. 1

• At 3:37 a.m., the dept. responded to a mutual aid call from the Franklin FD.

Feb. 2

• At 1:39 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

• At 10:59 p.m., the dept. responded to a mutual aid call from Cashiers FD. It was cancelled.

Feb. 3


• At 7:01 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Clubhouse Trail. The alarm was set off from burned food.

Feb. 4

• At 2:39 a.m., the dept. responded to a mutual aid call from the Scaly F&R dept. to assist on a structure fire.

• At 5:14 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a location on Carolina Way.

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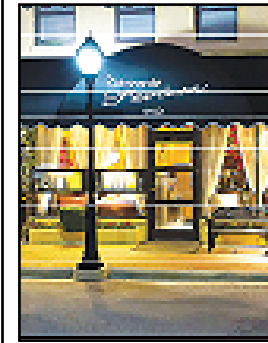
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