

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 16, Number 47

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Thursday, Nov. 21, 2019



John Dotson



Marc Hehn



Brian Stiehler

The outcome holds – Dotson, Hehn and Stiehler win Highlands election

Though not official when “headlined” in the Nov. 7 edition, the winners of the 2019 Town of Highlands municipal election stand.

During the canvass which was completed Friday, Nov. 15, provisional ballots increased by two – from the original four to six – but three were thrown out. There was one absentee ballot.

Following the canvass which according to MC Board of Elections Director Melanie Thibault was completed at 11 a.m., a recount of the Highlands race began and was completed that afternoon.

According to Thibault after each election, the state board picks a precinct to be recounted. This year it could have been one of the two One-Stop voting

places, the town of Franklin or the town of Highlands.

This year, the Franklin One-stop voting tally was recounted.

However, because of questions that arose out of the town of Highlands election, Highlands was also recounted on canvass day.

This happened for two reasons. Some people thought the ballot posted at the Highlands precinct showing the number of votes for each candidate when the polls closed, was the final vote. It wasn't.

As people were proclaiming winners based on the ballot posted at the Highlands precinct, the Board of Elections was posting the Early Voting numbers on its website.

Though according to Chief Judge of the Highlands Voting Precinct, Jody Zoellner posting the

Early Voting results first is not unusual, it further confused the issue already brewing in Highlands because those numbers didn't match the Highlands precinct posting.

Obviously, the Board of Elections' initial posting wasn't complete because the Highlands precinct numbers had not been included.

However, by 9 p.m. the correct count was posted on the Board of Elections website, ending the confusion.

Zoellner, who has worked the polls for 15 years, said posting the Highlands precinct tally has been done for years, and it has never represented the final count.

However, she said due to the confusion this year, posting Highlands precinct totals prior to the

• See **ELECTION** page 7

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HCA's for profit status saved H-C Hospital

By Brittney Lofthouse

One of the biggest challenges plaguing rural America is the limited access to affordable, quality healthcare. Retention and recruit-

ment of doctors is virtually nonexistent and for residents in rural America to see a specialist of any kind, they often find themselves

• See **H-C HOSPITAL** page 7

100 years old and counting!



Friends and family gathered at First Baptist Church, Highlands to honor their own Pearl Lambert on her 100th birthday the evening of Wednesday, Nov. 13. There was a meal, cake and flowers for Pearl.

– Photo by Sheri Gibson.

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Issues to be wrapped up tonight

Tonight's town board meeting is kind of a wrap-up meeting here at the end of the year. At the December meeting newly elected Town Board members will be sworn in, and new business will be initiated.

The meeting tonight will begin at 7 pm at the Highlands Community Building. Several agenda items that have been in development for several months will be presented.

First on the agenda is a presentation by Cassie Wilson of Martin Starnes & Associates. She will present to the board the annual Auditors Report for FY 2018/19. Each year this accounting firm does an audit of all town finances. The audit takes several months to complete. Tonight's presentation highlights the findings of their report. Their audit has also been reviewed by the North Carolina Local Government Commission.

Rose Bauguess of the Southwestern Commission will also give an update on the Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Michael Mathis, our



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

assistant planner, and I have been attending meetings in the past months as this plan has been developed.

The board will also review a final subdivision plat and review procedures for the sale of the old water tank property on Satulah. Since the new water tank is currently in operation, the town has no need to retain this property. Our Town Manager, Josh Ward, will also present proposed revisions to the Highlands Employee Personnel Manual. The revisions have been in committee development for quite some time and now require board approval.

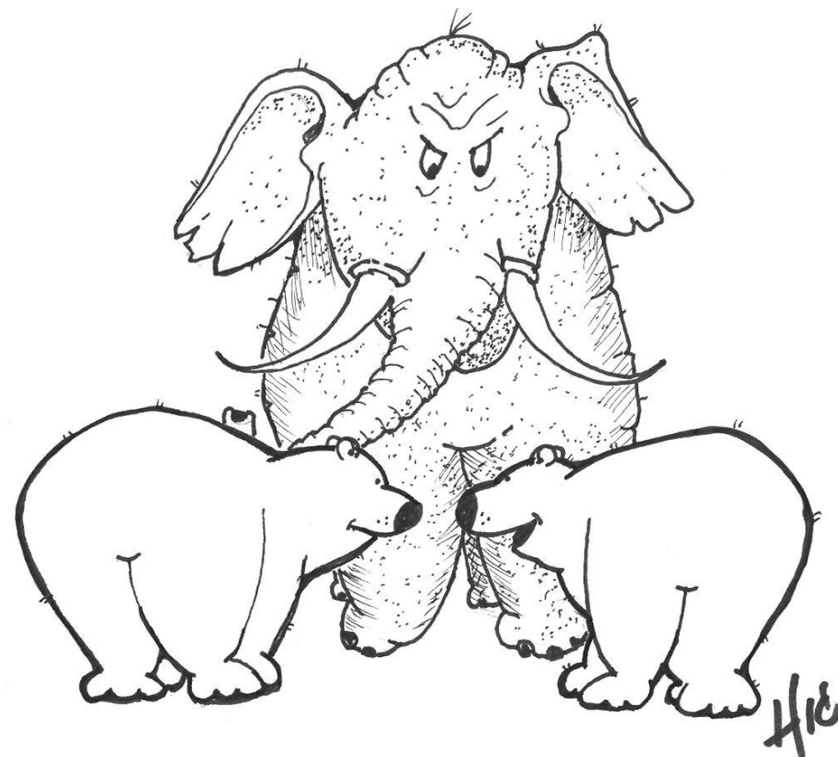
On the agenda is a presentation by Fire & Rescue Chief Ryan Gearhart for the preliminary plans of the new fire station facility. The public safety committee, the chief, staff and members of the fire department have all worked together to develop this initial design. Randy Baker of Pinnacle Architecture will be at the presentation to answer questions. Pinnacle Architecture specializes in designing municipal fire stations.

The next step will be for the board to give the go ahead to move to the final design phase. The planning board will also conduct a review during this phase. The goal is to have the project ready for bid as soon as possible. After the bidding process is complete, the Local Government Commission will weigh in and give its approval before loan financing and construction can get underway. At some point in the spring the actual construction could begin.

In a related matter, soil borings were recently completed on the site of the new fire station. The good news is that no significant rock formations were discovered. The caveat is that hidden rock on a Highlands construction site can always magically appear as work begins. We will keep our fingers crossed.

I also want to thank the Highlands Chamber of Commerce for presenting the Town of Highlands the Del Roberts Award at the recent Autumn Ovation Ceremony. The town was recognized for its support of all the community initiatives and events that are sponsored by the Highlands Chamber. The town and I look forward to an ongoing partnership with the Highlands Chamber.

• HIC'S VIEW •



"Well. I think we have discovered an exception to the rule, don't run."

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• LETTERS •

Election story was wrong




Dear Editor,

In the front-page article of the Highlands Newspaper, dated Thursday, No-

vember 7, 2019, several statements reported were not accurate. As the Chief

• See LETTERS page 19

• WEATHER •

Fri, 22-Nov	Sat, 23-Nov	Sun, 24-Nov
		
57°F 47°F	55°F 31°F	49°F 24°F
A brief shower or two	Periods of rain	Sunshine and patchy clouds
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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.



We couldn't wait to wish you a

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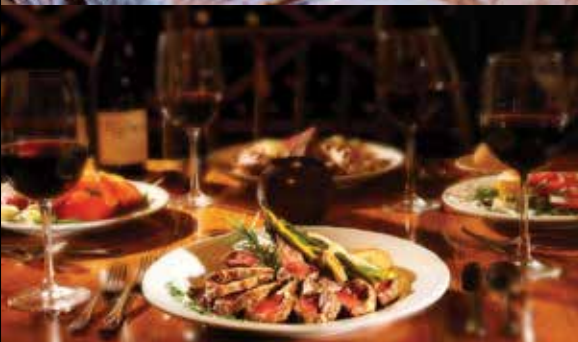
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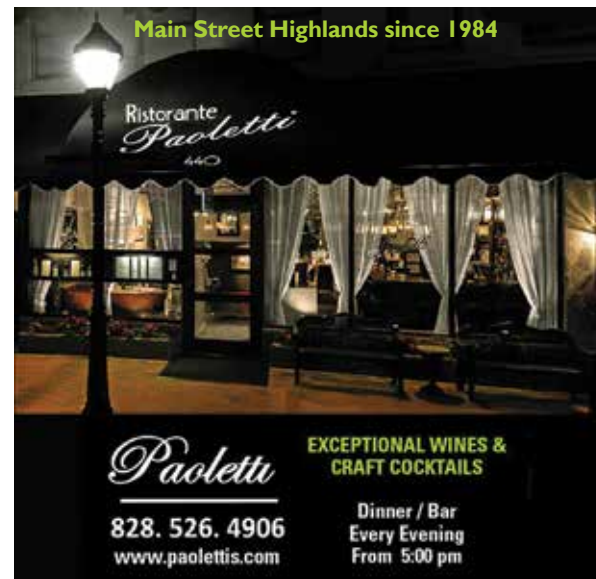
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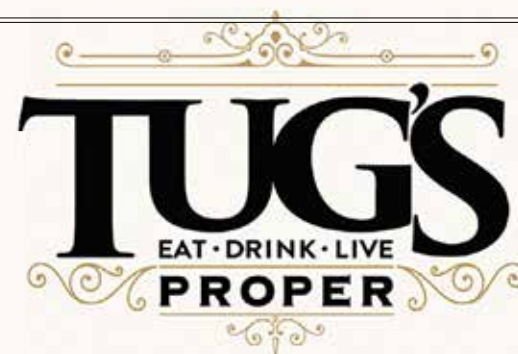


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MLS# 92452 | Offered for \$995,000



PRICE CHANGE: Move to the country in beautiful Scaly Mountain! Per-fect three bedroom, two-and-a-half bath home with a lot of privacy, one car garage with a work shop, a one-car carport, and a large back deck to watch and enjoy the sounds of nature. Gas logs in living room. Located on 1.15 near level acres on the Atlanta side of Highlands, yet close to town. Would make a great starter home or rental property.

MLS# 92106 | Was \$199,000 NOW Offered for \$189,000!

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MLS# 90504 | Offered for \$1,225,000



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...LETTER continued from page 2

Judge of the Highlands Voting Precinct, I would like to address these statements and my concern that a well-read and published newspaper from Highlands made these statements.

Statement #1: The headline states: "2019 Town Board Winners". Two of the candidate's total votes are so close – it is unprofessional to announce a "winner." In the same article the headline is later contradicted by stating: "the final count won't be complete until the canvass is completed November 15." Anyone taking a look at the headlines – then the three candidates' pictures – can only think that they are the official winners of the election.

Statement #2: "After the polls closed Tuesday night, there were three versions of the outcome – two of which were wrong."

There were not three versions of the "outcome" of the election. The post of the election day total on a yellow sample ballot outside of the Highlands polling place was an unofficial total of election day votes only.

I have worked the polls for 15 years and it has always been customary to post these results but it is not intended to determine a winner. This is not a complete count and not official. As the polls are closing, at the Macon County Board of

Elections office, the board is compiling the results of the One Stop votes. Since I must hand carry to Franklin my ballots, total tapes and card to the election board office, the One Stop Totals would have been posted separate soon after the polls were closed. These two counts are combined by the board and posted sometime later and my guess would be after 9pm. On election day no count is complete.

The complete count is made 10 days after the election after all absentee and provisional ballots are in and counted. For everyone's knowledge, the Macon County Board of Election has a live stream on their web site on election night with election counts as they are available.

As a poll worker for many years in Highlands, I, along with my co-poll workers, make every effort to avoid confusions and distrust of the voting process in our beautiful town. I feel that the front-page article casts doubt about the validity of the voting system in Highlands. I regret the confusion and misunderstanding that has resulted from this newspaper article.

I realize that getting the news to the public is an awesome job, however, I also feel that it is an awesome responsibility to be accurate in the presentation.

Jodie Zoellner
Highlands

...ELECTION continued from page 1

final count from the Board of Elections, will not happen again.

So, in the end, the total for all candidates except McCall and Rogers increased after the canvass.

Brian Stiehler got 185 votes; Marc Hehn, 136; John Dotson, 135; Eric Pier-son, 132; Hank Ross, 127; Nick McCall retained his 85 as did Michael David Rogers at 58.

On another note, Thibault and Zoellner reiterated the importance of people updating their voter registration so the rolls are accurate when it comes time to vote.



According to Thibault, the Board of Elections does not and cannot act as a private investigator and the only way the rolls can be kept up to date is if voters notify the board and change their address.


...H-C HOSPITAL continued from page 1

driving more than an hour away. When HCA purchased Mission Health Systems earlier this year, which includes Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, there was uncertainty as to what the merger would look like and if and how it would impact healthcare locally.

As it turns out, the buy-out by HCA is now poised to save local residents millions of dollars and protect what few medical options the Highlands community has. Over the next few weeks, if Congress doesn't vote

• See H-C HOSPITAL page 10



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•WORD MATTER•

Stuff

There's nothing quite so eye-opening as helping someone move, especially when that someone is downsizing.

We recently helped relocate a loved one from his 1,500 sq. ft. home for the past 17 years into a 600 sq. ft., one-bedroom apartment. We employed movers to handle the heavy lifting but we did the packing and we shuttled

over the delicate items, technology, electronics and valuables.

What came into sharp focus was the amount and type of stuff we tend to accumulate over time. I believe many of us have experienced this eye-opener, and have had conversations such as this:

"Where did all of this – stuff – come from?"

"Gosh, I'd forgotten we even had this."

"Honey, what is this?"

Now, I understand family photos, heirlooms, books, music, keepsakes, hand-me-downs, etc. I understand the essentials of day-to-day living. But ...

"You know, honey, I didn't realize we had six sets of dishes!"

"Are you going to take ALL those books with you? Why not take just the books you haven't read?"

People clean out and downsize anywhere from regularly to never, but for reasons both personal and individual, we seem to hold onto stuff for much longer than we need to.

Many folks I know, and you probably do as well, turn their garages into storage rooms for stuff and leave their automobiles outside. Sorry, I don't get that. More than a few pay to maintain storage lockers, just for extra stuff. Seriously.

Why do we keep so much stuff? Is this an American



Bud Katz

thing or a human thing? Do we believe that after years, perhaps decades, we are going to begin playing Yahtzee or some other board game again? Are we going to start shooting hoops, hitting tennis balls, or blending Margaritas again?

Okay. Time out. Margaritas? Maybe we should hang onto that vintage blender, if it still works. For a while.

Earlier this year, as we do almost every year, we went through our closets. I rediscovered shirts, shorts, and shoes I hadn't worn for a very long time. I had no clue where these things were hiding. We took a carload of stuff to a consignment store, not in hopes of reaping a windfall but to make space to accommodate stuff acquired in the current century that we might wear now that we know we have it.

The flip side of that particular purge revealed an embarrassment of empty hangers hanging in the closet. Careful, dude. Don't let the tail wag the dog. You do not have to buy more clothes just because you have empty hangers.

Every now and then I make the foolish mistake of gazing around a room or into a closet. (Note to self: invent transparent closet doors! Make a ton of money and know what's really going on inside.)

Why do I do that? What do I hope to accomplish? I can hear the conversation now...

"Hey, honey, instead of binging on Netflix tonight, how's about we clean out ..."

"Sorry, babe, I can't hear you. I'm rearranging the pantry. Did you know we had 76 cans of soup, beans, tuna, fruit and veggies left over from that provisioning we did last winter when we thought we might get snowed in and not be able to get to Bryson's or Ingles?"

Sigh.

Perhaps the questions aren't verbalized, but we ask them, mostly of ourselves, throughout this process. Why did I buy this? Why did I hold onto this, even after hiding it in a closet? What is this?

"Wow, honey, remember these cool aluminum-foil, waxed paper and Saran Wrap dispensers? Didn't we buy these for Dad?"

"Oh, yeah, I do remember. You know, maybe we should take them home and ..."

"Nope! No! Not gonna happen. Do not even think about it!"

We live in a consumer society, and that consumption fuels our economy, but at the end of a day of packing and delivering, discarding and donating, and dispersing among family members, a question must be asked: do we really own all the stuff we have, or does it own us?

As we were helping our loved one move, I wondered about the burgeoning secondary market for salt and pepper shakers, mixing bowls, measuring cups and spoons, plastic drinking glasses and pots and pans. This speaks to the existence of consignment and second-hand stores, flea markets, and non-profit donation businesses such as Goodwill, or on the local level, Fibber's and Mountain Findings. Keep in mind, their survival depends on our purchases.



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Would you retire to France?

I pondered that question when I read a Wall Street Journal article about a couple who did just that. My husband and I are both retired, and I know without asking that his answer would be a resounding "No."

I, on the other hand, occasionally daydream about the possibility—if not of retiring there, at least of spending several months. Years ago, before our first trip to France, I read another WSJ article about living in Dijon, France and learning French at the University of Burgundy. The writer had enrolled in a French-language immersion program and had enjoyed living and studying in that city for several months.

Our bike and barge trip started in Dijon, and it was a picturesque and walkable city. The fact that it was situated on the Burgundy Canal added to its appeal. Of course, I was still working back then so it was a pipe dream for sure.

Several years later, we returned to France to bicycle Normandy with friends. My girlfriend had spent lots of time in Paris, and our time there on either end of the Normandy trip was especially enjoyable because she was familiar with the city. A discussion of taking a two-week French immersion class ensued, and we emailed back and forth about it for a few months when we returned to the States.

We pictured ourselves spending two weeks learning French and then being joined by our husbands for a week of bicycling or driving the countryside. Her husband suggested Quebec would be a more economical choice. Spoilsport! Neither trip has come to fruition, but you never know.

My daydreaming began anew in 2017, when my husband and I took a Viking River Cruise in the south of France, topped off by a visit with a high school girlfriend who really did retire to France. She and her husband purchased a cottage in the charming village of Mirmande with the intention of spending part of each year there. Time



Kathy Manos Penn

passed, and they wound up moving to France full time. They have a condo in Nice where they spend the winter months, and when it warms up, they return to their storybook stone cottage in Provence.

For us, the logistics seem a bit daunting plus my husband has never been quite as enamored of France as I have. Still, when the next WSJ article appeared, I was intrigued. This time, a couple had retired to Car-

cassonne, a medieval city in the South of France. They found the housing affordable, the weather mild, and the scenery amazing.

Imagine walking to the Farmer's Market several times a week or taking a two-minute stroll to your choice of restaurants. Imagine a twenty-minute bus ride to the local airport with flights to England, Ireland, Portugal, and Belgium.

The practical side of me was interested in health coverage. This couple is paying approximately \$1,500 annually for coverage under France's National Health Insurance Plan which pays 70% of prescription costs and doctor and hospital bills. Having just incurred significant medical expenses for my husband's heart surgery, all of which was covered by Medicare and our Medicare Supplement, I'm not sure the 70% coverage would work out all that well for us.

Perhaps I need to stick to dreaming of a month-long vacation, maybe two months. I see us renting a stone cottage in a small village, bicycling to town for coffee, and venturing out by train or car to other locales. I think of visiting villages in Brittany and taking a ferry to the Channel Islands. A girl can dream, can't she?

• *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/KathyManosPenn.Author/.*

...H-C HOSPITAL continued from page 7

to continue funding Charitable Care, rural hospitals across the nation are in jeopardy of losing millions of dollars in funding. Had HCA not bought the not-for-profit health system Mission Health, and transitioned it to the for-profit company, HCA, Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, as well as Angel Medical Center, could have been facing a complete shutdown due to the elimination of funding.

But now, as part of the for-profit network, the potential funding decreases in Congress won't impact Highlands-Cashiers Hospital at all.

"Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is committed to the care of every individual in the community regardless of their ability to pay and as part of HCA Healthcare, has a gen-

• See H-C HOSPITAL page 14

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•HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS•

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- 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 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 rais-

ing 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 Alilio 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 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

•BIZ/ORG NEWS•

BBBS spend a day with llamas



On Saturday, Nov. 9, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Highlands and Cashiers plans annual group outings for Bigs, Littles, and their families. On November 9, BBBS partnered with Mark English, of Llama Caddy for another Llama Hike at Camp Merri Woode in Cashiers. Llama hikes are a great way for Bigs and Littles to share time together and for building confidence in young people. No Llama hike would be complete without a llama race! Participants get to run with their Llama in a little friendly competition. BBBS provided lunch for the group following the hike.

– By Big Brother Billy Love



• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

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.

Fri., thru Nov. 22

- Families with young children ages 3-5, are invited to join the Highlands Nature Center's Education Specialist, Paige Engelbrektsson, every Friday morning 10-11a as she combines stories, walks, and activities for their little ones. Different topic each week. Adults must accompany their children. The suggested age for children is 3 to 5 years old. Families who wish to participate in this free outdoor educational program should be prepared to go outside rain or shine. It's free. No registration is necessary. Meet at the Highlands Nature Center, 930 Horse Cove Road. For more information, call (828) 526-2623.

First Fridays

- The Bascom at Sotheby's series features different artists each month

with a reception the first Friday of every month at Highlands Sotheby's International Realty from 4-5:30p at the corner of Main Street and Highway 64 across from The Old Edwards Inn. The public is invited to come meet the artist, view the exhibit and have some wine.

- At the Rec Park Pool. Movie Float-in Night - all ages Pool opens at 6:30p and movie starts at 7 p.m. Call for title and prices. 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.

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

- Free music in the K-H Founders Park on Pine Street 6-8 p.m.

Sundays

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

Thurs., Nov. 21

- A free coffee/meeting at 10:30 a.m. at Hudson Library to meet candidate Dr. Conway who is running for NC Senate District 50. Free and open to the public.

Fri., Nov. 22

- Booksigning at Hudson Library with author Martha Porter of "Advent in the Real World," at 11 a.m. Refreshments will be offered.

Sat., Nov. 23

- At PAC, Akhnaten at 12:55 p.m. Pre Opera Discussion at 12:40p. Run time is 4 hours.

Tues.- Fri., Nov. 26-29

- At the Spa at Old Edwards Inn, Le Grande Jewelry Trunk Show. Nov. 26 & 27, 11 to 5p; Nov. 28, 10a to 1p; Nov. 29, 10a to 2p. For more information, call 828-526-9887.

Tues., Nov. 26

- Booksigning at Hudson Library with Cassandra King Conroy's "Tell

me a Story," at 12:30 p.m. Lunch bites will be offered.

- Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Tuesday, at 6pm at Rec Park. All are invited.

Fri. & Sat., Nov. 29-30

- The 32nd Annual 'Hard Candy Christmas "Arts and Crafts Show" Mountain Christmas Tradition is coming the Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving, Nov. 29-30. Hours are 10-5 each day. The Western Carolina University Ramsey Center in Cullowhee, NC is the location and features original art and crafts at great prices. 100 local and regional artisans will be selling their handwork.

Sat., Nov. 30

- Annual Town Lighting in K-H Founders Park on Pine Street at 6 p.m. with Silly Ridge Roundup performing. Cookies, hot chocolate and glow stick

necklaces will be given out.

- Santa in K-H Park on Pine Street 7-9 p.m.

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

Live via satellite MET Opera Akhnaten at PAC, Sat., Nov. 23



The Highlands Performing Arts Center will present the MET Opera's production of Akhnaten by Phillip Glass. Countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo headlines American composer Philip Glass's transcendent contemporary creation, with Karen Kamensek conducting. Phelim McDermott's stunning production employs a virtuosic company of acrobats and jugglers to conjure a mystical reimagining of ancient Egypt. Beginning with burial of one Pharaoh and the young son becoming the new Pharaoh with new ideas that radically transformed ancient Egyptian society. And the chaos that follows. Tickets are available online: www.highlandspac.org or www.highlandspacperformingarts.com or at the door. Highlands Performing Arts Center, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands, NC



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• HS SPORTS •

with Kedra McCall

Basketball is in full swing

This week middle school basketball played against Summit Charter School. Both the boys and the girls won pulled out a win. Both of their seasons are off to strong starts, yet still have room for growth. Their next home game will be today, November 21st against Cullohee Valley. The girls will start at 4 pm and the boys will follow.

High School basketball played in multiple preseason scrimmages to prepare for their season. They played their first regular season game against Tallulah Falls. The JV boys and Varsity boys were unable to finish with a win. Varsity girls finished out the game with



Varsity boys.

Both high school and middle school cheerleaders have been cheering at basketball games and will also have their first competition this weekend. They will compete in Greensboro, with a set time of 5:18 pm.

Come support all of your Highlanders as their new seasons begin!

a win. JV girls did not play due to Tallulah Falls not having a team. Their next home game will be on Friday, November 22nd. Again, JV girls will not play due to Rosman not having a team. JV boys will start at 5 pm followed by Varsity girls, then

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...H-C HOSPITAL from page 10

erous charity care policy and that policy will not be changing," said Nancy Lindell, Public Relations Manager for Mission Health.

Congress first authorized money to help hospitals defray the costs of caring for patients who couldn't afford to pay in 1981. According to a July report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments in 2014 covered more than half of uncompensated care costs for the hospitals receiving the money. DSH payments in 2014 were \$18.2 billion.

By 2019, the total DSH allotment was \$22 billion, 57% of which came from the federal government; the rest came from state governments.

As part of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in 2010, the goal was to extend health care coverage to tens of millions of Americans through Medicaid expansion and affordable commercial health insurance — which would theoretically mean less hospital spending for charitable care. As part of the ACA, charitable care allocations decreased beginning in 2014.

The problem came in 2012 when the original law was amend-

ed to allow states to opt out of Medicaid expansion, which North Carolina elected to do. Further, Congress also eliminated the requirement for everyone to enroll in insurance. Those two amendments combined, didn't address the charitable care decreases, which would no longer be financially practical.

While Congress has voted four times to delay the cuts, the last vote only authorized funding to continue until today, November 21. Without a vote, rural hospital across the country, especially those in states like North Carolina which did not expand Medicaid, could close their doors.

While the HCA merger has spared Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, next door in Jackson County Harris Regional Hospital is bracing for the uncertainty and the very real possibility of severe implications due to the lack of action by Congress.

Congressman Mark Meadows said his office is aware of the financial implications his district is facing if Congress doesn't act and he has been working with his colleagues in the House Energy and Commerce Committee to find a solution.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Gordon Center children lift hearts with song

Recently, children from the Gordon Center Afterschool program made a trip to the Eckerd Living Center to bring a little sunshine to the residents. To the delight of the residents, they sang three silly songs.

• FINANCIAL MATTERS •

Dealing financially with life's 'crossover' episodes

My last column on the new SECURE Act was quite detailed and a little “wonky” so I thought I’d write something less academic that was brought about by a recent event and has had a profound effect on me and my career.

Last December I experienced the most unexpected and disruptive event of my professional life which caused extreme stress to both my practice, my family and has changed me forever.

But they say every cloud has a silver lining, and once the dust began to settle, the abundance of time gave me the mental space I needed to consider many things, including my place in the financial planning profession along with how and where I wanted to practice for the next decade.

It also allowed me to think differently about financial planning, creating a new framework if you will, and out of this came the concept of crossover points.

The word crossover is defined as: cross·o·ver noun /krôz ôvər/ 1. a point or place of crossing from one side to the other.

As such, in the context of financial planning, Crossover Points are:

“Points in time when a significant life event occurs, resulting in a substantial financial impact on our lives.”

Based on this definition, last December I passed a crossover point in my life. Frankly, it felt more like a kidney stone.

Some may refer to these as “inflection points,” “transitions in life” a “new season” or a “change in direction.” Whatever you call them, planning for them can be exciting (when you’re on track) and terrifying (when you’re not on track), and not planning for them can be a disaster.

Crossover points are not necessarily the same as the proverbial “goals and dreams” my industry often promotes.



Michael P Henderson, CFP®
Certified Financial Planner™

Goals and dreams have their place in our financial plans, but they are aspirational in nature. Crossover points can be expected or unexpected, positive or negative, but generally are more certain, making their financial impact sometimes inevitable and potentially more disruptive.

Take death for example (or as I would refer to it; your final crossover). It is both inevitable and uncertain. It’s going to happen to all of us, but if it doesn’t hap-

pen when we expect (or we think it should happen), it can create massive amounts of uncertainty and disruption. And whether at the end of a long life, or prematurely, the financial impact can be significant, or minimized through proper planning.

By far, the most anticipated crossover point is when we cross over from working to not working (retirement). Becoming financially independent provides the freedom to control life’s most precious commodity, our time.

Whether it’s waking up every day and doing something we love, travel and leisure, time for family, being able to provide an education for someone we love, helping our parents, or supporting our favorite causes - these are the positive reasons we save and invest.

So far, I’ve been able to identify twenty-two different crossover points. Some are completely unrelated to each other; many are intertwined and inseparable. But in this column over the next few weeks and months, I’m going to go deeper into a few of them to help you better prepare for your next Crossover Point.

• *Investment advice and financial planning services offered through Crossover Point Advisors, an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. The opinions expressed in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual*

Enter Highlands Christmas Parade now!

Highlands Chamber of Commerce is accepting applications for this year’s Olde Mountain Christmas Parade. The parade is on Saturday, December 7 at 11:00 a.m. on Main Street in Highlands. Entry forms are available at the Chamber office at 108 Main Street or can be requested by email at visitor@highlandschamber.org or by phone at 828-526-2112.

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Highlands Hurricanes swim team competes at Banjo Bear Invitational

By Kristy McCall

Recently, members of the Highlands Hurricanes swim team competed in the first annual Banjo Bear Invitational held at Buncombe County Schools Aquatic Center. Approx. 400 swimmers from 10 teams attended this two-day meet.

Coach Jordan Kenter said that overall the Hurricanes performed well.

"We look at this meet from an individual perspective since it wasn't scored as a team meet, and virtually all of our swimmers had at least one best time, several had multiple best times, and several dropped a ton of time," said Kenter. "I think it was very successful overall. The level of competition at this meet was very good, and with the meet being structured by only two age groups (12 and under and 13 and over) it allowed for greater competition in each and every race."

Kenter said the Hurricanes had several great swims during this two-day meet.

"Mark Gross had an excellent meet and stood out to me," he said. "Also, Blake [Kenter] legally completed his first ever 100-yard IM, 50-yard breaststroke, and 200-yard freestyle. Those are just two examples that come to mind, but there were a bunch of great swims from everyone who participated."

Kenter added that being part of this Plateau-based team has been rewarding.

"HHST has been so rewarding for me personally and for our family as a whole," said Kenter. "Personally, I love coaching, and I love working with these kids and helping them to improve and have fun doing it. As a family, the pool deck is our home away from home, and we really love it. Most of all, I get enjoyment from watching my kids and the kids I coach have fun in the water, learn how to be a part of a team, and learn how to push themselves to improve. With the team being all ages from 4 up to 18, our younger swimmers have some great role models to look up to, which is very comforting as a parent."



Hurricanes Coach Steve Hott guides the team at the Banjo Bear Invitational. — Photos by Kristy McCall

HHST Head Coach Steve Hott said the Hurricanes came out and swam their best.

"Overall, HHST did very well at the Banjo Bear Invitational," said Hott. "We had many personal records (PRs) set. It was the largest meet some of our swimmers had ever been to, which can be intimidating. But between the coaching staff and the more experienced swimmers, I think those swimmers' inexperience was mitigated. That was one of the purposes of us going to a relatively large two-day meet, to give experience to some of the newer swimmers."

Hott made note of numerous Hurricane achievements during the two-day meet. Chase Kenter won 9 events, Conner Hughes and Aniah McKim each scored two 1sts one 2nd and two 3rd-place finishes. Vivian Kennedy, Blake Kenter, Justin Powell and Timmy McDowell all had PR's in the 100-yard freestyle with marked drops in time. Kennedy dropped 6 seconds, Kenter dropped 12 seconds, Powell dropped 13 seconds, and McDowell dropped 7 seconds. Peyton Kaylor dropped 15 seconds off of his PR in the 100-yard breaststroke. Elias McKim finished 2nd in the 500-yard freestyle. Zander Coward, a relatively new swimmer, swam several difficult

events for his first time in a meet. Coach Hott said Coward did well in all of them. The boys 200-yard free relay and 200-yard medley relay of Conner Hughes, Aniah McKim, Mark Gross and Chase Kenter bested the rest of the field and won with times of 2:06.77 and 2:27.88 respectively.

"In addition to everyone doing well," said Hott. "Special kudos should be given to Chase Kenter and Conner Hughes who dropped 17 and 13 seconds respectively in the 200-yard Butterfly (perhaps the most difficult event in age group swimming). Timmy McDowell perhaps had the best meet of all of the Hurricanes. He also dropped 10 seconds off of his career best 50-yard breaststroke, 18 seconds off of his 100-yard backstroke, and 8 seconds off of his 50-yard butterfly."

HHST swimmers will likely compete at Clemson in January, North Carolina State Championships in February (Chase Kenter will participate), Tarheel States in March, and a home meet in April to wrap up the winter season.

The Hurricanes hosted the Highlands Fall Invitational on Nov. 16, stay tuned to Plateau Daily News for the results of that meet.

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Maintaining & updating a home pays off when it comes time to sell

By Lynn Kimball
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services
Meadows Mountain Realty

Home maintenance is truly protecting your investment. Additionally, routine upkeep makes a home easier to stage when the decision has been made to sell. Taking care of your home keeps your finger on the pulse of its condition.

Keep documentation of home maintenance. Whether you replace a water heater, buy a new washing machine, or install an addition to your home, keep all records, warranties, and purchase receipts. Paperwork may prove helpful during the contingency process while under contract. Additionally, receipts and paperwork can be helpful for a new homeowner down the line.

Routine home maintenance examples include annual inspections of the HVAC system, clearing the gutters of debris, aerating the lawn, and inspecting the roof are among maintenance and system checks that homeowners conduct on an annual basis. Additionally, a home inspection every five to ten years enables a homeowner to really know the condition of a home. Other items to keep on top of include cleaning ducts and making sure carbon monoxide and smoke detectors are operational.

A dark home holds no appeal! Natural light and artificial light brighten up spaces. Dated light fixtures work well in a historic home or one decorated with antiques where the lighting balances the furnishings. However, lighting has come a long way and modern fixtures pack a punch. Similarly, light bulbs used throughout a home should have the same hue, whether this is bright white or a golden glow.

Lighting is an easy upgrade to make when selling a home. Like changing drawer and cabinet pulls and knobs, lighting offers and instant upgrade. Lighting matters in a home and older light fixtures can be swapped out for modern counterparts to add a more updated look. If you are preparing a home for sale, consider taking a close look at easy updates that will add appeal.

Updates can add value to a home. Small improvements can certainly pack a punch when it comes to adding value to a home. From curb appeal to staging, making an effort can easily set one home apart. Buyers often have a number of homes to choose from and unique touches may make the difference!

• Lynn Kimball has over 45 years of real estate experience, with over 35 years serving the Highlands Cashiers area. She has gained Emeritus Status

with the National Association of Realtors and previously served as a Director and Vice President for the Highlands Cashiers Board of Realtors. Whether you are interested in searching properties or comprehensive information about our area, you are invited to visit her user friendly website at www.signatureproperties-nc.com. Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices BHHS Meadows

Mountain Realty has three locations: 488 Main Street in Highlands, 132 Hwy 107S in Cashiers or visit Lynn at her 2334 Cashiers Road location in Highlands across from Highlands Falls Country Club. Lynn Kimball may be reached at 828-421-8193 or by email at Lynn@bbhsmmr.com

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



Thank god for nothing – A Thanksgiving thought

Archbishop
John S. Erbelding

Of all the magazines we get at our home, one is read cover to cover. It's called Real Simple. It covers everything from food to decorating to lifestyles, and as the name implies, it tries to make it simple. The recipes are not out of Julia Child's French cookbook, The Joy of Cooking, but more like the five ingredient ones off a can of Campbell's Soup. Comfort foods, like a cup of hot chocolate you can wrap your hands around on a cold, rainy day.

It was in my October issue of Real Simple a few years ago that I found a monthly section called "Life Lessons" and a one paragraph article called, "Embrace Sloth" by Erica Jong. Its brevity lets me share it with you:

"Americans aren't good at taking vacations, it says. It goes against our Protestant work ethic to give ourselves unstructured time. We think that if we're not working, we're being lazy. But continuous exertion impedes our creativity; it's very important to have idle days. When every segment of our time is booked – when we go deadline to deadline to deadline – we don't dream, we don't play, and we don't think of new projects (or worse, we don't think). I know, because I've struggled with this my whole life. But I've realized that there's incredible pleasure and possibility in deciding to veg out and do nothing for a change."

Well said, Erica!

I am a pathological type A personality and born under the zodiac sign of Aries which just compounds the problem.

My mother's favorite saying was, "Idle hands are the devil's work things." So I come by it honestly.

But one beautiful early Wednesday afternoon a few weeks ago, I tried to put myself into rehabilitation. I tried to do nothing, a new word to my vocabulary. I sat in a comfortable recliner on our west-facing deck, with a long mountain view, and proceeded to do nothing. Or, so I thought. It was a most difficult attempt, but after a few minutes of mental, restrictive, self-conversation, I began to succeed at nothing.

No I-phone, no telephone, just God, me, and quiet.

It was astounding. It was the most spiritual worship I have ever enjoyed.

I don't know how long I had been doing it, but I watched a large bird play in the thermal drafts on the mountain, its wings hardly moving. He was lifted by the hand of an unseen God. He was an image of pure joy.

I watched as clouds joined and separated over the expanse of the skyline as if by the kneading hands of a greater force than we can know.

A single deer trotted into our property, ate the deer corn I had left for him and went down into our lower field. I was transfixed by how his ears twitched with every small sound and wondered why I had not known that before.

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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

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

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

Wednesdays – Supper at 6 p.m.

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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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Holy Eucharist Rite II. Childcare available at 10:30

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828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

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

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526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Worship 8:30a 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.

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Randy Reed, Pastor 828-421-9172 • 165 S. Sixth Street

Sundays: Worship: 11

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Pastor Dan Robinson

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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

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Highlands Chamber of Commerce hosts Annual Fall Festival, Autumn Ovation

Every November, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce celebrates the successes of our business community with their Annual Autumn Ovation.

This year, Chamber Executive Director Kay McKan welcomed Chamber members and introduced and thanked Chamber Board members who had served during the year.

A special part of the event is the presentation of three prestigious awards which are given to individuals and businesses, acknowledging their significant contributions to Highlands.

This year's event was hosted by Old Edwards at their new Woodfire Bistro + Bar, Four65.

The 2019 award recipients were:

Robert B. Dupree – "Outstanding

Community Service." Presenting: Chamber Board Chair Hilary Wilkes. Recipient: Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Accepting: Stephanie Edwards, Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Board Chair

Duke Power – "Volunteer of the Year." Representing Duke Energy and to speak on this award: Gerald Parks, Duke Energy Construction and Maintenance Supervisor for Macon County. Presenting: Mary Adair Trumbly, Chamber Board Vice Chair. Recipient: Steve Mehder

Del Roberts – "Outstanding Business/Organization." Given in memory of Del, local businessman and for his volunteer service to the Chamber. Presenting: John Woods, Chamber Board Member. Recipient: The Town of Highlands. Accepting: Mayor Pat Taylor and Town Manager Josh Ward.



Robert B. Dupree – "Outstanding Community Service." Presenting: Chamber Board Chair Hilary Wilkes. Recipient: Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation. Accepting: Stephanie Edwards, Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Board Chair



Duke Power – "Volunteer of the Year." Representing Duke Energy and to speak on this award: Gerald Parks, Duke Energy Construction and Maintenance Supervisor for Macon County. Presenting: Mary Adair Trumbly, Chamber Board Vice Chair. Recipient: Steve Mehder



Del Roberts – "Outstanding Business/Organization." Given in memory of Del, local businessman and for his volunteer service to the Chamber. Presenting: John Woods, Chamber Board Member. Recipient: The Town of Highlands. Accepting: Mayor Pat Taylor and Town Manager Josh Ward.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from 18

I closed my eyes and tried to see what Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, saw that made her music so special.

I heard acorns fall and the rustle of a squirrel in some early fallen leaves. There was the distant call of a deer and crows in a neighboring field in animated conversation.

A breeze blew and for the first time I was aware, with closed eyes, that God wears a cologne of cut grass and wood smoke mixed with some late blooming flowers, but it is God's smell, and it lets us know God is always near, but we can miss God's presence by our busy-ness.

I opened my eyes. I was struck by a new beauty in a scene I have viewed for years.

The sky was a blue no painter's palette could create.

The clouds were whiter, the trees in autumn's array of color, and sounds of nature more like background music for a celestial performance.

And then, amidst all this grandeur, a passage of scripture came to me, a passage I was too busy to relate to, too driven to obey, but it was there as if written by some unseen hand in the clouds, and it changed me, I pray for good, and it simply said, Be still, and know that I am God.

I want to thank God for the nothing He gave me that afternoon, the nothing to do or think about but God.

I enjoyed our afternoon together, and if you have not had a quiet date with God lately, do it. You never know just how long God's been waiting for a chance to do nothing with you. And it may be the best Thanksgiving ever!

From Fire Chief Ryan Gearhart:

Please remember to get your chimney cleaned before using your fireplaces this year.

In addition, if you are closing up and leaving town, please make sure you have a key holder and code the department can access in case of fire alarms while you are away,

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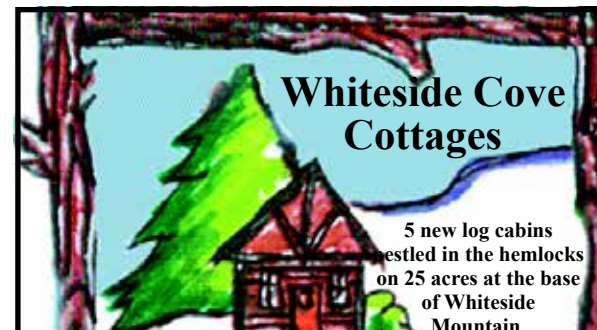
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OLD EDWARDS HOSPITALITY is offering the following positions: Immediate Full-Time On-Site Graphic Design and Layout Professional needed to join marketing department of Old Edwards Hospitality Group in Highlands, North Carolina. At least two years of print layout and design required. Keen eye for design, detail-oriented and proficiency in formatting for scannable content a must. Experience in CRM, email marketing, website updating and/or social media is a plus. Must have high integrity, sense of humor, consistently positive nature, interpersonal skills and work well as part of a close team. Full benefits. Possible subsidized housing. Position is 100% onsite in Highlands, NC, no exceptions. Please provide cover letter, resume and samples. References will be required. Please apply via email to pturnbull@oldedwardsinn.com with a current resume in PDF format, please. (st. 11/21)

FULL-TIME TEMPORARY MARKETING POSITION IN HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA. Old Edwards Hospitality Group is seeking a marketing professional and graphic designer experienced in page layout and ad creation for both print and digital to fill a six-month position between approximately March 1 and September 31, 2020. At least two years of professional layout and design required. This position designs billboards, newspaper and magazine ads, digital ads and more for a high-end luxury brand. Some experience in website updating—or ability to learn—required (content management, not coding). Must have high integrity, sense of humor, consistently positive nature, interpersonal skills and work well as part of a close team. Position is 100% onsite in Highlands, NC, no exceptions. There is a possibility that this position could become permanent. Please provide cover letter, resume and samples. References will be required. Please apply via email to pturnbull@oldedwardsinn.com with a current resume in PDF format, please. (st. 11/21)

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On Monday, Nov. 18, the signage warning truckers not to proceed down The Gorge Road went up in front of 200 Main on Main Street. Sensor-activated lights will blink when an 18-wheeler approaches to warn the driver to proceed down the mountain via NC 106. Mayor Patrick Taylor said the issue of installing cameras has become even more complicated than first envisioned. "I am still working with DOT on what kind of camera system could be installed," he said.

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