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Highlands' Newspaper

FREE

Volume 2, Number 1

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, Jan. 9, 2004

The week of Jan. 9-15

Jan. 10

CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP –

Leave your tree outside near the road and Alan Marsh will come by and pick it up. Call him at 526-5130.

HIKE OFF THOSE POUNDS –

The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 6-7 mile, moderate- to-strenuous hike on the Appalachian Trail from Wayah Crest to Winding Stairs Gap. Call hike leaders Dave and Terry Barr, 369-3800 for more information.

Jan. 11

ACTORS TAKE NOTE –

Auditions for Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest," 3 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street. Five men and 4 women are needed. For more information, call 526-8084 or 743-7757

Jan. 14

The Episcopal Church is having a community supper to hear the Summer Chapel Band, Wednesday at 6 p.m. It's \$5, call 526-2968 for reservations.

AEROBICS ON –

New After-Work Aerobics Class at the Highlands Rec Park with Sandy Trevathan, certified in AFAA and ACE training. Classes are at 5:15 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Call 526-5852.

GIRL SCOUTING –

Daisys, Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts meet 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Highlands United Methodist Church. Come join them.

INK CARTRIDGES –

Highlands School is still collecting used ink cartridges. The staff just sent in 150 and they're ready for more. Please take used ink cartridges to the main office at Highlands School. It means money to the school.

FREE MUSIC –

Every Friday and Saturday night, Cy Timmons sings and plays his guitar at Highlands Wine & Cheese from 7-11 p.m. It's free.

AA MEETINGS –

The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous now meets in the remodeled basement meeting room of the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary. Meeting times remain the same: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wednesdays and Fridays at noon.

Town Board OKs rezoning requests

By Kim Lewicki

Heirs to the Potts estate made rezoning requests of the Town Board several times over years and this time commissioners said "yes" with a 4-1 vote. For owners of the Henry

lot, the answer to their first-time rezoning request was a quick unanimous "yes."

During the public hearing session of the Jan. 7 Town Board meeting, commissioners listened to the

public about rezoning two lots – the Potts' lot on Spruce Street and the Henry lot on Poplar Street.

Several neighbors near the Potts

See REZONING pg 15

Highlands School B-ball still on



Photo by Jim Lewicki

At the Saturday, Jan. 3 home game against Walhalla, Highlands lost 47-65 but they played hard. The next home game is Jan. 9 against Hiwassee Dam.– JVG is at 4 p.m., JVB is 5:15 p.m., Varsity Girls is at 6:30 p.m., and Varsity Boys is at 8 p.m.

Playhouse gets five-year lease

By Kim Lewicki

It took some haggling, but the Town Board voted unanimously to extend the Highlands Playhouse lease – with stipulations.

At Town Attorney Bill Coward's suggestion, the wording of the lease will be "massaged" to reflect the current situation between the Town and

the Playhouse. Mainly, that the Playhouse is the primary tenant and it decides by whom and when the property can be used.

"Over the years, they haven't prohibited anyone from using the facility," said spokesperson Attorney Zeke

Tax review board still in the works

By Kim Lewicki

The Chamber of Commerce's request for a Town Board appointee to an Occupancy Tax Review Board was once again postponed. The issue was first postponed at the Dec. 3 meeting.

"I just think the board they are suggesting is not very good," said Mayor Buck Trott. "Most of the people on this board are Chamber members or members of the Chamber Board."

Suggested review board members are one county commissioner, one Highlands commissioner, one representative from the Highlands Visitor Center, one representative from a lodging member of the chamber, and the chamber executive committee.

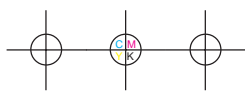
The chamber suggested the review board hold an open meeting each year after the audit is completed. Recommendations for occupancy tax use would be made to and considered by the Chamber's board of directors at its yearly-planning meeting.

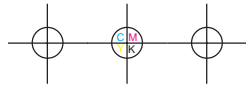
Commissioner Ross said the Chamber had invited the Town to participate in the process, and that it should be set up as the Chamber sees fit. "I'm not sure what business it is of the Town Board to get involved," he said.

But Commissioner Patterson said the Town Board should be involved because right now distribution of the tax money is controlled by people who can't be voted out of office.

At the mayor's suggestion, the board voted to have a work session with the chamber to design a different review board.

See PLAYHOUSE page 12





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• LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR •

The 'Real Santa'

Dear Editor,

Fred Wooldridge's answer to "Tish's" letter in the Dec. 19 issue of Highlands' Newspaper was a classic.

In addition to his far-out sense of humor, he has a hat-full of common sense.

Great letter, Fred.

Bill Burden
Cashiers

Protect pets with bill

Dear Editor,

God forbid that anyone would ever intentionally hurt or harm on of His creatures, but in fact it happens every winter with antifreeze.

We all know that it is deadly - a highly toxic substance - fatal in even small doses. But each year in the U.S., as many as 10,000 of our best friends are poisoned, either accidentally or due to ignorance - as a result of exposure to ethylene glycol. All it takes is a teaspoon for a dog or cat. It causes immediate kidney failure. By the time the symptoms of poisoning appear, the animals are already doomed.

Why do so many animals get into fatal trouble with antifreeze? It has a sweet smell and taste that children, companion animals and wildlife find irresistible.

A simple addition of a bittering agent during manufacturing would make antifreeze and engine coolants unpalatable. This bittering agent - denatonium benzoate - is the world's most bitter substance.

The bittering agent itself is safe, biodegradable and won't harm engines. For only pennies a gallon, it does not harm and will save thousands of lives each year.

Fortunately, there is a bipartisan bill in the House of Representatives - The Antifreeze Safety Act, H.R. 1563 that will require manufacturers to add this bittering agent to their products.

Help your pet by calling or writing your representatives to "support and cosponsor" an "Antifreeze Safety Act" now. H.R. 1563 needs to be passed into law as California and Oregon have already done. Let's join this simple, inexpensive effort to save our loved ones' lives.

The Honorable John Edwards, United States Senate - (202) 225-6401.

The Honorable Elizabeth Dole, United States Senate - (202) 224-6342.

The Honorable Charles H. Taylor, U.S. House of Representatives - (202) 225-6401.

Call them. Remember, they work for us.

Debra Edwards
Cullowhee

LETTER-TO-THE-EDITOR POLICY

We welcome letters from our readers. All letters are subject to editing. We reserve the right to reject letters. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. Letters bearing identification and phone numbers can arrive by post or email. Published letters do not necessarily represent opinions of Highlands' Newspaper. Letter deadline: Monday prior to publication.



• OBITUARIES •

Dr. Doralea R. Harmon

Memorial services for Doralea R. Harmon, MD, age 85, will be held Tuesday January 6, 2004 at 2 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of the Annunciation in Vidalia, Ga. Rev. Ron Southerland officiating. She died Tuesday, December 30, 2003 at the Medical College in Georgia in Augusta of injuries received in an automobile accident.

Dr. Harmon was born in New York, but grew up in Savannah, Ga., and graduated from the University of Georgia. She received a Master's degree, a PhD and an M.D. from the University of Wisconsin and was a member of Sigma Xi, scientific research society and Alpha Omega Alpha, national honor medical society.

She was in private practice in Madison, Wisconsin for nine years and in Highlands and Franklin, North Carolina almost thirty years, retiring in 1989. After working as an on-call physician for a North Carolina psychiatric hospital, she moved to Vidalia in 1992 in order to staff the R.T. Stanley health Center, where she worked until recently. She was currently practicing at the Family Health Center.

She is survived by a sister, Mary Dunbar of Savannah, GA, numerous nieces, nephews and godchildren, and her long-time friend and companion, Ann Houston of Franklin, NC.

A funeral service will be held Friday, January 9 at 2 p.m. at St. Agnes Episcopal Church in Franklin, with Rev. Claude Stewart officiating and she will be interred at the St. John's Cartoogechaye Episcopal Church Cemetery in Franklin, N.C.

Memorials may be sent to a favorite charity or the American Heart Association. The family will receive friends Thursday, from 7-9 p.m. at Bryant Funeral Home.

Victor H. Smith

Victor H. Smith, age 80, died December 22, 2003 in a Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. He was born in Highlands, February 8, 1923. His parents were Harley A. Smith and Edna McKinney Smith. His grandparents were early residents and founders of the Town of Highlands.

Mr. Smith was a Veteran of World War II, and was seriously wounded in France and was awarded the Purple Heart.

He attended Oglethorpe University and was with Rich's Inc. Atlanta for more than thirty years. In 1975 he returned to Highlands where he could garden and be with nature as much as possible.

Surviving are Alfred J. Miller, Highlands; a brother, Wiley H. Smith, Demorest, Ga; four nieces and three nephews.

A remembrance is planned for spring.

Please support Highlands-Cashiers Hospice, PO Box 190, Highlands, NC 28741.

Bryant Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Understanding the immigration law

On January 29, the Highlands Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the law firm of Edwards, Ballard, Bishop, Sturm, Clark and Klein will host a seminar on changes in U.S. immigration laws that can impact local businesses.

The business immigration law

update will be held on Wednesday at the Highlands Conference Center from 9:30 until noon.

Cost of the seminar is \$10 for Chamber members and \$20 for non-members. To register, please call Ruth Buchanan at 526.5841.

Holiday traditions continue



Students at Mrs. Wilma Gordan's Highlands Pre-school enjoyed their annual Christmas party which included a special visit from Santa Claus. Students are: Jake Calloway, Analyse Crook, Emily Crowe, Hunter Cutshaw, Madison Dalton, Wesley Hedden, Ryan Houser, Brian Jenkins, Tucker Johnson, Ryan Karcher, Madison Lloyd, Benjamin Miller, Mykenzi Potts, Alexa Reese, Sarah Rogers, Adam Schiffli, Harrison Shomaker, Bethany Shuler, Christopher Van Horn and Kaitlyn Wolfrey.

Behold the children



Students of the Our Lady of the Mountains Faith Formation program presented their second annual Christmas play. This year's play was titled "Behold the Star" and featured the following students: Juliette & Isabella Lupoli, and Carli Calloway as angels; Ann Marie Crowe as Mary; Robbie Calloway as Joseph; Emily Crowe as a sheep; Mary Katherine as a cow; Jose Feria and Johnny Lupoli as shepherds; Brendan & Bridget Karcher and Sayne Cruz as wisemen; Spencer Nadler as narrator and King Herod; Ezra Herz as Innkeeper; Stephen Karcher as narrator; and Lucy Herz as stage manager.

Photos by Kristen Karcher




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• **LIFE UNDER CONSTRUCTION** •

Preparing your tools for 2004

It's that time of year again. Time to prepare your mind, body, and spirit for some new construction.



Dr. Maryellen Lipinski

Will this year be a time of major renovation, light repair work or just a bit of renewal? Are you going to need a truckload of lumber and a pound of nails? Maybe just a little liquid nails will be required? At any rate, it's probably a good idea to contemplate some renovating.

Whatever the depth of your construction projects, it's probably best to at the very least begin thinking about it and maybe even committing it to a pad and pencil. Yes, I am a bit old fashioned when it comes to writing down goals. I enjoy the actual process of writing them down and then reading them out loud.

If they are a bit lofty, I can begin to tweak them before I commit, always keeping in mind that the best-laid plans might need a bit more designing. It has been said that a goal is not a goal unless it is written down.

Basically, I believe that we make ourselves up as we go along in life, but having some direction is probably a wise idea. We need to allow for enough flexibility for change to have room to grow in different directions because it is important to keep our options

open if reframing is needed.

Maybe we need to sharpen our tools? Maybe we need to purchase new ones? Or just maybe the old tools work just fine. Just give it some thought. That's all I'm asking. I've

discovered that at

times, I am not the sharpest tool in the shed but that's okay by me. I usually am smart enough to know not to strive for perfection.

Ask yourself the following questions to explore some of your options.

1. Have you lost something along the way?
2. What gives you joy in life?
3. What will give you momentum to move forward?

Life does need a bit of designing. Mind, body and spirit all need our time and attention. Simple can be complicated because it takes more thought and planning.

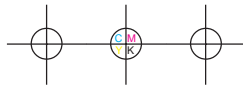
I hope your construction projects for last year turned out to be a delightful finished project and that they provided a basis for a strong foundation for the coming year. I look forward to continuing the building process with you next year. After all, Life is but ... a work in progress.

The greatest gift that you can give yourself is a little bit of your own attention.

- Anthony J. D'Angelo

Have you picked up your copy of *Life Under Construction*? It's a great gift or even better way to start the New Year. Stop by Chapter 2 in Cashiers or Cyrano's Bookshop in Highlands or email melspeaks@aol.com. Dr. Maryellen Lipinski is a psychologist by profession and an international professional speaker by design. Currently, she coaches individuals to obtain their goals in life and works as a Realtor at Village Realty of Sapphire Valley. www.ilovemountainrealestate.com. Her first book, *Random Thoughts and Mine Always Are. Conscious Detours to Creative Power* will make you laugh, cry, and think! www.maryellenlipinski.com

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• ASK FRED •

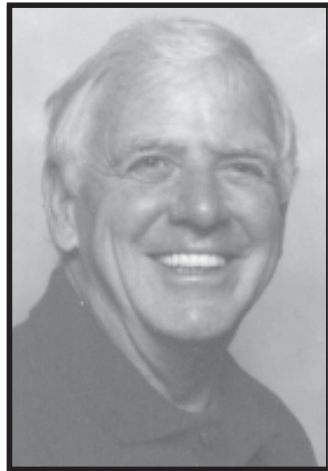
Loving Loretta

Dear Fred.

I recently sent my girlfriend, Loretta, a dozen roses in hopes of moving our relationship to the "next level."

I was real happy when she called and said she loved me. I asked her if it was the flowers that made her see me in a new light. She said that it was the card that was attached that did the trick. She's into handwriting analysis and said that after she analyzed my handwriting she realized that I am her perfect match, her soul-mate. Only problem is the woman at the florist was the one that wrote the card. I ordered the flowers over the phone.

What should I do?



Fred Wooldridge

Freaked Out Over Loretta

Dear F. O. O. L.:

Oh boy, you have already made so many mistakes that I don't know if I can safely bail you out of this one. Rule #1: Never, never, never send flowers to a woman unless you are in real, double Dutch, down in the dirt, serious, big time trouble. Rule #2: Never date anyone who is a handwriting specialist. She probably has already analyzed your life line and knows your astrological sign (I hope you're not a Feces).

People who do these things are very analytical and you will never have a minute's rest with this gal. She will always be asking, "What exactly did you mean by that comment?" They also ask "How do you think that makes me feel?" and other scary girl type questions. My best advice is to run.

But if I can't talk you out of trashing your life with this woman, here is what I would do. Find the girl at the florist who wrote the card. Pay her an enormous sum of money to give you pages and pages of her handwriting. Then practice, practice, practice until your script is exactly like hers. Use the onion skin/tracing method. It worked great for me in the sixth grade when I needed a note from home to get out of trouble.

Once your relationship has reached the fatal, last level (The big "M") smash your writing hand with a large mallet and tell her it was an accident. I realize this might be a bit drastic but we are desperate here. When the bandages come off, complain to your new wife that your handwriting is different since the accident and then you can return to your old scribble. By then, it will be too late for her ... and you.

And remember, this could have all been avoided if you had just not sent the roses.

The following submission is an answer to Fred's answer to the question about the perils of driving the Gorge Road published in the Dec. 26 issue.

▪ See DEAR FRED page 6

Want to have some fun this winter? Our very own Contributor/Columnist Fred Wooldridge is ready to answer your questions about Highlands with tongue in cheek. The sky's the limit. All published questions are anonymous and, of course, don't expect a straight answer. E-mail us at askfredanything@aol.com. Put "Dear Fred" in memo line. We reserve the right to edit questions.

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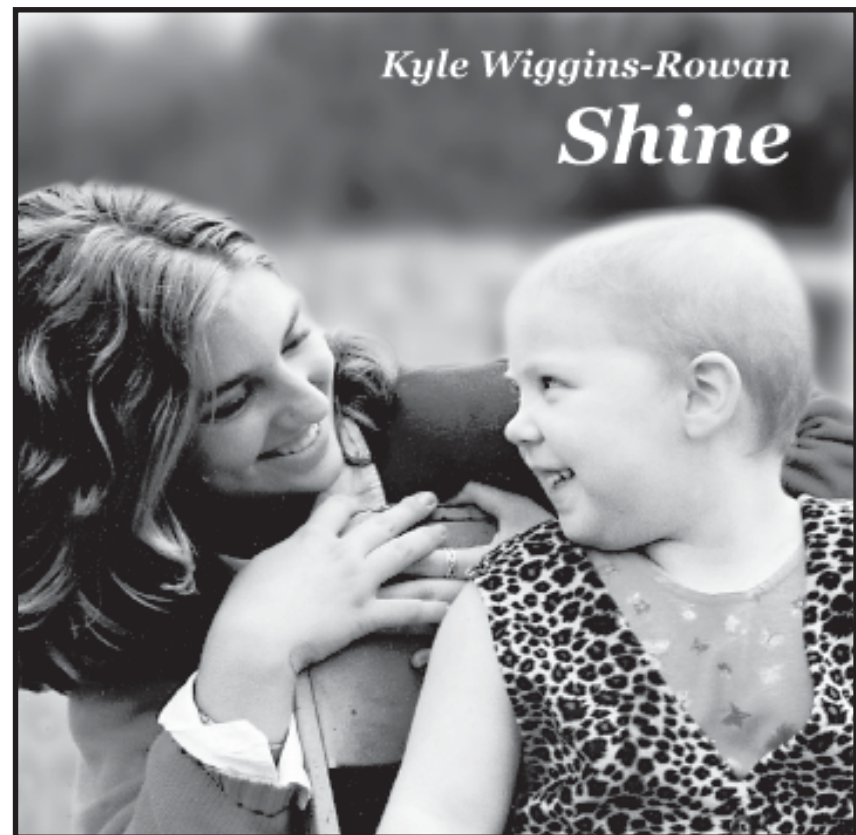
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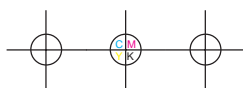
Songs for Madison



Kyle Wiggins-Rowan

Shine

Kyle Wiggins-Rowan, a junior at Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, recently initiated a fundraising effort to benefit Madison Schandolph, a four-year-old girl who was diagnosed with Leukemia. The young artist is offering Shine, a jazz compilation sampler, from which the proceeds will go to benefit Maddie. A few weekends ago, Wiggins-Rowan performed two nights with the Paul Scott Jazz Quartet at ...On The Verandah in Highlands. She and Scott have been working on the CD for her Symposium Project, a requirement for graduation at RGNS. Said Scott, "This 16-year-old girl has the voice of an angel and a heart to match. "It's a wonderful feeling: to give knowing that a child might have a better chance at life." said Wiggins-Rowan. The CDs may be purchased by sending an email request to pwiggins_rowan@yahoo.com. Additional contributions may be sent to: The Madison Fund c/o Marlene Alvarez, 1536 Franklin Road, Highlands, NC 28741.



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... DEAR FRED continued from page 5

The question:

...My problem is how to drive to Franklin and back faster than 25 miles per hour. Every time I go, there seems to be a slowpoke ahead of me. They do not seem to notice the turn-out cut especially for them. I am not suggesting that I want to drive more than 45 mph, but 20 is just ridiculous. I certainly realize the road is very scenic and curvy, but there are those of us who have to make the trip often and cannot dawdle.

The answer to Fred's answer:

Dear Fred:

I read your response to 'Mytee Peeved' in the December 26 edition. Well now Fred, albeit I find your humor well placed, here are some things for you to mull.

Many of us have lived in Miami or other metropolitan areas. And, many of us are forced to continue to live in those areas. Not all of us have the wherewithal to defect to this idyllic place. But we do run away from home at every opportunity, and this is the reason why.


We long for a quieter pace, a slower route, an opportunity to inhale the fragrance of the pines, feel the crisp cool air, hear the sound of the river run down the mountain. To live in an area such as Highlands is to have an opportunity (and the operable word here is opportunity) to drive to Franklin and actually experience these things - and if one must go frequently, how fortunate! The better the opportunity to experience the beauty of the trip. An extra five minutes picked up enroute is not going to extend one's life whereas a draught from the beauty of the trip may well do so.

Ah, Fred, with your Barryesque response and admission to being a "Top Gun" behind the wheel, you have brought Miami to Highlands. Charlie Brown had a word for it: "Argh!" You, and 'Mytee Peeved' may want to consider having yourselves bronzed and sold as bookends in a local art shop.

So here are my suggestions to you. (1) Take that sedative, pull off the road, and observe the happy, relaxed people who drive slowly by you. (2) We'll give you free orange juice laced with an appropriate amount of Vodka if you will go sleep off the grouchies somewhere. (3) Accept the fact that not everyone brought Miami to Highlands. (4) Remember that it is those very same drivers that you spoof who keep your salary coming and your community thriving!

Respectfully, G.J. Ellyson

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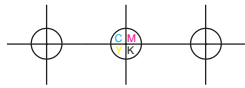


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• MOVIE PIX •

Video Guy Presents:

The 1990 PG rated comic strip-turned movie,

Dick Tracy

Produced, directed and starring Warren Beatty, as well as Madonna, Mandy Patinkin, Al Pacino, Dustin Hoffman, Dick Van Dyke, Glenne Headly, and about a million others.

This film is a really cool and fun adaptation of Chester Gould's comic strip, very well done and surprisingly artistic.

The Storyline: (what, are you joking? It's a comic strip turned into a movie, there is no storyline) Well, there kinda is a story, but no more and no different than you'd expect.

Dick Tracy is the straight laced, up right, stand up, square jawed, level headed (any other linear references can be added here) detective, trying to foil the very evil plans of the very evil Big Boy Caprice (Al Pacino). Along the way he meets and is tempted by Breathless Mahoney (Madonna), dates his steady girl Tess Trueheart (Glenn Headly, who is way sexier than Madonna any day of the week), and alternately threatens and is threatened by hoods, punks, wise guys, thugs and some not really very polite people with names (and faces that match) like Mumbles, Flat Top, Pruneface, Lips, and Little Face.

Will Big Boy succeed in his very evil plans (the details of which, I confess I didn't really catch, but trust me here, they're evil, I'm sure)? Will Tracy survive the almost certain death that awaits him if he goes to wherever that place is that he



Stuart Armor

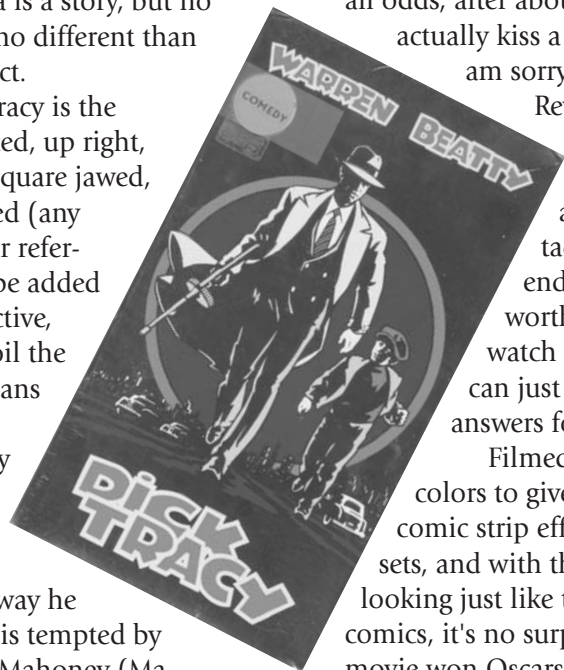
shouldn't ought to go, when it's perfectly clear to the viewers that almost certain death awaits him there? Will Tracy and Tess be together in the end? Will Tracy, against all odds, after about 243 near misses,

actually kiss a girl on the lips? I

am sorry, but my Video Reviewers Code Of Ethics forbid me to give away any amazingly spectacular surprise endings, but it IS worth your time to watch this movie, so you can just find out the answers for yourself.

Filmed in just seven colors to give a really neat comic strip effect, with real cool sets, and with the bad guys really looking just like they did in the comics, it's no surprise that this movie won Oscars for Best Make-up and best Set Decoration. A bit of trivia, in addition to directing, producing and starring in the movie, I think Beatty made the hors d'oeuvres for the cast party all by himself.

Other cartoon/comic to movie films are Popeye, Batman, Hulk, Spider Man, Rocky and Bullwinkle, Flinstones, and be sure to see the governor of California in one of his earlier roles in "The Villain," these and about 5,000 other titles are available at Movie Stop Video, give them a look.



WNC species protected and thriving thanks to 1973 Act

December 28, 2003, marked the 30th anniversary of the enactment of the federal Endangered Species Act (Act). Passed in Congress by an overwhelming majority in 1973, it was signed into law by President Richard M. Nixon.

This law provides a means of protecting the rarest of our plants and animals and their habitat. In the past 30 years, locations throughout Western North Carolina have been the scenes of numerous endangered species success stories, often a result of state and federal government agencies, non-profit organizations, private businesses, and individuals working together. Here are some examples:

- In 1999 the peregrine falcon, whose populations had been decimated by the pesticide DDT, was removed from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. Key to the recovery of the peregrine falcon were cooperative reintroduction efforts across the nation. Here in Western North Carolina, falcons were reintroduced at numerous sites between Grandfather Mountain and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Peregrine falcons nest on rocky cliffs, and today they can be seen at such popular places as Chimney Rock, Looking Glass Rock, and Linville Gorge.

- After years of having bald eagles migrate through the region, 1999 saw the return of nesting bald eagles to Western North Carolina, on the shores of Lake James in McDowell County. Although the first eagles' nest tree was killed by Southern pine beetles, the pair has successfully constructed a new nest at a nearby site and hatched two young eagles last year.

- The 4,467-acre Needmore Tract in Swain and Macon Counties, home to four endangered and threatened species, will be turned over to the state of North Carolina and managed by the Wildlife Commission. The Needmore Tract was initially purchased to make way for a hydroelectric dam that was never built. Becoming state land is a tremendous step in protecting the water quality of this stretch of the Little Tennessee River, home to two endangered species - the Appalachian

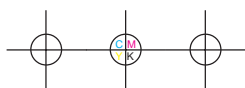
elktoe mussel and the littlewing pearl-mussel--and one threatened fish - the spotfin chub. It also helps protect the Virginia spiraea, a threatened plant that is found on the banks of the Little Tennessee.

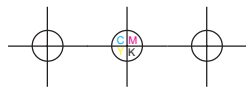
- In the late 1980s, the Service began working with the University of Tennessee and, later, with Conservation Fisheries, Inc., to reintroduce four federally protected fish species--the spotfin chub, duskytail darter, smoky madtom, and yellowfin madtom--into Abrams Creek on the Tennessee side of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. These four fishes were accidentally killed off in the creek in 1957 in a failed effort to establish a strong rainbow trout fishery. Today, these species are reproducing on their own in Abrams Creek, and biologists have begun reintroducing these same species into the nearby Tellico River.

- Working with the Atlanta Botanical Garden, the Service has propagated in captivity, and transplanted into the wild a number of federally protected plant species, including the carnivorous green pitcher plant and the mountain sweet pitcher plant, both of which are found in our Appalachian mountain bogs, and rare wildflowers, like the Roan Mountain bluet and Heller's blazing star, which are found on balds and rocky outcrops at some of the region's highest peaks.

Since 1973, 1,318 species have been named to the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. Of those, 15 have been recovered to the point of delisting. The Act's greatest achievement is that it has prevented the extinction of many species. Only seven have been declared extinct.

Endangered species are indicators of the health of the environment. Their decline alerts us to the fact that the quality of some of the basic elements of our environment, elements that we depend on--air, land, and water--are being compromised. When we protect endangered species and conserve our natural habitats, we protect ourselves and conserve our own communities. The Act is an invaluable tool that has helped us achieve such protection and conservation.





— RECAP of the last six months of 2003 —

Lots of news has inked the paper since July 2003.

The biggest news item, at least in our eyes, is that Highlands' Newspaper was born with its first issue on the streets, July 18. In addition to up-to-date news coverage, Highlands Newspaper features columns about cooking, hiking, traveling, sports, movies, flower arranging, spiritual messages, health & fitness and books written weekly by full time and seasonal residents.

• Also in July, two longtime fixtures of the Peggy Crosby Center -- the Macon County Health Dept. and Fibber Magee's moved to new quarters. The health dept. went to the Highlands Civic Center and Fibber's went to the cottages on the Cashiers Road across from Little Bearpen Road.

• Joel B. Walden, recounted his summer days spent in Horse Cove as a youth.

• The financial pieces to fund the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital water line began to fall into place and bids were finally opened in January, 2004.

• Though the rainy summer was something newcomers to the area aren't used to, old-timers say the rain was a blast from the past common in Highlands, a temperate rain forest. Bob Wright with the Upper Cullasaja Watershed Association said by the end of July, rainfall was ahead of 2002 by 13.56 inches.

• The Highlands Fire & Rescue Dept. celebrated 50 years of service with an open house at the fire station on Oak Street on Aug. 2.

In August:

Alan Marsh was the first to join the Highlands Town Board race. Before it

was over, five men threw their hats into the ring.

• Highlands and Satolah residents banned together for the first of many meetings to try to convince Georgia officials not to reroute traffic while the bridge over Chattooga River on SR 28 is repaired.

• Robin Phillips, a descendant of the Hills of Horse Cove recounted her summer days in the cove.

• The Main Street Inn request for a zoning change was denied by the planning board.

• The Macon County School Board learned that all the schools in the county met or exceeded their annual yearly performance goals. Highlands School met all 15 of its academic performance targets.

cially joined forces so each department can legally help the other in case of emergencies.

• Highlands Cable Group began inching its way to the town limits.

• Highlander Dabs Potts shared the thrill of dirt racing with readers,

• The first day of school for students was Wednesday, Aug. 6, 2004.

• The Macon County Sheriff Dept. announced Tazar laser guns were replacing pepper spray and would be used to urge suspects to "cease and desist" when ordered to do so.

• After six years of court battles, The Edwards et al vs. The Town of Highlands case was put to rest. The courts ruled in the town's favor settling the question of the rights of the town and the public to the streets shown on

was accepted and work started about 45 days later.

• Scuba divers made repairs to Lake Sequoyah Dam.

Episcopal dedication



• The Bowery Road case is still pending in court. Ten property owner along the front seven-tenths of the road don't want the town to improve the road by widening and paving.

• Local and state authorities from North Carolina and Georgia gather to discuss the ramifications of closing the bridge over the Chattooga River at SR 28.

• Ear, nose and throat physicians, Drs. Christopher T. Wenzel and Shannon E. Hunter expanded their Waynesville practice to Highlands.

• The Episcopal Church of the Incarnation dedicated its \$3.5 expansion on Aug. 29 with Bishop Robert Johnson, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina presiding.

In September:

• Adam Heffernan, Collin and Scott Paxton announced the resurrection of The Instant Theater Company which previously operated in the 1980s. It features year-round theater and theater-education primarily out of the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street.

• School officials announced that with 150 students enrolled in grades 9-12, high school enrollment at Highlands School was significantly higher than in years past. "In the past five years, it's up significantly," said Principal Jack Brooks. "Highlands School's reputation for strong academics and consistent discipline action has brought more students to the school," he said.

• In a rare move, the Town Board voted to go against the planning board's recommendation and agree to rezone the Main Street Inn B1. With

Highlands beats Franklin in soccer



• The Town Board agreed to be the lead agency and recipient of federal grant money that will be used to clean up area lakes and to prevent siltation in the first place. Jim Johnson, working with Kilpatrick Stockton LLP spearheaded a lobbying effort to corral federal funds to be delivered to Highlands January 2005.

• The Highlands Police Dept. and the Macon County Sheriff Dept. offi-

the original Kelsey map of Highlands.

• With construction booming in Highlands, officials agreed to enforce its ordinance which prohibits construction noise after-hours on weekdays and on weekends.

• History was made on Monday, Aug. 11, when Highlands School soccer team won its first game of the season and its first soccer win ever against Franklin.

• Relay for Life raised \$100,000 of its \$170,000 goal before the "walk" began, Friday, Aug. 15.

• The town asked the state to take over the back part of Bowery Road so it could be widened and paved using state funds.

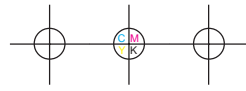
• Development on Satolah Mountain threatens to close "short" trail to the top.

• News from Iraq came from Lt. Col. Brook Myers, U.S. Army stationed in Balad. Birthday parties "American-style" complete with cookies from home were thrown for everyone in her battalion.

• The Highlands School gym bid

Celebrating 50 years of service





B1 zoning, the inn doesn't have to provide parking for its guests so it can open its restaurant to the public.

- Isabelle Robertson, 92, recounted her "seasons" spent in Highlands – particularly the season of 1923 when the circus came to town.

- The Macon County sports complex on Buck Creek Road was dedicated on Sept. 12, with food, speeches and entertainment courtesy of the Highlands School Band, cheerleaders, booster club and athletes.

Complex dedicated



- Candidates for the 2003 Town Board election were announced. Commissioners Mike Cavender and Herb James and Dennis DeWolf, Alan Marsh and Eric Pierson joined the race.

- The Highlands Scholarship Golf Classic was played Sept. 29 at Highlands Falls Country Club – \$21,000 was added to the current \$600,000 principal.

- Highlands Rotary Liberty Gala at Highlands Country Club brought in more than \$30,000 which funds scholarships and community service projects over a two-year period.

- Readers got a peak at the Hetzel's life – one full of cats and world-class dahlias.

- A visitor from Georgia told readers about her harrowing experience hiking Rabun Bald. She got lost in the wilds but was rescued 12 hours later, safe by sore.

- For the seventh year in a row, The Girls' Clubhouse, a community-service group made up of middle school girls from Highlands School, started a year of service.

- Highlands' Newspaper began publishing the Highlands School newspaper – Mountain Trail – a monthly insert full of Highlands School news.

- The Macon County School budget for 2003-2004 came in at \$31.2 million.

- Lightning strikes in Highlands was discussed in "Lightning feels close on the Highlands Plateau."

Mtn. Trail is born



- The Chamber of Commerce unveiled two of its plans for Highlands – a pavilion on Pine Street and retail directory signs to be placed at each street corner in town.

- The first-ever SOAR Adventure Race in Highlands was Saturday, Sept. 27. About \$30,000 was raised to fund educational needs for children of fallen soldiers.

In October:

The Highlands Community Child Development Center on Church Street broke ground Oct. 7.

- Old Edwards Inn continues to be in the news as it goes before various town boards and committees for permission for various projects.

HCCDC breaks ground



- A robber stole \$15,000 from RBC Centura Bank on Oct. 14, but he didn't get far. With the help of citizen John Shearl, police officers apprehended Howard Otis Haines, Jr., 61, of Franklin around the corner at Furniture South.

A.L. Williams talks



- At the Oct. 15 Town Board meet-

ing commissioners agreed to give Highlands Cable Group one more chance to come into compliance.

- Readers learned about the art and passion behind Robert Isham's carved creations.

Farewell song



- David Wilkes of Highland Hiker, gave readers valuable tips about area trout fishing.

- A.L. Williams agreed to an interview and told it all in a Q&A about "The real Old Edwards Inn & Spa Story."

- Highlands performing tradition, blind, guitar-strumming, singer, Sylvia Sammons ended with her last concert from the porch of her home on Fourth Street, Friday, Oct. 24.

- Modern potters were featured at the Bascom-Louise Gallery – in particular, Highlands own Patrick Taylor.

- Highlands School gym site work was completed, the first step toward building the gymnasium on Pierson Rd.

- With Father Mike Jones' retirement from the Episcopal Church, Father Stephen Hines took over as interim pastor.

- Saturday, Oct. 25, was a day full of Highlands School activities. The annual Fun Run, a car wash to support teachers' continuing education and the Highlands School Fall Festival.

In November:

- After years of extensions, meetings and revisions, the Town of Highlands revoked Highlands Cable Group's franchise.

- On Nov. 4, voters elected Alan

Marsh, Dennis DeWolf and Herb James to the Town Board. Their terms are for four years.

- Northland Cable activated its high-speed Internet service. Highlands' Newspaper was the first business hooked up.

- Readers learned about the popularity of "garden art" and learned where they could buy it in Highlands.

- Ex-stunt woman turned doctor explained our her journey of pain led to where she is today.

- After 33 years, Dr. John Baumrucker closed his practice and will devote his time and energy to administering medicine in Montero, Bolivia.

- Christy Kelly, past director of the Chamber of Commerce, was appointed the executive director of the Peggy Crosby Center.

- Old Edwards Inn continues to be in the news. Plans to develop the Rib Country site and to replace the railing along the Main Street sidewalk were discussed at town meetings.

- Highlands-Cashiers Hospital announced that is was now "smoke-free"

- The Highlands School Basketball season kicked off with its first game, Tuesday, Nov. 11 against Tallulah Falls. Highlands lost the Varsity Boys game 50-67, but the Varsity Girls won 44-20.

Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein provided readers with a Q&A about the town's position on the Old Edwards Inn project.

- Crazy weather makes the news. Lots of rain, then snow, then spring. So far, a winter season of extremes due say weather experts to a lack of a "Nino" system this year.

- A new way of building energy efficient structures was unveiled at the Highlands Community Child Development Center on Church Street. Styrofoam blocks stacked and then filled with concrete serve as both walls and insulation.

- The first snow of the season fell on Nov. 28 with about 4 inches.

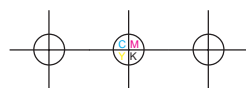
- The Thomas Harbison state marker was erected in front of Town Hall and dedicated on Saturday, Nov. 29.

In December:

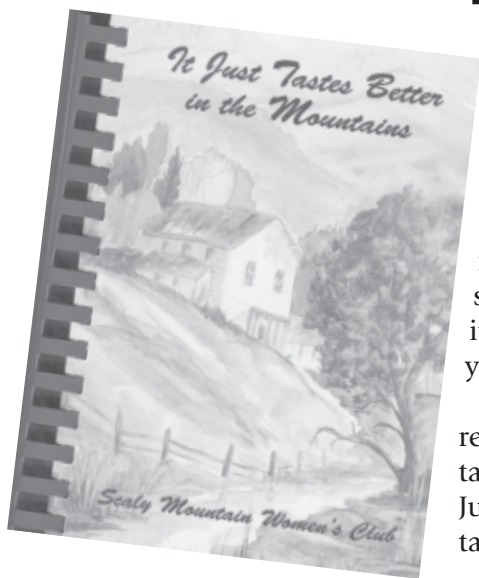
- In another rare move, the Town Board went against the planning board's recommendations and voted to send two re-zoning requests – on Spruce and Poplar streets – to a public hearing, Jan. 7.

- Dusty Rhodes, owner of High-

▪See RECAP page 14



• COOKING ON TEH PLATEAU •



There's something about winter weather that just makes you want to hunker down in front of a roaring fire with a bowl of hot soup or stew. My Dad used to call it "soul food," because it warmed your stomach and your heart.

Below are some heart-warming recipes found in the Scaly Mountain Women's Club cookbook, "It Just Tastes Better in the Mountains."

The ingredients are available in

area food stores or likely in your freezer or on your pantry shelves.

Hardy Hamburger Vegetable Soup

2 cans low fat beef bouillon
4 cups water
3 (15-oz.) cans tomato or use fresh if you've got them. Use all the liquid, and break them up into pieces).

24 oz. frozen mixed vegetables – a brand with the largest variety.

4 baking potatoes
2 lbs. ground chuck
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
2 onions, chopped – about 3 cups.

1 1/2 cups celery, chopped
2 Tbls. brown sugar

Bring first three ingredients to a boil.

Add mixed vegetables and diced potatoes and simmer.

Brown hamburger in very hot skillet; salt and pepper generously. Let it cook in rather large chunks. Drain and add to soup pot. At this point, salt and pepper to taste.

Simmer for 30 minutes more. I add brown sugar to cut the acidity – two tablespoons is usually adequate., but sometimes it requires more.

If you like garlic, you can use garlic powder in the hamburger while browning, it or a clove of fresh garlic can be sauteed with the onions and celery.

– Kenneth McCullough

Minestrone Soup with a touch of Greek

2 cups coarsely chopped onion
1 cup sliced celery
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 cup olive oil
5 cups beef or chicken broth
3 1/2 cups water

1/2 cup dry red wine
1 (16 oz.) can tomatoes, cut up
2 cups chopped cabbage
2 tsp. dry basil leaves
1/2 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 1/2 cup zucchini
1 cup frozen French-cut beans
4 oz. spaghetti, broken into pieces

1 (15 1/2 oz.) can kidney bean, undrained
1 (15 oz.) can tomato sauce
1 cup sliced carrots

IN an 8-quart sauce pot, saute onion, celery, parsley and garlic in olive oil until tender. Stir in broth, water, wine tomatoes, basil, tomato sauce, cabbage, carrots, salt and pepper.

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer one hour.

Stir in remaining soup ingredients. Simmer, covered, 15 to 20 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Makes 19 1-cup servings, 230 calories each cup.

– Bobbie Rothberg

Corn & Potato Chowder

6 slices bacon
1 med. onion, chopped
2 cups cooked corn
2 cups diced potatoes
1 can cream of mushroom soup
2 1/2 cup milk
salt and pepper, to taste

Place potatoes in Dutch oven and cover with water and simmer until tender. Cook bacon until done, drain, removing all grease but the barest amount needed to saute the onions. Add the onion, soup, corn and seasonings to the cooked potatoes and simmer a few minutes before serving. Top with crumbled bacon. You may substitute cream of celery or other soup. Good with cornbread.

– Jo England

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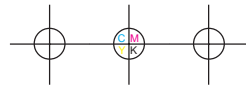


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Highlands' Newspaper

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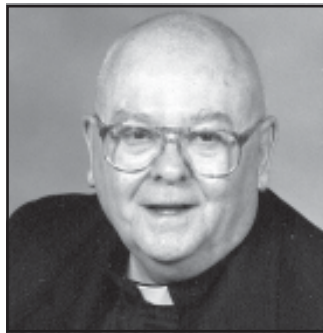
This holiday season give the gift of a Highlands' Newspaper PDF Internet subscription. \$12 per year. Weekly PDF version of paper posted at www.highlandsnewspaper.com each Friday.



■ SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING ■

He will finish the work if we let him

A very shy young man fell in love, but he was utterly tongue-tied whenever he was with the girl he loved. A friend offered him some advice. "Just memorize some great lines from a book of poetry, perhaps, expressing your total admiration. Something like, "When I see your face, time stands still."



Father Bill Evans
Our Lady of the
Mountains Catholic
Church

It made sense. So for weeks the young man practiced and practiced. "When I see your face, time stands still."

Finally, the big date. They went to a romantic restaurant. The lights were low. His eyes met hers and he said, "When I see your face, I, er, time, uh...." He forgot the words! He really was a klutz.

Again he tried. "Mary, when I see your face, I, er, I mean ..." Now he was totally frustrated. Finally, in desperation he blurted out, "Mary, your face could stop a clock."

We laugh because it is funny, but there's another part of us that's a little sad when we hear a story like this. It reminds us of how much we're still struggling to get right in our own lives. After all this time, we say to ourselves, "I'm still stumbling at the same old places in the road. Same old places! Same old cuts! Same old business! Same old sins! Nothing ever seems to change.

It can be mighty discouraging and can even make us want to give up once and for all. But before we do that, it might be a good idea to see what God has to say to us on this matter.

Whenever we pray, we have a strong tendency to just babble on. Why not be quiet and listen? He's trying to catch our attention. He's calling us by name. Listen to him.

"I've been walking at your side from the very beginning," God says. "It has been a slow journey but I have been following your progress with real hope. I know that you say "yes" to me sometimes and get distracted or tired and your "yes" turns to a "no." And, on the other hand, I know that sometimes you start with a resounding "no" to me and then your better self takes charge and you turn it

● PLACES OF WORSHIP ON THE PLATEAU ●

Blue Valley Baptist Church

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11 a.m.
Sunday night services every second and fourth
Sunday at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting – 7 p.m.

Buck Creek Baptist Church

Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
First Saturday: Singing at 7:30 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

NC 28 N. and Pine Ridge Rd., (828) 369-8329
Rai Cammack, Branch President, (828) 369-1627
Sundays: Worship – 10 a.m.; school & primary
classes – 11 a.m.; Women's & Men's Org. – noon
Tues: Women's Org. – 6:30 p.m.; Library – 6-8
Wednesdays: Boy Scouts of America mtg. – 6:30
p.m.; Young women's activities – 6:30 p.m.

Clear Creek Baptist Church

Pastor Everett Wilson, (828) 743-3379
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.;
Prayer – 6:30 p.m.
Evening Service – 7 p.m.

Community Bible Church

(Evangelical Presbyterian Church
Steven E. Kerhoulas, Pastor, 526-4685
3645 U.S. 64 east
Sundays: School – 9:30 a.m.; Worship – 10:45 a.m.
Tuesdays: Women's Bible Study – 9:45 a.m.
Wed: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study – 6:30
Thursdays: Guys Sr. High Discipleship – 6 p.m.

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

Interim Priest: Stephen Hines, 526-2968
Sundays: Holy Eucharist – 10:30 a.m.; Adult Class
– 10 a.m.; Children's – 11 a.m.
Mondays: Women's Cursillo Group @ Church – 4
p.m.;
Tuesdays: Men's Cursillo @ church – 8 a.m.
Wednesdays: Supper and Program in Jones Hall
– 6 p.m.
Holy Eucharist – 10 a.m.

First Baptist Church

Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sundays: Worship – 8:15 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 6:30
p.m.; School – 9:30 a.m.; Youth – 6:30 p.m.;
Choir – 7:15
Wednesdays: Dinner – 5:30 p.m.; Team Kids – 6
p.m.; Student & Adult Prayer – 6:15 p.m., Choir –
7:30

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m. (child care at 11
a.m.); School – 9:30 & 9:45.
Wednesdays: Children's Devotions – 9:30 a.m.;
Supper – 6 p.m.; Choir – 7 p.m.
Thursdays: Bible Study – 10 a.m.
Sat: Adventistas del Septimo Dia – 10 a.m. & 5

Highlands Assembly of God

Rev. Scott Holland, 524-6026, Sixth Street
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Highlands Seventh-Day Adventist Church

Wednesday evening prayer & Bible Study
Call Lloyd Kidder at 526-9474

Highlands United Methodist Church

Pastors Eddie & Kim Ingram, 526-3376
Sundays: School – 9:30 & 9:45 a.m.; Worship – 11
Wednesdays: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study &
activities – 6 p.m.

Lutheran Church of the Holy Family – ELCA

Rev. Pam Mitcham, Pastor,
2152 Dillard Road – 526-9741
Sundays: Worship/Communion – 10:30 a.m.

Macedonia Baptist Church

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in
Satolah
Pastor Rusty Wolfrey, (706) 782-8130
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.;
Choir – 6 p.m.
Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

Mountain Synagogue

St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin 369-6871
Friday: Sept. 12 Sabbath Eve Services at 7 p.m.
For more information, call (706)-745-1842.

Our Lady of the Mountains Catholic Church

Rev. William M Evans, Priest
Parish office, 526-2418
Wednesdays & Fridays: Mass – 12 noon
Sundays: Mass – 11 a.m.

Scaly Mountain Baptist Church

Rev. Clifford Willis
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m. & 7
Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

Scaly Mountain Church of God

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Alfred Sizemore
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 10:45
a.m.; Evening Worship – 6 p.m.
Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
For more information call 526-3212.

Shortoff Baptist Church

Pastor Rev. Baker Crane
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7 p.m.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Franklin ■ 526-9769

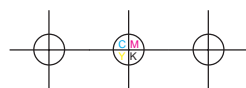
Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time)
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

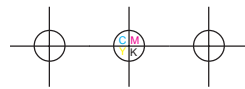
Westside Baptist Church

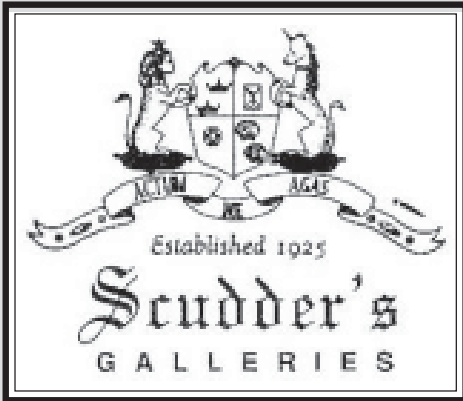
Interim Pastor, Terry Dixon
Services in the basement of the Peggy Crosby
Sundays: Fellowship & Worship – 11 a.m.;

Whiteside Presbyterian Church in America

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11 a.m.







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526-9632

4th Street across from Old Edwards Inn
Made-to-order sandwiches,
green & fruit salads, ice cream
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and 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Th., Fri., Sat. Sun.

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... PLAYHOUSE continued from page 1

Sossomon. "The terms may not have been agreed to, but they didn't prohibit anyone. And that practice will continue."

He said the Playhouse is a long-standing institution in Highlands which has made a tremendous investment in the building with plans to invest more. "The reason they wanted a 10-year lease is because they plan to repave the parking lot and repair the stairs leading up to the building," he said.

Scott Paxton of the Instant Theater, proposed that his group lease the playhouse September through April so theater could be presented year round in Highlands. He said The Instant Theater has the manpower and the technical support to

help take care of the facility.

But David Kleist, artistic director for the Playhouse said years in the business has shown him that two companies in one theater don't work.

Besides, he said the Playhouse has plans to extend its season into the leaf season and plans to begin building sets long before May.

Commissioner Amy Patterson said she would like to see the facility better utilized by the community. "It is a town building into which we've invested about \$60,000 over the years."

Commissioner Hank Ross said he'd like to insulate the facility so it could be used in the winter.

Commissioner Dennis DeWolf agreed the Play-

... Spiritually from page 11

into the beginning of a "yes" - maybe a little soft at first, but a beginning."

"I know," says the Lord, "that sometimes you don't see the progress you're making. You feel disappointed that you haven't done better and done better faster. Dear child of mine, I'm not surprised at all. These things take time. I knew that when I made you. Look how long it takes me to make a tree or a flower. And that's simple when compared to all that I've dreamed for you. After all, it's not easy to make a human being with all of its complexity. What I have in mind for you will take a lifetime - a lifetime of you and me working together. And even when you reach the end of your road, I know in advance that I will have to help you finish your work. And I will do just that. I promise."

None of us, no matter how perfect, will be entirely finished and complete when we reach the end of our pilgrimage on earth. There will still be wounds in us that have to be healed and holes in us that have to be filled up. What we celebrate today is God's loving desire to help all who have passed into his presence to complete their life's work, to let fall away anything left in them that may stand in the way of perfect love, and to have all that is wounded healed perfectly.

This is what we call purgatory. Purgatory is not a place - it is a state of being - it is that period of time, short or long as needed when we are changed into a perfect being so that we can enter heaven. It may be on this earth or it may be in another dimension but remember it is a state of being.

What we pray for is not that God will help all of our beloved dead - for he already intends to do just that - but that they will be open to God's help and will enter quickly into the joy that God so longs to share with them. That is exactly what we pray for when we pray for our beloved dead. We pray that this state of being made perfect will happen very quickly.

house is an Town institution and would like to see it continue while being more beneficial to the community.

Town Attorney Bill Coward said the lease had not been re-worded since 1979. "There are places where the language can be made to reflect the current situation," he said.

Once re-worded, the Town will lease the building exclusively to the Playhouse for five years. Any organization that wants to use the facility must go through the Playhouse board for approval rather than the town, who owns the building.

"That's what has been happening all along, anyway," said Coward. "Now the lease will reflect reality."




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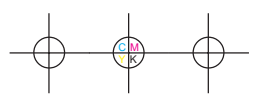

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Auditors say county is fiscally sound

By Kim Lewicki

The 2003 audit of Macon County shows the county is in good fiscal shape.

So announced representatives from Martin Starnes & Assoc., CPAs, P.A. at the Jan. 5 Macon County Commissioners meeting in Franklin.

The undesignated fund balance amount helps determine the fiscal health, said auditors. "More in the undesignated fund balance is good and over the past four-year period it's been very good."

The undesignated fund balance for fiscal year 2002-2003 is \$6,012,139, an increase of \$553,548 over fiscal year 2001-2002.

The Local Government Commission suggests municipalities maintain an undesignated fund balance of general fund expenditures of eight percent - Macon County's is 22.9 percent.

As the operating of Macon County becomes more involved, so does the necessary fund balance. Over the last four years, the fund balance has increased from \$9,196,220 in 2000 to \$11,784,595 for fiscal year 2003.

As expected, revenues from property valuation have increased. In 2000, property valuations were about \$3.5 billion. In 2003 they were up to \$3.8 billion. However, Martin Starnes & Assoc. said property taxes are lower in Macon County when compared to other counties its size. Macon County's property tax rate is 0.44 - comparatively its 0.6688. "Size" is based on population - 25,000-49,999 people.

The General Fund - net cost of services provided - is divided into seven categories. About 28 percent of the general fund is designated for education, 24 percent for public safety, eight percent for human services, 21 percent for general government, seven percent for economic and physical development, five percent for interest and seven percent to "Other."

In General Fund Revenues, Ad Valorem taxes were up for fiscal year 2003 - \$16,907,859 from 16,620,119. Local Option Sales Tax brought in \$4,864,740 in 2003 up from 4,861,711 in 2002. Revenue from Restricted Intergovernmental proceeds was \$4,589,051 up from \$3,898,781. That's state and federal grants and funding.

Revenues from investment earnings were down from \$333,612 to \$176,467 due to the national economy, said auditors. Revenue from permits and fees was up - \$1,144,315 from \$976,086. Revenue from sales and services was also up - \$1,578,409 from \$1,409,061.

General Fund Expenditures were divided into seven categories. The biggest chunk was spent on human services - 29 percent of the budget; 26 percent on public safety; 20 percent on education; 14 percent on general government; five percent on cultural & recreation; four percent on economic and physical development; and two percent on transportation.

Human Services expenditures were \$7363,982 up from 6,862,886; \$5,354,043 was spent on education - down from last year's \$5,392,478; public safety was up significantly - \$6942,414 from 6,007,043; a little more was spent on general government - \$3,560,880 from \$3,374,892; and \$1,054,450 was spent on economic and physical development, up from \$937,968.

Expenditures on cultural and recreation was down - \$1,392,164 from \$1,496,940. Expenditures on transportation was up substantially - \$595,843 from \$385,623.

The general debt service requirement is at \$3,659,510 but will decrease incrementally over through 2008 to \$2,415,144.

The 2003-2004 budget includes \$1,200,000 which will be generated from the new 1/2 cent tax.

A fiscal year is July 1 through June 30.

... RECAP continued from page 9

lands' Rhodes Superette turned 80 years old.

• Macon County Commissioner, Highlander Ricky Bryson, was reappointed as vice-chair of the board at the Dec. 1, Macon County Commissioner meeting.

New state marker



• A huge slab of rock dislodged from the rock face of Bridal Veil Falls and landed to block the drive under the falls. N.C. DOT and the USFS are discussing if the area is stable and whose job it is to move the rock.

• The three new Highlands Town Board Commissioners Marsh, DeWolf & James were sworn into office.

• Griffin Bell, citizen, told Town Board members that Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein's son's relationship was a conflict of interest and suggested someone else deal with the OEI project from now on.

• Readers learned about a Christmas Mayor Buck Trott spent in the jungles of the Philippines.

• The Town Board formed an ad hoc committee made up of Dennis DeWolf, Hank Ross and Town Administrator Richard Betz, to field OEI zoning issues. Gantenbein is still zoning administrator but won't handle OEI affairs.

• 2003 Highlands School Homecoming King and Queen, seniors James View and Anna Claire Sims, were honored prior to the Dec. 6 Homecoming basket ball game at Highlands School.

• The annual Highlands Christmas Parade featured scores of organizations dressed for the occasion on Dec. 6.

• Highlanders Donnie and Bitsy Calloway send news from Big Oak Ranch in Alabama where they are house parents to three boys.

• Highlander Mary Thompson recounts Christmas days of old in

Highlands.

• Kevin Corbin and Donnie Edwards were re-appointed as chairman and vice-chair, respectively at the Dec. 8 Macon County School Board meeting.

• The flu hits Macon County but vaccine rations are low.

• Readers learn about Highlander Pam Wexler-Smith's daughter, Elizabeth's "Christmas" experience working with the Peace Corps in the Dominican Republic.

• Highlands School Band teacher, Kathryn Teem conducts her last Christmas concert at Highlands School. After 15 years, at Highlands School she has accepted a teaching position at

King & Queen 2003



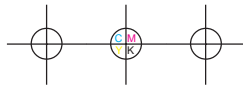
Macon Middle School for 2004-2005.

• Highlands Community heeds call for help from the Emergency Council in the way of money and gift for the area's needy.

Rock slide



• As 2004 comes to a close, town officials prepare for changes growth will bring to the town in the coming year.



• POLICE & FIRE REPORT •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of Dec. 26-Jan. 7, 2004. The only names are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

Dec. 26

• At 1:55 a.m., an officer on patrol investigated suspicious activity at the Old Edwards Inn construction site on Church Street. A chase ensued. The suspect wrecked his car and escaped into the woods.

• At 6 p.m., officers investigated an alarm activation at Regions Bank. All was secure.

Dec. 29

• At noon, a visitor at a residence at Flat Mountain Estates found keys which he turned into the police.

• At 2:35 p.m., officers investigated a possible larceny of money from Highlands House of Coffee but the money was found.

• At 3:20 p.m., McCarroll Construction company reported a table saw missing from under the Rib Country Restaurant.

Dec. 30

• At 1 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at Twigs on U.S. 64 east. All was secure.

Dec. 31

• At 11:45 a.m., officers responded to an accident between two vehicles on Main Street. There were no injuries.

Jan. 1, 2004

• A little past midnight, officers responded to a complaint of fireworks being shot off on Cullasaja Drive. The people were told to stop.

• At 2:55 a.m., officers assisted a patron at Mitchel's Motel who had too much to drink and didn't know where his room or truck was located.

Jan. 3

• At 10:35 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at a residence on Split Rail Row. All was secure.

• At 8:30 a.m., officers responded to a noise complaint from merchants near the Old Edwards Inn construction site on Church Street. Officers determined the noise was minimal and workers promised to hurry.

• At 2:15 p.m., officers responded to a noise complaint about the Old Edwards Inn construction site. Workers were told to stop working.

Jan. 5

• At 7:45 p.m., officers responded to an alarm at Bank of America. All was secure.

• At 9:20 p.m., officers were called to Gas Light Cafe where owners said a bag of money was found.

Jan. 6

• At 11:59 a.m., officers were notified about a possible suicide threat. They notified Jackson County Sheriff's Dept.

• At 2:20 p.m., officers responded to an alarm at a residence on Ravenel Ridge Road. All was secure.

• At 2:35 p.m., officers responded to a call of open windows in a residence on Hickory Street. All was secure.

Jan. 7

• At 11 a.m., Charles Allen Cope, 32, of Sylva, was arrested for felonious breaking and entering, larceny, failure to stop and eluding arrest in connection with the Dec. 26 larceny of an air compressor and nail gun valued at \$600 from the Old Edwards Inn construction site.

... REZONING continued from page 1

estate said they don't want it to be rezoned commercial. Neighbors of the Henry property said they didn't mind if that lot was rezoned commercial.

During 2002, part of the Potts estate was divided and rezoned from R2 to B3 to accommodate Mountain Findings which was having a hard time finding a home. Since that time, the lot next door has stood empty because said heirs, "no one wants to buy it zoned R2."

"We have an interested buyer, but only if we can get it rezoned commercial," said heir Lois Keener. "We never would have agreed to divide the property and sell it to Mountain Findings if we knew we weren't going to be able to get this part rezoned, too."

At its Dec. 1 meeting, the planning board recommended not to rezone the lot until the Land Use Committee had a chance to look at the entire area - with the thought that zoning changes might be a good idea elsewhere, too.

But commissioners Herb James and Amy Patterson said they didn't think heirs to the Potts estate should have to wait any longer for an answer and both thought rezoning to B4 would be appropriate.

"The lack of an updated land use plan shouldn't be a reason to deny someone's request for rezoning," said Patterson. "The land use plan gives us general guidelines. The B4 zone was developed precisely for something like this. It's less impact than the multifamily R3 and offers a mixing and mingling feeling between zoning areas." The property would be between B3 and R3.

Linda Clark, chairman of the planning board, said members were

concerned about how rezoning that one lot would impact the rest of the area and they wanted to stand by the land use plan.

"We value the land use plan and we use it as a guide," she said. "It's true that some property uses weren't evident when the land use plan was enacted, but we didn't see that much of a difference in this property use than five years ago."

Patterson and Commissioner Ross said rezoning the Potts property to B4 from R2 meant the property could be used for residential, but it could also be used as a low-impact buffer between B3 and R2.

Ross said in the case of the Potts estate, where part of it had been rezoned to accommodate Mountain Findings and the other left R2, a hardship had been created for the owners.

Commissioner Alan Marsh, who voted against the rezoning request, was concerned that the rezoning of the Potts property would cause a "domino affect" in the entire neighborhood.

"Rezoning this property isn't going to influence other properties in the area," said Ross. "The entire area is moving toward a low impact business and institutional area, anyway."

The answer came faster for the Henry property owners. Commissioners voted unanimously to rezone the property on Poplar street, R2 to B3.

"This is a totally different situation," said Commissioner Marsh. "This is a little lot in a commercial area and there's a buyer who wants it for commercial use. No one would buy it for residential use."

Larceny suspect eludes police but is arrested two weeks later

On Jan. 7, a larceny suspect was caught and arrested a week after officers attempted to stop and question about suspicious activity.

"Around 2 a.m., on Dec. 26, Officer Jimmy McCall saw a man loading tools into his truck at the Old Edwards Inn construction site on Church Street. When Officer McCall ap-

proached him, he got into his truck and drove off," said Highlands Police Chief, Jerry Cook.

Officer McCall took off after him and around Fifth and Main streets, the compressor fell out of the suspect's truck.

"At Mirror Lake Road and U.S. 64 west, the suspect crashed his truck and

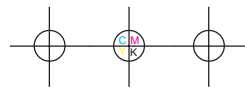
escaped into the woods. Officers searched for him for hours but couldn't find him," he said. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Charles, Allen Cope, 32, of Sylva.

Then Wednesday, Jan. 7, Highway Patrol in Jackson County saw a motorist driving too fast. When deputies pulled him over, he got out of the car

and ran into the woods. Deputies learned there was a warrant out for his arrest.

He was captured, arrested and is being held in the Macon County Detention Center for larceny of an air compressor and nail gun valued at \$600; for failure to stop and eluding arrest.





● UPCOMING EVENTS ●

On-Going

• New After-Work Aerobics Class at the Highlands Rec Park with Sandy Trevathan, certified in AFAA and ACE training. Classes are at 5:15 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays. Call 526-5852.

• Daisys, Brownies and Junior Girl Scouts meet 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Highlands United Methodist Church. Come join them.

• Highlands School is still collecting used ink cartridges. The staff just sent in 150 and they're ready for more. Please take used ink cartridges to the main office at Highlands School. It means money to the school.

• Every Friday and Saturday night, Cy Timmons sings and plays his guitar at Highlands Wine & Cheese from 7-11 p.m. It's free.

• The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous now meets in the remodeled basement meeting room of the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary, in Highlands. It's accessible from both Main and Church streets. Meeting times remain the same: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. For further information, call (800) 524-0465.

Jan. 10

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a 6-7 mile, moderate- to-strenuous hike on the Appalachian

Trail from Wayah Crest to Winding Stairs Gap. Meet at Westgate Plaza across from Burger King in Franklin at 9 a.m. Bring a drink, lunch, rain gear, and wear comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people; reservations are required. Call hike leaders Dave and Terry Barr, 369-3800 to make a reservation, for more information, or in case weather looks doubtful on morning of hike. No pets, please.

Jan. 11

• Auditions for Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest," 3 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street. Five men and 4 women are needed. For more information, call 526-8084 or 743-7757

Jan. 17

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4.5 mile hike, with a 500' elevation gain, from Jones Gap to Whiterock Mountain along the Bartram Trail, for beautiful views of the Nantahala mountains from the spectacular rock face of Whiterock. Meet at Highlands Bank of America at 10:00 a.m. or at the intersection of Hwy. 64/28 (the Highlands/Franklin road) with Turtle Pond road at 10:15 a.m. Bring a drink, lunch, rain gear, and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. Drive about 20 miles round trip, returning 2-3 p.m. Hikes are limited to 20 people; reservations are necessary. Call hike leader Mo Wheeler, 526-9561, for a reservation, more infor-

mation, or in case weather looks doubtful. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Jan. 18

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2 mile hike on the Macon County Greenway in Franklin. The group (or individuals the option of adding another two miles on the rail going the other way, for a total of 4 miles. Meet at Macon Plaza Bi-Lo) at 2:00 p.m. Bring a drink, a snack if you wish, wear clothing appropriate to the weather and sturdy, comfortable shoes. Hikes are limited to 20 people; reservations are required. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations, more information, or in case weather looks doubtful on day of hike. Visitors are welcome, but no pets please.

Jan. 19

• Conversation Peace will be held at Highlands School on Mondays beginning January 19. The Introductory video and meeting will be from 4:30-6 p.m. Anyone in the community who is interested is invited to come. Please contact Carol Bowen at 526-5168 if you have questions or need further information. This study presents seven powerful speech-transforming elements that are based on the Bible. Each week by video Mary Kassian, Christian author, speaker, and conference leader, will introduce powerful elements and techniques

for communication based on Biblical principles.

Jan 20

• The Railway Children – Set in 1905 and based on the novel by E. Nesbit, this warm tale from Great Britain focuses on a family whose idyllic life is shattered. Cast: Dinah Sheridan, Bernard Crabbiness, William Mervyn, Ian Cuthbertson and Jenny Agutter. The time is 7 p.m. at PAC on Chestnut Street and it's free.

Jan. 29

• The Highlands Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the law firm of Edwards, Ballard, Bishop, Sturm, Clark and Klein will host a seminar on changes in U.S. immigration laws that can impact local businesses. The business immigration law update will be held on Wednesday at the Highlands Conference Center from 9:30 until noon. Cost of the seminar is \$10 for Chamber members and \$20 for non-members. To register, please call Ruth Buchanan at 526.5841.

Jan 30 & 31

• Cowboy Envy – an exciting evening of old-time cowboy song and stories will be presented by Highlands' Instant Theatre Company Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. at The Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chesnut St. in Highlands. \$5 Children, \$15 Adults for tickets call (828) 342-9197.

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