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Highlands' Newspaper

FREE

Volume 2, Number 11

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, March 19, 2004

The week of March 12-19

March 17, 24, 31

▪ **WINE CLASSES** – Highlands Wine & Cheese Shop at Falls on Main presents a four-week seminar on wine tasting, food and wine matching, and general discussion at 5:30 p.m. \$95 per person includes the wine, the Wine Bible and one white and one red wine glass.

March 18 & 19

▪ **BIZ SEMINARS** – Southwestern Community College's Business Assistance Center will present two business seminars at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. "Successful Marketing for the Craftsperson and the Artist" from 1-4 p.m. on Thursday, March 18. "Building Your Business Image" from 9 a.m. until noon on Friday, March 19. For more information, call SCC at 743-6688 or at 349-1278.

March 20

▪ **LIVE PERFORMANCE** – 1st Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show Produced by The Instant Theatre Company at 7:30 p.m. at The Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center. Tickets are \$10 for adults in advance, \$15 at the door. \$5 for children under 18. For more info, call 828-342-9197.

March 22

▪ **AGING ISSUES** – The Region A Area Agency on Aging serving the southwestern counties is holding an Aging Issues Forum for public input to develop a four year, 2004-2008, Area Aging Plan. Seniors are invited to come to the Golden Age Senior Center Monday at 2 p.m. Call 586-8562 for more information.

March 24

▪ **CUSTOMER APPRECIATION** – Highlands Postmaster Elizabeth Kelley wants to show her appreciation to Highlands with a party in the lobby of the Post Office from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be refreshments and goodies. "Just our way to say, thanks."

March 25

▪ **PTO MEETS** – The PTO Board meeting 4:30 p.m. at the Highlands School Library.

March 27

▪ **LIVE MUSIC** – Arthur & Katie strumming and singing at Buck's Coffee Cafe from 8-11 p.m.

Growth and home prices on the rise in Highlands

By Kim Lewicki

A lot of data in Marketek's population study commissioned by the town verifies what most Highlanders already know — the growing desirability of Highlands will undoubtedly fuel popu-

lation growth over the next few decades and home values in the town and township tend to be above those throughout Macon County.

Using 2000 Census data, Marketek reports an average home value of

\$289,314 in the town and \$305,753 in the township. "But that's low," said Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein. "A new 1,250 sq. ft. home on a side street in town without a view

▪See GROWTH pg 15

Parking restrictions in effect



Photo by Jim Lewicki

Various parking restrictions went into effect Wednesday, March 17 — earlier than in years past. In response to complaints from business owners on South Fourth Street, the two-hour parking district was extended up "the hill" on Fourth Street and along Church Street. Ryan Angel and Scott Nelson, bike patrol officers with the Highlands Police Dept., are patrolling the parking district, issuing citations to those who ignore time limits.

Final piece now in place for OEI

By Kim Lewicki

With the final OK from the zoning board, architects can now complete the Old Edward Inn and Spa on the property between Church, Fourth and Main streets.

At a special called meeting of the zoning board March 17, board members issued a Special Use Permit

to rebuild the Highland Hiker/McCully building contingent upon gross square footage verification by Deputy Zoning Administrator Richard Betz.

Some months ago, problems arose when architects for OEI learned that the basement area of the

▪See FINAL page 15

Annexation request turns to built-upon limit issue

By Kim Lewicki

An annexation request from owners of a lot along the south side of Lake Sequoyah on Arnold Road has the Town Board rethinking its watershed ordinance and built-upon requirements in the critical and balance of the watershed.

Owners of a lot six lots in from N.C. 106 on Arnold Road, Jack Sawyer and Bill Torres are requesting annexation so they can hook onto the town's sewer which ultimately leaves them more area for building, said commissioners.

"They don't have to worry about the setback from the lake for a septic system or a drain field if they hook onto the sewer," said Commissioner Amy Patterson.

Board members weren't necessarily opposed to annexing the lot. "For years we've wanted some kind of control along the south shore of Lake Sequoyah," said Patterson. "We've wanted vegetation buffers, dock regulations as it relates to sedimentation because the county doesn't have much. It's important that we do what we can to protect our water source."

Commissioner Hank Ross said he liked the idea of homes along the lake being on the sewer.

But Mayor Buck Trott said it felt like "spot annexing" to him because

▪See ANNEXATION page 16

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Printed by the Asheville Citizen-Times, Asheville, N.C.

• FORUM •

The benefits of free publications

I'm constantly asked when I'm going to start charging for Highlands' Newspaper. The answer is "never" and here's why.

I provide the news to the community as a service. I don't think anyone should have to pay for the news.

There are other reasons, too. My advertisers like the fact that prospective buyers and clients don't have to buy the newspaper to see their ads.

Visitors and locals pick up one of the 5,000 copies distributed from more than 100 points in and around Highlands because it's free. Locals, which include year-round homeowners and second-homeowners, pick the paper up because it represents another voice in town.

Highlands' Newspaper has grown in reputation since it's maiden issue July 18, 2003. Now people in Dillard, Otto, Franklin, Cashiers, Lake Glenville, Sapphire, Scaly Mountain and of course Highlands wait anxiously for its arrival every Friday.

And, more than 500 people read each week's issue on-line from all over the country - and that's free, too. (Statistics can be verified by Earthlink and The Asheville Citizen-Times Press.)

The Macon County News & Shopper, Smoky Mountain News, the Highlands Real Estate Buyer's Guide and the Laurel Magazine are all free publications and always have been. Highlands' Newspaper is just following a business practice that obviously works.

The only publication in town that isn't free is "The Highlander" - one of 30-some papers owned and operated by Community Newspapers, Inc., out of Athens, Ga.

Interestingly, it looks like CNI is beginning to appreciate the benefits of free papers, too. Stacks of "The Highlander," each stamped "complimentary," are available at Highlands Town Hall, the lobby of the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, Mountain High Lodge, and the Highlands Visitor Center.

Free publications are good for all. Advertisers prefer them because more people read them - people don't have to buy the publication to see their ads.

Our advertisers provide the revenue which enables Highlands' Newspaper to provide a free news service for the community. We thank them and the Highlands community for supporting Highlands' Newspaper over the last nine months. Now that spring is upon us and the season is beginning, may we all have a prosperous 2004.

• OBITUARY •

Hugh "Morgan" Richards

Hugh "Morgan" Richards died at Lakeland Regional Medical Center on Wednesday, March 10 of respiratory failure.

Dr. Richards was born in Lakeland, Fla., August 7, 1923 to Dr. H. Mercer and Stella Richards. He attended schools in Lakeland through high school, but graduated from Georgia Military Academy in 1941. He attended the University of Florida, but like most young men of the time, dropped out and enlisted in the armed services. He served his country in the European Theatre of Operation from 1942-1946 as a front line combat medic and was awarded the Bronze Star.

Upon his return, Morgan attended Emory University earning his undergraduate degree in 1948. On a bet he and his friend the late Dr. Jim Bird attended Emory University School of

Dentistry, 1948-1952. While in dental school he married Helen, the former Helen Jane Hazen who was attending Nursing School at Emory.

He began practicing dentistry in Lakeland in 1952. He was active politically serving dentistry as the president of the Polk County and West Coast Dental Associations. He continued serving as a delegate and trustee to the Florida Dental Association. He retired from his practice in 1989 after 37 years. He was active civically serving as a deacon at the First Presbyterian Church and assistant scout master of Troop 104 with Hank Higginbotham.

Morgan had numerous hobbies. Most notably he was known to be able to fix anything from a color television to a toaster and his collection of tools

▪ See OBITUARY page 5



Candidate Judge John Snow who is running against incumbent Senator Bob Carpenter as State Senator for District 50 in the Nov. 2 election, talked to a packed house at the Highlands Precinct Democratic meeting at Town Hall, Saturday, March 13.

Judge Snow going to the people on his way to the State Senate in Raleigh

By Kim Lewicki

The Highlands Democrat Precinct meeting, Saturday, March 13 at Town Hall was a lesson in grass roots politics at its best.

Democrat leaders from Macon County and the Highlands Community are fired up about the Nov 2, 2004 election – and not just the presidential one.

Judge John Snow is running in the North Carolina State Senate District 50 race against Senator Bob Carpenter, a 16-year Republican veteran.

"This candidate is the real deal," said Macon County Democratic Party Chairman Bobby Kuppers of John Snow. "This guy needs to be in Raleigh, period."

Kuppers said Snow has served more than 27 years on the bench in North Carolina, four years as district attorney. "He has a grasp of what District 50 is all about and has a "no-nonsense" approach to things," said Kuppers.

"I want to be your representative, your senator in Raleigh," said Snow. "We are living in times of great change and we need someone in Raleigh who knows who you are, what you want and what you need in Macon County."

Snow said he is accustomed to applying laws to solve problems but good laws are needed to help our people, he said. "Listening to you, communicating with you, visiting you, understanding your needs is how I can help you in Raleigh," he said.

Snow said representatives in Raleigh need to do something about jobs leaving North Carolina.

"We need to bring our resources to bear and the only way to do that is to be personally involved," said Snow. "We need to let businesses and industries know that Macon County is a good place to raise families, a good place to work."

He said his years on the bench have shown him the negative effects of not having a job on a family.

"There is a lot of dignity in having a job, of being able to feed your family," said Snow. "I've seen in court what happens when people lose their jobs. It leads to custody fights, crime, abuse. I know what's going on out there."

Kuppers said the Macon County Democrat Party is determined to see changes this election. "But people have to get out and vote," he said.

Kuppers encourages all Democrats to attend the next Men's Democrat Breakfast meeting March 27 at Angel Hospital where Judge Snow will be the key speaker. "We need to get our candidate exposed to as many people as possible," he said.



Photos by Jim Lewicki
Area Democrat leaders Bobby Kuppers, Allan Bryson, Buck Trott with Judge John Snow.

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• COOKING ON THE PLATEAU •

There's still time to cook for St. Paddy

By Cynthia Stacey

Contributor

There is a reason why St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in Ireland and I believe it has less to do with snakes then it does a celebration of the freedom of speech.

Because I have a nice Gaelic last name like Stacey I took it upon myself to do a little research on what St. Paddy's day was really all about. That was when I found this Street Ballad at the public library which gave me a much greater understanding and appreciation for what transpired in the 1700s when green was adopted as the color of the "nationalist" party in Ireland. It also gives me a much deeper appreciation for the freedoms we enjoy in this country when I celebrate St. Patrick's Day, admittedly with a bit of flare.

Now there is nothing flashy about Irish cooking, in fact it is very simple and often somewhat bland for my taste, so I have taken the liberty of spicing things up a bit with this Irish Stew that I make every year on St. Patrick's Day. My Irish father would have preferred corned beef and cabbage but in my opinion a hot bowl of lamb stew with bread fresh out of the oven warms both heart, home and soul.

So with a bit of spice added to the stew, a few green carnations and a bottle of Bailey's I raise a toast to the wearin' o' the green. (. . . and if you're in the mood for a video I recommend "The Secret of Roan Innish")

Stacey's Irish Stew

from Thea's Kitchen

copyright 2004

5 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered

3 carrots cut in 2 inch chunks

2 pounds of cubed lamb for

stew (I prefer leg of lamb)

3 large onions sliced thin

5 cloves of fresh garlic, chopped

1 bay leaf

pinch of thyme

4 teaspoons salt

1/4 teaspoon white pepper

ground fresh black pepper to taste

1/4 teaspoon sage

1/2 teaspoon rosemary (crush in palm of hand)

1 quart chicken stock

2 tablespoons fresh minced parsley

Brown lamb in olive oil in heavy skillet then add stock and

remaining ingredients except parsley which you can add after

stew has simmered for about an hour. Simmer covered until lamb

is tender, approx. 2 hours. Serve in soup bowls with plenty of broth

and fresh hot bread.



The Wearin' of the Green — Boucicault

(public domain)

O Paddy dear, an' did ye hear
the news that's goin' round?

The shamrock is by law forbid
to grow on Irish ground

No more St. Patrick's Day we'll
keep, his colour can't be seen,

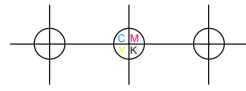
For there's a cruel law agin the
wearin' o the Green.

I met wid Napper Tandy and
he took me by the hand,

And he said 'How's poor ould
Ireland, and how does she stand?

She's the most distressful
country that iver yet was seen

For they're hangin' men an'
women there for the wearin' o the
Green.

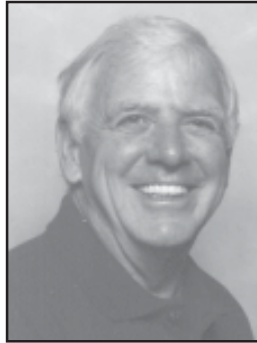


• ASK FRED •

This lady has her shorts in a wad

Not So Dear Fred:

I am a refined, intelligent lady who reads your articles in the "Highlands' Newspaper" and I find you to be the most arrogant, obnoxious and mean-spirited person I think I have ever known. I wouldn't vote for you, even if you ran for dog catcher. I can't stand you. How did you get like that?



Fred Wooldridge

Angry in Highlands

Dear Angry in Highlands:

Well, I am not running for dog catcher and normally I don't like to respond to questions with sexual overtones, but in this case, I will make an exception. After all, "normal" is not in my vocabulary.

Everyone who has seen the movie "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" knows that all words come from Greek origin. In this case the word "arrogant" comes from the Greek slang term, or group of words "arroganous manarrous" which means sensuous mannerisms and feelings for an object.

This most often happens with men and their guns, but that's another story. As a female, your use of this word connotes, in Greek translation, a sexual fascination with my words in the newspaper.

Furthermore, the word "obnoxious" in Greek translation,

means noxious-pladedious or, I want to grope or touch an object that belongs to a person like me who puts words in a newspaper.

This fetish you have is more common among women who voted in Palm Beach, Florida during the last

presidential race. Closing the voting booth curtain behind them, they caressed the candidate's names in front of them and were overhead saying, "Bless me father, for I have sinned." If you are from Palm Beach, I can't help you.

But if you are from Highlands, I can temporarily relieve you of your sexual fantasies. Here's how. Make an appointment with me immediately and I will let you come over and fondle my computer.....as long as you wear gloves and my wife is home. That should hold you for a while.

Oh, I almost forgot to tell you how I got like this. It takes years of hard work. First, get a job as a policeman in Miami and stay there 28 years. That will get you well underway. Then spend the next 14 years dangling from a rope on the cliffs around Highlands, followed by a controversial column in the "Highlands' Newspaper."

POW, you become like me. I am soooooo impressed that you want to emulate me.

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 – in ASK FRED. 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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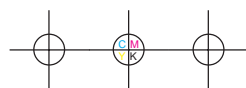
... OBITUARY continued from page 2

could rival what you would find a hardware store.

In Highlands, N.C., he was Mr. Fixit for Mountain Findings. He was a pilot with both single, multi-engine and seaplane ratings and continued to fly until his health prevented it.

Morgan is survived by Helen Richards; daughter Laura Richards Garland of Panama City Beach, Fla.; two sons, Charles P. Richards and Dr. Harley M. Richards both of Lakeland; a brother, William T. Richards of LaGrange, Ga.; and six grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the American Cancer Society.



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• BOOK REVIEW •

with Katie Brugger

"The Empty Ocean," by Richard Ellis (577.7E)

Humans may indeed be emptying the oceans, as this book charges, but it now appears that sea creatures are beginning to strike back. Last week a sea lion grabbed a fisherman off a boat in Anchorage, Alaska. An AP report quoted the man's father, "The sea lion was just swimming around the boat like they always do when the boats are delivering fish." The article continues: "And just like that, the creature — estimated about 12 feet long and between 1,200 and 1,500 pounds — leaped a half dozen or more feet out of the water and grabbed his son." The young man was not injured, but after reading this book I have to admit I was rooting for the sea lion.

I'll give you fair warning: reading this book may mean you'll never eat fish again! Richard Ellis is the author of numerous books, including *The Book of Whales*, *The Book of Sharks*, and *Search for the Giant Squid*. He is currently a research associate at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. This book is meticulously researched — the bibliography is 43 pages long! Unfortunately though, it is organized in such a way that it is not an easy read. The subject matter is depressing enough, and to keep the reader's interest the author should have woven a story.

Instead, Mr. Ellis took a dry scientific approach, devoting a chapter each to fish, whales, porpoises, sea turtles, sea birds, seals, etc. and then splitting each chapter into sections specifically about an individual species. And since the history of almost every species is basically the same — abundance in the past, discovery by humans, modern depletion and destruction — the book becomes tedious. Someone needs to come along and take Mr. Ellis's research and shape this material into a form that people will read, because there is an important message here: we are severely overfishing the oceans but we can change and use the oceans in a sustainable manner.

The descriptions of modern fishing practices are appalling. Mr. Ellis writes that "The introduction of new fishing technologies in the latter half of the twentieth century changed the nature of the fishing industry. Now fishermen deploy longlines that may be a hundred miles long and hung with thousands of baited hooks, which may be intended to catch a particular kind of fish — marlins and swordfish, for example — but catch everything else, too, including thousands of unwanted species of fish, sea turtles, dolphins, and sea birds. Gill nets are submerged walls of netting whose meshes form a noose around the heads and bodies of fish that swim into them. Because of the huge bycatch of marine wildlife in these nets, they have been labeled 'walls of death'; hundreds of thousands of whales, dolphins, seabirds, sea turtles, and sharks, and other nontarget species have been killed by them to date. Bottom trawlers scrape the ocean floor clean of every living thing, from bottom-dwelling fishes to corals." The innocuous term for unwanted fish that are caught and discarded is "bycatch."

Research has found that "For every 10 pounds of Gulf of Mexico shrimp scraped from the seafloor, 80 to 90 pounds of 'trash fish'— rays, eels, flounder, butterfish, redfish, batfish, and more, including juveniles of many species — are mangled and discarded, in addition to tons of plants and animals not even considered worth reporting as 'bycatch,' i.e starfish, sand dollars, urchins, crabs, turtle grass, seaweed, sponges...and whatever else constitutes the seafloor communities that are in the path of nets."

It's not just overfishing that is threatening the future of many ocean species: pollution is a problem too, particularly for species that live close to shore. Pollution sources include runoff from farming and coastal development, sewer discharge, and burning of fossil fuels.

■ See BOOK REVIEW page 14

B-Ball 2004 Season Champions



The Macon County Basket Ball Biddy League Team (ages 7-9) "The Heat," were 2004 Season Champions and Tournament Runner up this season. The team's overall record was 12-1. From Left to right: Logan Schmitt, Cai Roman, Austin Reese, Corbin Hawkins, Luke Fairley, Will Araujo, Clayton Dunn, Cody St.Germain, Matthew Rodriguez, Justin Rodriguez, Coach: Timothy Dearth, (not Pictured) Frank Rodriguez

Commended for a job well done

On Friday, March 5, General Manager of OEI Manuel de Juan, treated everyone working on the OEI project to a cookout at Highlands Diner. He thanked all for working so hard through all kinds of weather to make OEI a success. He said he was proud of the project and the quality of work done.



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Annual Crop Walk set for April 17

By Luke Osteen
Contributor

With the advent of spring weather, walkers, strollers and all-around Good Samaritans are stretching and preparing for the Highlands CROP Walk, slated for 9 a.m. Saturday, April 17.

Crop Walk is a gentle 2-mile stroll through town, starting and stopping at Highlands United Methodist Church. CROP, Christian Rural Overseas Program, funds hunger alleviation projects throughout the world.

CROP Walks have been held in Highlands since 1996 and the local effort has raised over \$53,000. Donations are being collected by area churches or people can sponsor a walker. Collection jars have been placed at The Pizza Place, Movie Stop, Don Leon Deli Cafe, Fireside Restaurant, Bryson Food Store, Mt Fresh Fine Foods, Buck's Coffee Shop, Pescados Highland

Burrito, Sports Page, Gas Light, Subway, and the International Friendship Center.

This year, 25 percent of funds raised locally will be donated to the International Friendship Center, a non-profit agency with the mission of providing information to the growing international populations of Macon County and Jackson County.

Its objective is to establish relationships of confidence and mutual respect between the local community and the international community.

From 8 to 10 a.m. on the day of the race, a fund-raiser pancake breakfast will be held at Highlands United Methodist Church. Walkers, sponsors or anyone looking for a delicious meal are invited to attend.

To be a participant, sponsor a walker or for more information about CROP Walk contact Beth Graham at 743-6688 or 526-3852.



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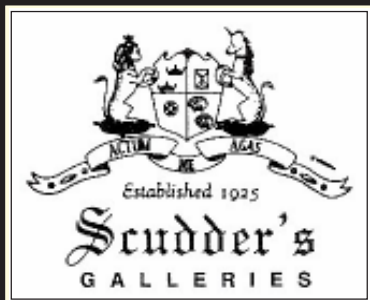
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• MOVIE PIX •

**Video Guy
Presents:**

Strictly Ballroom

The 1992, PG romantic comedy from Australia, written by Baz Luhrmann and Craig Pearce, starring Paul Mercurio and Tara Morice and a bunch of other people that no one from the States would have ever heard of, but nonetheless are spectacular.



Stuart Armor

Sort of romantic comedy, sort of a mock-umentary, sort of a spoof, it follows the story of the talented, arrogant, and frankly stupid, Paul (played by Mercurio), in his life long quest for Pan Pacific Grand Prix Ballroom Dance Championship. Coached and managed on the way by his obsessive and deranged mother, he seems destined for success. But Scott is a bad boy and a rebel, and wants to do the unthinkable, add his own dance steps, and naturally this scandalizes the venerable Ballroom dance community. If this sounds ridiculous and stupid, that's because it is. It is also a screamingly funny, laugh till you hurt yourself story. Bizarre characters, wonderful facial expressions, cliché on cliché on cliché make this movie.

Along the way, he meets the klutzy, mousy and plain Fran (flawlessly played by Tara Morice) who dares to dream of dancing with Scott in the competition. There is no chance at all of this happening, and even less chance

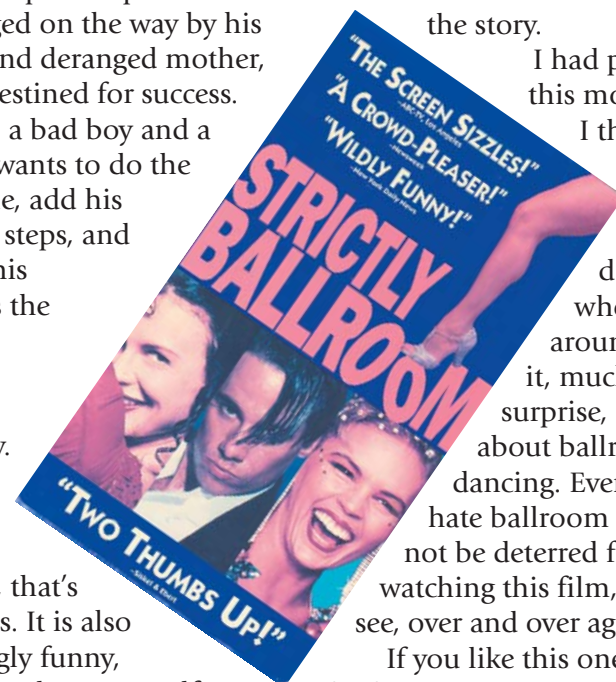
of her becoming his love interest. So, of course, she becomes his dancing partner and love interest, duh. Good guys, bad guys, intrigue, dark family secrets, and Spanish spoken with an Australian accent all play into the story.

I had passed on this movie because

I thought it was all about ballroom dancing, but when I did get around to seeing it, much to my surprise, it was all about ballroom

dancing. Even if you hate ballroom dance, do not be deterred from watching this film, it's a must see, over and over again.

If you like this one, give a look to Hairspray, Footloose, Shall We Dance?, Chorus Line, Dirty Dancing, and Cabaret. More outrageous Aussie films are Così, Love Serenade, Children of the Revolution, Welcome To Woop Woop, and Pricilla Queen of the Desert. These and about 5000 other titles on VHS and DVD are available at Movie Stop, stop on in, give us a look.



• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL SPRING SOCCER •

A brief forecast of girls' soccer this season

By Roger Mueller

Highlands School Soccer Coach

From the onset, you have to be pretty excited about our prospects. We are 1-1-1 and have already scored 3/4ths as many goals as we did last year.

We have plenty of depth this year and at least three to five players who can score. If we can have strong matches against Walhalla and Rabun Gap then I think we will have a successful season. We still haven't played our best soccer yet — we'll have to convert those positive playing experiences we're having in practices to the matches. Once we do that, I think it will be great to watch us play.

The Rabun County match was our best effort thus far. We could've won but really ran out of energy towards the last 15 minutes of the game.

Key players to watch — Amy Crook, Angela Aspinwall, Callie Rawlins, Rosalind Ashburn, Jenna Greene and the freshmen.



Varsity player Amy Crook at the home game against Towns County, Ga., March 11,

Highlands School Women's Soccer Schedule Spring, 2004

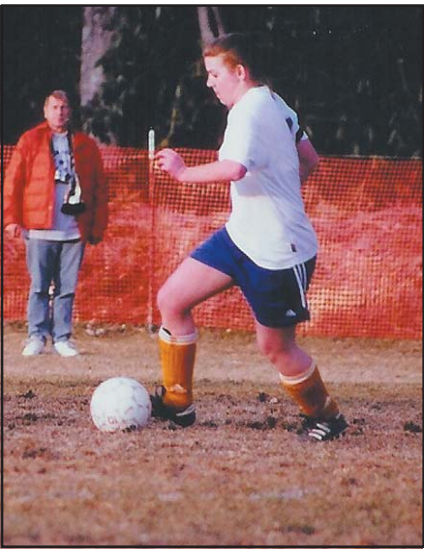
Date	Day	Time	Place	Opponent
Mar. 17	Wed.	6 p.m.	Home	West Oak
Mar. 19	Fri.	4:30 p.m. V	Home	Rabun-Gap
Mar. 22	Mon.	4:30 p.m.	Home	Murphy
Mar. 24	Wed.	4:30 p.m.	Away	West Oak
Mar. 26	Fri.	5 p.m. JV, 6 p.m. V	Away	Towns Cty
Mar. 29	Mon.	6 p.m.	Away	Cherokee
Mar. 30	Tues.	5 p.m.	Home	Rabun Cty
April 1	Thurs.	4 p.m. JV,	Home	Rabun-Gap
April 1	Thurs.	6 p.m. V	Away	Andrews
April 14	Wed.	5 p.m. JV, 6:30 V	Away	Walhalla
April 19	Mon.	6 p.m.	Away	Murphy
April 21	Wed.	5 p.m., JV 6:30 V	Home	Walhalla
April 23	Fri.	4:30 p.m. JV only	Away	Rabun-Gap
April 26	Mon.	4:30 p.m.	Home	Andrews
April 28	Wed.	5:30 p.m.	Home	Madison
County				
April 30	Fri.	4:30 p.m. JV only	Home	Rabun-Gap
May 3	Mon.	4:30 p.m.	Home	Cherokee
May 12	Wed.	TBA	TBA	1st Round State Playoffs

Coach: Roger Mueller

Managers: Greg Porter, Josh Hedrick, Paul Frederick



Claire Frederick and Iyali Ruiz at the March 11 game.



Amy Crook at the March 11 Home game against Towns County, Ga., Highlands won 3-0.

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Sports Page

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Scholarships for nursing available

The Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee is now accepting applications for the Judy Moore Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship program for nurses was established in 1997 to honor Judy Moore who was killed in 1996.

Two scholarships for \$1,000 will be made available for the year 2004-2005. The application deadline is May 17, 2004 for both undergraduate and graduate scholarships. Applicants must have completed their first semester in nursing and meet other eligibility requirements.

For more information, call Anne Hyder at Macon County Public Health Center at 349-2424.

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DAWN OF THE DEAD
rated R

7:10 & 9:20 Nightly

4:20 Tuesday & Thursday Matinee

2:10 & 4:20 Saturday & Sunday Matinees

SECRET WINDOW
rated PG-13

7:05 Nightly

4:10 Tuesday & Thursday Matinee

4:10 Saturday & Sunday Matinees

STARSKY & HUTCH
rated PG-13

9:10 Nightly

2:05 Saturday & Sunday Matinees

HIDALGO
rated PG-13

7 & 9:30 Nightly

4:30 Tuesday & Thursday Matinee

2 & 4:30 Saturday & Sunday Matinees

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
rated R

7 & 9:30 Nightly

4:30 Tuesday & Thursday Matinee

2 & 4:30 Saturday & Sunday

• SPORTS PICKS •

Four to Score

Tips for making your bracket super, scintillating & sensational
(copyright Duke Vitale)



Ryan Potts

How do I pick a first round upset? Here are four tips.

1. Go-To Guy

A great Cinderella team has to have a money player-one who can step up to the challenge when the favored team clamps down on the defensive end. Past examples of this phenomenon include Harold Arceneaux, Bryce Drew, Brett Blizzard and Wally Sczerbiak. Some money players from midmajors this year include; Zakee Wadood from East Tennessee State, Raphael Araujo from BYU, Luis Flores of Manhattan and Taylor Coppenrath from Vermont.

2. Who did they play?

Check in see if your Cinderella has beaten anyone of note this season. BYU has a win over Oklahoma State, Richmond has wins at Kansas and at Colorado, and Murray State has beaten both TCU and Southern Illinois.

3. 3 Point Shooting.

Does your Cinderella shoot the 3 well? It is the great equalizer in college hoops-and it has helped cause many an upset over the years. Some of the top 3 point shooting midmajors this year are Louisiana-Lafayette, Air Force and Princeton

4. This is most important.

Who ARE they playing?

Check the matchup. 4-13 and 5-12 games just scream upset. Most important to look for are differences in style (if the favored team is full of great athletes and they are playing a ball control team like Princeton or Utah State) and how the higher seed finished the season. A team like Providence, who is backing into the dance having lost 3 straight is much more likely to be upset than a team that finished strong.

Four players to watch in this year's dance:

1. Blake Stepp — Gonzaga has the inside horses to go all the way this year, but they will go as far as Mr. Stepp can carry them. He is the money player that this team needs to show that they are Cinderella no

more.

2. Matt Freijie — Vanderbilt has slipped under the radar all year, but Freijie is good enough for a Sweet 16 bid if he can get hot.

3. John Gilchrest-He single-handedly won the ACC tournament for Maryland and is the hottest player in the country.

4. Rashad McCants — Call him a crybaby, call him a headcase, but also call him the man. McCants is one of few players in college today that cannot be stopped when he is hitting. A combination of athleticism and skills that can only be eclipsed by his liabilities on the defensive end.

Four more players to watch: (gotta keep the four theme going)

1. John Lucas Jr. — Oklahoma State was the surprise of the Big 12 and they did it behind the shooting of this young gun. His quickness and shooting ability give Oklahoma State a marquee player to hang their hat on.

2. Ben Gordon — Uconn has been maddeningly inconsistent, and Gordon personifies that. He has disappeared in big games down the stretch for the Huskies this year and must emerge as their closer if they are to live up to expectations.

3. Timmy Bowers — Mississippi State has been the quietest of the top teams this season, but Bowers is anything but quiet. With a loud mouth and an even louder game, Bowers has Rick Stansbury's club poised to make a deep tourney run.

4. Jason Maxiell — Cincinnati needs to atone for some recent tourney flops, and they can do it behind Maxiell, who is a dominating post presence on both ends.

The four best shooters in the dance:

1. JJ Redick, Duke — Makes more threes from NBA range than any shooter in this years tourney, he stretches the defense like no other and is automatic from the free throw line at the end of games

2. Luis Flores, Manhattan —

Flores is one of the top players in the nation that you have never heard of, and can light it up from behind the arc. He torched Southern Illinois on national TV, and will do it again in March Madness.

3. Derek Raivio, Gonzaga — The freshman sensation is one of the reasons for the Zags dominance this season. His perimeter shooting opens up the middle for Ronny Turiaf and company.

4. Francisco Garcia, Louisville — Willing to take and make the big shot as well as every other three leading up to that. An incredible weapon in Rick Pitino's high octane attack.

The four best defensive players in the dance:

1. Emeka Okafor, UConn — Changes the game on the defensive end with his shot-blocking ability and defensive rebounding prowess. Basically eliminates baseline drives with his uncanny timing and quickness.

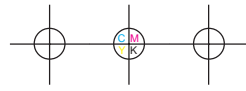
2. Josh Childress, Stanford — Long arms and size make him capable of hounding the oppositions best shooting guard. Has the quickness to stay with anyone on the floor, but can use his height to guard post players as well.

3. Cliff Hawkins, Kentucky — Tubby Smith is all about defense, and Hawkins is the best on ball defender college basketball has to offer. He locks down opposing point guards and shuts off dribble penetration as well as anyone.

4. Chris Duhon, Duke — Duhon is the best defender in the nation off the ball. He disrupts passing lanes as well as any guard in years, and he wreaks havoc on the help side by denying perimeter passes. Duke's all time leader in steals will add to his total in March.

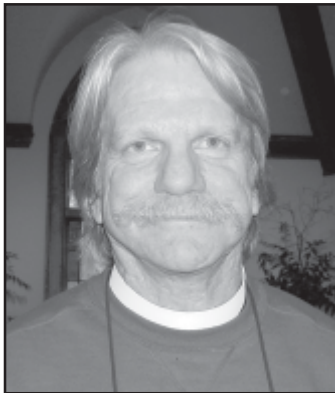
Four teams that will

•See SPORTS page 12



■ SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING ■

The importance of keeping appointments with God



Stephen Hines
Episcopal Church of
the Incarnation

J.C. Penney, founder of the chain of retail stores is credited with the following statement: "If a man's business requires so much of his time that he cannot attend the Services of the Church, then that man has more business than God intended him to have."

James A. Garfield, 20th president of the United States, is a good example of not having more business than God intended.

During the first week of Garfield's presidency, a member of his cabinet insisted that he should attend the cabinet meeting which had been called for 10 a.m. Sunday. It was a matter dealing with a national crisis, but Garfield refused on the grounds that he had an appointment.

The cabinet member insisted that he break his appointment since the Sunday morning meeting was of national importance.

Still Garfield refused. "I should be interested to know with whom you could have an appointment so important that it cannot be broken."

The President replied, "I will be as frank as you are. My engagement is with the Lord, to meet Him at His House at His Table at 11 a.m. tomorrow and I shall be there."

President Garfield kept the Lord's Day, the crisis passed and the nation survived.

• 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.

Christ Anglican Church **743-3319**

"A Bible-based liturgical church"
Services: Tuesdays at 5 p.m. at the Community Bible Church in Highlands
Holy Communion at most services.

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: Choir – 9 a.m.; Bible Study & Book Study classes – 9:15 a.m.; Holy Eucharist – 10:30 a.m.;
Children's Chapel – 10:30 a.m.
Mondays: Women's Cursillo Group (Library) – 4 p.m.;
Tuesdays: Men's Cursillo in Jones Hall – 8 a.m.
Wednesdays: Supper & Program in Jones Hall – 6 p.m.
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist – 10 a.m.
The Sunday Service is telecast on cable channel 14

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.;
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

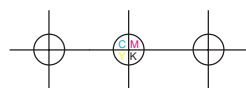
526-9769
Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time)
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

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.



... SPORTS continued from page 11

disappoint in the dance:

1. Saint Joseph's — they have the best backcourt, but their frontcourt is nonexistent. If they face a team with a dominant frontcourt player like Texas Tech then they will be sent home early.

2. Syracuse — Their 2-3 zone causes problems, but they lack a true point guard and Gerry

MacNamara is too streaky to carry the Orangemen.

3. Providence — The Friars have a super stud in Ryan Gomes, but the rest of the team is iffy, and they have not played well in their last few games and that does not bode well for tournament play.

4. Cincinnati — They need to be careful of ETSU in the first

round, who has two fine players and the shooting ability to upset the Bearcats.

Four Sleeper Picks:

1. North Carolina — They are extremely talented and have been tested night in and night out against the best in the country. McCants can carry this team if necessary. If they can get past Air Force in the first round then they could be Elite 8 bound.

2. Maryland — The Terps are

hot right now and have senior leadership in Jamar Smith to complement the great guard play of John Gilchrest and Travis Garrison.

3. Xavier — Another team that is peaking at just the right time. Chalmers and Sato give them versatility on the perimeter, and they play defense well enough to make noise in March

4. Wisconsin — The Badgers can defend on the perimeter and rebound well. They have a star player in Devon Harris who can come through in the clutch, and have just enough depth to survive the rigors of the dance.

Final Four Picks:

1. Gonzaga — The Bulldogs have the depth, the inside presence, and the superstar in Blake Stepp to finally make the Final Four and establish their program as a dominant force in College Hoops

2. Wisconsin — Devon Harris is a superstar, and the Badgers defend well enough to survive what I think is the easiest region by far.

3. UConn — This pick comes down to whether or not Emeka Okafor is on the floor during tournament time. UConn is deep and scary talented in the frontcourt, but their backcourt has been wishy-washy, which is bad news in the dance.

4. Duke — The Blue Devils will be the favorite to win it all coming in. They take people's best shot night in and night out, and they are successful despite that significant fact, which prepares them well for the tournament. Duke has the senior leadership necessary to win a title, as well as solid defense and great outside shooting.

Got 'Cabin Fever?'

Then find the cure this Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the Martin Lipscomb Performing Arts Center in Highlands when The Instant Theatre Company presents The First Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show.

The evening will feature singers, dancers, songs, storytelling, piano solos, impersonations, and yes, even a magician. One of the talented acts will receive a \$500 cash prize, based on audience reaction.

This is a one-night event and tickets are going quickly so be sure to reserve your seats by calling the ITC box office at (828) 342-9197.

• BUILDERS & ARCHITECTS •

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Rand Soellner's home designs feature beautiful Mountain timber elevations with wide, open plans with tall ceilings and the most value-engineered systems available. "I am just completing a knoll-top design for a client in Glenville, N.C. that has 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, Great Room-Kitchen-Dining, Family Room, Loft-Study, and attached 2-car garage with driveway and sitework. The builder has quoted a price of \$275,000. This is about half to one-third of normal prices for nice mountain homes on the Highlands-Cashiers-Toxaway Plateau," said Soellner.



The key to this kind of success is in designing a plan that meets the client's needs and orients to mountain views, keeping foundation costs low, using/creating value-oriented systems that are solid, then working with local Realtors and appraisers to have the look and features that will appreciate in value when people want to resell the home.

RAND SOELLNER ARCHITECT

Phone: 8 2 8 . 7 4 3 . 6 0 1 0
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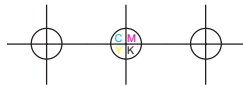
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Rand Soellner Architect shares office space in Wright Square, in Downtown Highlands, next to Nantahala Realty. Rand works with many of the builders, Realtors, private land owners and speculative developers in the Highlands-Scaly Mountain-Cashiers, Toxaway and Brevard area. Rand Soellner's homes are under construction all over Western North Carolina.



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Staff Physical Therapist – Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Active inpatient and outpatient caseload. Monday-Friday, 8 – 4:30. Excellent benefit package. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

R.N.s – Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE) Three positions open for nights; 36 hours per week. Prefer ACLS, TNCC, ENPC, or PALS with E.R. and cardiac background. Full-time R.N. in the O.R. Hospice Nurse. Competitive pay and an excellent benefit package included. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Maintenance Mechanic/Plumber - Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE): Preventive maintenance and repairs to hospital buildings, equipment, and machinery. Two years apprentice and four years work experience preferred. Some computer experience preferred. Competitive pay and an excellent benefit package. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Manager of Fidelia Eckerd Living Center at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Full-time, 40 hours+ per week, day shifts, but must be flexible. Responsible for operations of 80-bed LTC facility, including financials, budgets, payroll adjustments, survey preparation, marketing, policy/procedures, QA, safety, and environment. Works closely with Assis-

tant Manager (DON) to maintain an Eden environment for our residents. Candidates with previous LTC and Eden Alternative experience preferred. Pay depends on experience. Excellent benefit package. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

L.P.N., Physician's Office at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital (EOE): Full-time, weekdays. Competitive pay and an excellent benefit package. Pre-employment substance screening. For details call: Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

Wound Care Nurse, RN/LPN at Fidelia Eckerd Living Center at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. If you are a team player and love working with the elderly, WE WANT YOU! Our Edenizing facility has friendly, compassionate workers, supportive team leaders, and provides residents with the best in continuity of care. If you are dependable and possess above-average skills, apply now. Excellent benefit package. Pre-employment substance screening. Call Mary Osmar, Human Resources, 828-526-1301.

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Hilltop Grill needs mature, dependable person for kitchen and counter help at Hilltop Grill on Fourth and Spring streets. Call (828) 526-5916 or stop by.

• BY OWNER •

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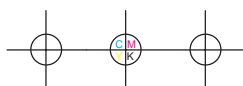
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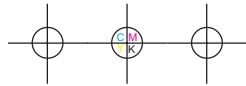


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... BOOK REVIEW continued from page 6

Remember how restaurants used to feature sole, swordfish, cod, haddock, and flounder? The fish that were historically considered prime eating have been so depleted that now we're eating what a generation ago was considered trash fish. Fishermen came up with catchy names to entice consumers to eat these new fish. They renamed the spiny dogfish the "cape shark" and the Patagonian toothfish from

Antarctica "Chilean sea bass."

Some of my friends are chefs, and years ago one showed me, as he was cutting up a large fish into fillets, how fish just weren't as healthy as in years past (I'll spare you the gory details). Another told me, "New species of fish are constantly being introduced, and it seems like they are always from farther away, for example Chilean sea bass. Also, the fish are smaller. Ten years ago you wouldn't see a fillet

smaller than five pounds for certain fish, now the fillets of that fish are no bigger than one pound." When I talked to a third chef this week, everything he said confirmed what I had read in this book. In fact, though he had not read the book it seemed like he had just finished it and was summarizing it for me.

Fish farming sounds like a solution, but in many cases it just creates new problems. "Farmed salmon are fed meal and oils from wild-caught fish. Each pound of salmon produced requires at least three pounds of wild-caught fish, challenging the presumption that fish farming necessarily reduces commercial fishing pressure. Pens full of salmon produce large amounts of waste — both excrement and unconsumed feed. This may result in unfavorable water quality conditions (such as high nutrient levels and low levels of oxygen) detrimental to both the farmed fish and the natural ecosystem." Packed conditions promote disease, and there is danger of transmitting disease to wild salmon. Also farmed fish escape, particularly during storms, and then can breed with wild fish, weakening wild stock and, if farmed salmon are genetically-modified, putting those genes into wild salmon.

The book contains an interesting bit of trivia concerning the wife of the Democratic candidate for President: In 1987 an activist signed on to a tuna boat as a laborer and surreptitiously filmed the slaughter of dolphins, made it into a film, and showed the film to Theresa Heinz, chair and CEO of Heinz Corporation, which owns StarKist, the largest tuna cannery in the U.S. After seeing the film, Ms Heinz began the "dolphin-safe" tuna program.

The most frustrating part of this book is that Mr. Ellis doesn't give the reader any information about what he or she can do. You get the feeling that not eating fish can't be the answer, because the teeming human population has to be fed something. Mr. Ellis does tell of research that shows that one solution to overfishing is the establishment of no-take marine reserves. "One of the more recently established marine reserves is located near the island of St. Lucia in the eastern Caribbean. Generations of fishermen have fished there using handlines or nets, but by the mid-1990s the reefs had become

almost barren. Conservationists cordoned off an 11-mile stretch of reef and prohibited fishing there, and five years later, the refuge was bursting with fish, which lived longer and grew larger. Moreover, big fish produce more offspring than smaller ones, and the extra fish are transported out of the refuge on ocean currents, making the reserve a nursery for nearby fisheries."

Mr. Ellis also describes the effect that restaurant owners have had on the fishing industry. In the 1990s it was becoming apparent that swordfish were on the way to extinction, and a movement began called Give Swordfish a Break, encouraging restaurants not to serve swordfish. Many leading restaurants joined, along with many cruise lines, and in October 2002 it was announced that the North Atlantic swordfish population had recovered to 94 percent of levels considered to be healthy.

But that still left me wondering what action I could take. There are resources out there, and I'll list a couple that I have found. Carole Baldwin, an ichthyologist at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, has just written a cookbook entitled *One Fish, Two Fish, Crawfish, Bluefish: The Smithsonian Sustainable Seafood Cookbook*. The recipes only call for fish or shellfish that are caught or farmed in ways that don't risk the future of the species. Information is available at www.mnh.si.edu/seafood.

Sierra Club members recently received pocket seafood guides from the Monterey Bay Aquarium that you can use when buying fish in a market or ordering in a restaurant. The guide has three columns: "best choices" (e.g., catfish, tilapia, stone crab), "proceed with caution" (e.g., pacific cod, sea scallops, canned tuna), "avoid" (e.g., Chilean sea bass, grouper, swordfish). They also have a website where you can print out your own guide or read up on the status of a particular fish:

www.montereybayaquarium.org (click on "Choices for Healthy Oceans"). The site is fun; they have live webcams so you can watch the activity in the various aquariums.

So it appears we don't have to stop eating fish. As one of my chef friends put it: "If we make the right choices, we can solve the problem of overfishing."

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORT •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of March 12-17. The only names are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

March 12

- A little past midnight, officers responded to an alarm at Fireside Restaurant in Wright Square. All was secure.
- At 7:30 a.m., a motorist at Oak and Third streets was cited for driving without a license.

March 13

- At 4 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at the Old Edwards Inn. All was secure.
- At 12:00 p.m., officers responded to a call of a dog bite from a woman on Cullasaja Drive.
- At 2:15 p.m., a purse found in the Cullasaja River at Gold Mine Road was turned over to police who turned it over to the Macon County Sheriff's Dept.

March 16

- At 9:45 a.m., officers responded to an accident involving two vehicles in the parking lot of Highlands Decorating Center. There were no injuries.
- At 4:30 p.m., a motorist was cited for littering.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department log entries for the week of March 10-17

March 12

- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers on a structure fire..

March 14

- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers on a woods fire.

March 17

- The dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Club Circle Drive. It was a false alarm.

Girls win big at gymnastic match



New Vision Gymnastics takes gold and silver at the North Carolina State USA Sanctioned Junior Olympic Gymnastic competition for level 8 held March 13 and 14. Casey Jenkins from Highlands School (left) brought home the gold with a first place win in Level 8 floor competition and qualified for regional competition in April. Katherine Munger (left) took silver on the vault. Congratulations to all the girls and to their coach, April Makinson.

... GROWTH continued from page 1

is listing for \$380,000. That's an entry-level home."

Several real estate agencies in town estimate that the price of homes in the Highlands area has doubled in the past five years.

Countywide, average home values were \$133,797 in 2000. Permit data from the Macon County Building Inspection Department reveals that estimated home value of newly constructed units in the county, which includes portions of the town of Highlands, increased 15 percent from 2000-2002.

Marketek says households within the town and township are generally more affluent than households county- and statewide. The estimated 2003 median household income of \$47,007 in the town and \$46,611 in the township. The median household income in Macon County is estimated at \$34,703 and \$42,641 statewide.

This supports the widely held belief that Highlands is increasingly drawing an affluent market, says Marketek, who calls Highlands a Rural Resort Dwellers Community.

Local real estate professionals and town officials listed reasons the Highlands real estate market is steady.

Improved roads to nearby metro areas have made the Highlands area more accessible, leading to an expansion in the second home market.

The majority of buyers are coming

"from wherever it's hot," including Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee and Mississippi.

An estimated 70 to 80 percent of home sales in the Highlands area are second homeowners.

Buyers of second homes are younger than purchasers were five years ago.

With home values in Highlands higher than in the county, buyers are interested in the investment aspect of their second homes here.

The "season" in Highlands has lengthened from June, July and August to April through December.

In areas like Highlands, where year-round residents, seasonal residents, tourists and businesses all compete for a diminishing supply of land, there is an ongoing question of how to meet market demands without jeopardizing quality of life.

"Local government, residents and the business community should work together to develop a collective vision to best manage future growth using the findings of the study as an initial framework for discussion," says Marketek.

The study was set for discussion at the March 17 Town Board meeting, but a medical emergency to the author of the population study has put plans to discuss its findings with Marketek on hold. "A new date hasn't been set," said Gantenbein.

... FINAL continued from page 1

Highland Hiker building couldn't be included in their square footage calculations.

The zoning board denied the Special Use Permit to renovate the Hiker building but said it would relook at the plans as long as they were substantially changed and the project didn't exceed 7,434 gross square feet.

As it turned out, OEI chose to tear down the Hiker building and "start fresh." Architects with Summerour have designed a connected extension of the complex called the Spa Addition five feet less than the allowed square footage.

It will include two suites which puts the room count at the inn on the lot (s) bordered by S. Fourth, Church and Main streets to 25 rooms as allowed.

Zoning Board chairman, John Dotson questioned allowing two rooms on what is technically a

separate lot adjoining the main lot. But board members agreed that since the entire complex is accessible by stairs, elevators, walkways and covered terraces, it is "essentially" one complex.

They also encouraged OEI to recombine the parcels into one parcel once all the work is completed.

"At that point you must understand that you cannot build one more thing on the parcel, and once combined you can't split it again," said board member Zeke Sossomon.

Caroline Rolader with Summerour said it's been OEI's intention to recombine everything into one parcel once work is completed as long as it wouldn't jeopardize the complex's grandfathered status.

Board members said the status wouldn't be affected.

● UPCOMING EVENTS ●

On-Going

- Registration for Summer Camp at the Highlands Rec Park is on. The camp begins June 14 and ends July 30. The camp will be closed the week of July 5-9. Camp is for children ages 5-10. Children must be 5 by June 14. No exceptions. Cost is \$2 per hour per child. Applications available at the Highlands Rec Park or call 526-3556 for more information.

- The Junior Girl Scouts are collecting aluminium cans to raise money for their trip to Savannah. Please deposit them in can on Church Street behind the Highlands United Methodist Church.. Will be collecting cans until the end of March.

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

- Every Saturday night there is live music at Buck's Coffee Cafe on Main Street.

- The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous now meets in the remodeled basement meeting room of the First Presbyterian Church sanctuary, in Highlands. Meeting times remain the same: Mondays at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wednesdays and Fridays at noon. For more info, call (800) 524-0465.

- Horticulture News is available for free from the Macon County Extension Center. Call 349-2046.

March 17, 24, 31

- Highlands Wine & Cheese Shop at Falls on Main presents a four-week

seminar on wine tasting, food and wine matching, and general discussion at 5:30 p.m. \$95 per person includes the wine, the Wine Bible and one white and one red wine glass.

March 18 & 19

- Southwestern Community College's Business Assistance Center will present two business seminars at the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. "Successful Marketing for the Craftsperson and the Artist" will be presented from 1-4 p.m. on Thursday, March 18. "Building Your Business Image" will be presented from 9 a.m. until noon on Friday, March 19. Each seminar is \$10 and seating is limited. Participants must pre-register by 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 16. To pre-register or for more information, call Southwestern Community College at 743-6688 or at 349-1278.

March 20

- 1st Annual Cabin Fever Variety Show Produced by The Instant Theatre Company at 7:30 p.m. at The Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center.

March 22

- The Region A Area Agency on Aging serving the southwestern counties is holding an Aging Issues Forum for public input to develop a four year, 2004-2008, Area Aging Plan. Seniors are invited to come to the Golden Age Senior Center Monday at 2 p.m. to express their opinion about current services or benefits now being offered and discuss needs not being met. Call 586-8562 for more information.

March 25

- PTO Board meeting 4:30 p.m. at the Highlands School Library.

March 25, March 27, March 29

- The Macon County Soccer Club wants soccer players to get ready for a brand new Spring Soccer Season. The season is planned to start on April 17 and continue through May. Registration will be at the Community Building in Franklin the following dates Thurs., March 25 from 6:30-8; Sat., March 27 from 10-2; Mon, March 29 from 6:30-8 The cost will be \$25 for players who registered and played during the fall 2003 season and for all others \$30. The spring league will be limited to children 14 years and younger. If you would like to coach call Tony Esterwood at 524-1928

March 27

- Arthur & Katie strumming and singing at Buck's Coffee Cafe from 8-11 p.m.

- Car Show from 11 am to 3 pm at the Whistle Stop Mall parking lot on Georgia Road (U.S. 441 South), Franklin. Registration fee is \$10 per car from 11 am to 1 pm day of the show. Top 20 cars to be awarded trophies. Free general admission. Proceeds help defray expenses for 2004 Macon County Senior Games/Silver Arts. More information: (828) 349-2090.

March 27

- The Satolah (Ga.) Volunteer Fire Department will hold its annual bluegrass & barbecue benefit Saturday at the firehouse on Route 28. Just below the boundary line with North Carolina. Dinner starts at 5 p.m., courtesy of the department's auxiliary, with music warming up at 7, with both Foxfire and Curtis Blackwell and the Dixie Bluegrass Band on tap. Cost of the dinner plates is \$6.50 for adults — somewhat less for children — with a choice of pork barbecue or fried chicken, plus cole slaw, baked beans, apple sauce and a roll.

March 28

- Auditions for the Highlands Community Players' spring play, the drama "Proof," will be held Sunday, at 3 p.m., downstairs at the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street in Highlands. The cast of four actors requires two women, one 20 to 30, one 30-40; two men, one 20-30, one 50 to 60. Rehearsals will be held during the month of April with performances May 6 through 9. A copy of the play can be read at the Hudson Library in Highlands. Call director Vir-

ginia Talbot, 526-4904, for more information.

March 31

- Art After School Session 4, at Bascom-Louise Gallery. Art for students in grades 4 through 8. 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.

April 1

- The Highlands Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the Highlands Historical Society and Smoky Mountain Host will present a Highlands Heritage Forum on Thursday, April 1, 5:30 p.m. at the Highlands Conference Center. This meeting is in answer to President Bush signing into federal law, legislation designating our region the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. In order that enough materials will be provided, please respond to the Chamber at 526.5841 by March 29 if you plan to participate.

April 3

- Flea Market from 8 am to 2 pm, annual spring Macon County Senior Games flea market at the County Community Building Gym, 1288 Georgia Road, Franklin. Proceeds from \$20 booth rentals and refreshment sales help defray expenses for 2004 Senior Games/Silver Arts program. More information or to rent a booth, call (828) 349-2090.

April 4

- The Macon County Horse Association will hold a Fun Show at the Macon County Fair Grounds. Practice classes begin at 11 a.m. with preview and instruction for our point shows and Games beginning at 1 p.m. There will be no fees for classes and no ribbons given. For more information call 349-6011 or 369-3810.

April 14

- Highlands School Seniors Cap & Gown pictures 9 a.m. at Highlands School.

April 17

- Highlands annual Crop Walk, a gentle 2-mile stroll through town starts and stops at HUMC. A fund-raiser pancake breakfast will be held at HUMC from 8-10 a.m. To participate, sponsor a walker or for more information, call Beth Graham at 743-6688 or 526-3852.

April 19

- There will be an organizational meeting for Adult Softball at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center. Anyone interested in having a team must attend this meeting.

- email events to highlandseditor@aol.com

... ANNEXATION continued from page 1

the annexation request doesn't include the five lots prior to the Sawyer/Torres lot. "I think we should see if owners of the other lots want to be annexed, too," he said.

Traditionally the town considers annexation requests on a case-by-case basis as long as the property is contiguous to the town limits. In previous annexation requests, lots have been contiguous by land. In this case, the lot is contiguous by water, said Town Administrator Richard Betz.

If annexed, because the lot is 1.03 acres there is no built-upon requirement under the current watershed ordinance. "There is no built-upon limit if the property exceeds one-acre," said Zoning Administrator

Larry Gantenbein. "The way the ordinance is written, the 12 and 24 percent built-upon limits go away once you meet the minimum lot size," said Gantenbein. There is a 24 percent built-upon limit when a lot is more than 1/2 acre but less than one acre.

Commissioners said that just doesn't make sense if the purpose of the ordinance is to control density.

The annexation request was tabled until commissioners learn from DENR if the town can tighten up the watershed ordinance to require built-upon limits regardless of the size of the lot. If they can, commissioners want to amend the ordinance prior to considering the annexation request.

