

Highlands' Newspaper

FREE

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Volume 3, Number 5

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, Feb. 4, 2005

On-Going

- At Highlands Wine & Cheese at the Falls on Main, wine flights Friday & Saturday from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

- The Instant Theatre Company's free Improvisation classes for adults Wednesday evenings Feb. through May, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the ITC's Studio at 310 Oak Square. Auditions for musicians and singers are held 7:30-8 p.m. on Wednesdays. Call 526-1687 to register for the free Improvisation class, or music audition.

- Pilates classes are Tuesdays & Thursdays at 5:15 p.m. at the Rec Park. The cost is \$8 per class, but the first class is FREE.

- At the Bascom-Louise Gallery - Open Studio with a Live Model 5:30-8:30 p.m. All participants bring their choice of art medium and \$10 to pay for the model and facilitator. Also, Art Leagues of Macon County exhibit.

- Al-Anon Group meets at noon on Thursdays in the Community Room at First Presbyterian Church.

- The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets in the remodeled basement room of the Presbyterian Church sanctuary, Mondays in Highlands at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wed. and Fri. at noon.

Feb. 3

- There will be a memorial gathering for Jack Chambers at Cyprus Restaurant on Wednesday, at 7 p.m. The cost of the dinner will be \$25 per person with an open bar. Reservations required. Call 526-3605.

Feb. 5

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy-to moderate 5-mile hike (with an elevation gain of 300 feet) in Pantherdown Valley to three waterfalls and the base of Big Green Mountain. Call leader Carl Blozan, 743-1765.

Feb. 6

- The youth mission to Bolivia will be having a spaghetti dinner Sunday, Jan. 30, 12:15 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church. Cost: \$8 for adults; \$4 for children.

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2.5 mile hike on the Standing Indian Campground loop trail. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin (opposite Burger King) at 2 p.m. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, more info.

Feb. 9

- Public Forum about county recreational plans Wed. from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Highlands Rec Park. Officials want to hear about ways to develop a comprehensive recreation master plan for Macon County.

Parents' input to determine school changes

By Kim Lewicki

About 23 citizens turned out for the final community forum school calendar meeting at Highlands School Thursday night. Now it all comes down to a vote.

Ballots arriving in the mail this week give parents a chance to vote on three proposed changes - school calendar, school start and end time, and switching to a block schedule for the high school.

Ballots must be postmarked by Feb. 4 to be counted. A committee made up of parents and teachers will count the ballots.

The month-long series of forums

were set up to explain proposed changes at Highlands School for the 2005-2006 school year.

Principal Monica Bomengen said there is no "hidden agenda" about the proposed changes they just represent new ideas open for discussion during the planning phase for next year. "There is no need to blindly do what's been done year after year just because that's the way it's been," she said.

Proposed calendar changes include the Traditional Calendar as it presently stands, with three days off for Thanksgiving, two weeks off for Christmas, and 10 weeks off for summer; the Balanced Calendar, dubbed year-round school,

which involves three-week breaks between the four grading periods and five weeks off for summer; and the Compromise Calendar which has four-day weekends between the four grading periods, a full week off for Thanksgiving, a week and a half off for Christmas, and 10 weeks off for summer.

Bomengen said initially the idea to make a calendar change came from herself and Assistant Principal Mark Thomas as a way to accommodate families who use "school year" time to vacation with their children.

She said families who take their children out of school for family vaca-

•See PARENTS page 2

A little bit of winter white



As soon as snow began to fall folks headed for nearby slopes to sled, ski and tube. This shot was taken 1 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 29 at Sapphire Valley Ski Area. Freezing temperatures continued through the week. On Wednesday, Feb. 2, freezing rain made road travel treacherous and officials to cancel meetings and close schools early. The Town Board meeting was cancelled and Highlands School students went home at 1 p.m. Photo by Jim Lewicki

Public input sought for county rec plan

By Kim Lewicki

If you've ever had ideas for improving county recreational facilities and programs now's your chance to go public.

On Wednesday, Feb. 9 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Highlands Rec Park, officials will be on hand to hear from the public about ways to develop a comprehensive recreation master plan for Macon County.

The long-range plan will serve to guide elected officials in developing county parks, recreation facilities and leisure-time activities and programs for Macon County.

"The outcome will be a road map for planning and budgeting for facilities and programs," said Becky Barr, with the Macon County Health Dept. "We really want to hear from the public - learn what they would like to see offered in their communities."

Ideas can run the gamut of facility renovations, new construction, recreational land development and programming needs.

•See REC PLAN page 14

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... PARENTS continued from page 1

tions aren't the majority at Highlands School but the numbers were still "alarming" to both her and Thomas.

"I've never seen anything like it in the 20 years I've been in education," she said.

But since the numbers don't involve a majority of Highlands School families, forum participants voiced concern over changing the calendar to accommodate them.

"The school shouldn't feel obligated to accommodate parents who want to pull their kids out of school," said several participants.

Steve Kerhoulas said a long summer is important to both the welfare and well-being of his children. "I wish summer was longer than it is," he said. "My boys are just tired at the end of the

school year. With sports and school they are just plan whipped." He said working during the summer is also important so they can earn money for college.

She said studies have shown that specific calendars don't positively or negatively affect student performance; it all comes down to the quality of teacher.

Proposed school start and end times are the current 8 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.; 8:30 a.m. to 3:20 a.m.; or 9 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

Highlands High School is one of only two schools west of Buncombe County that isn't on the block schedule. Called 4x4, it enables students to take four courses each semester instead

▪See PARENTS page 5

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

Ode to Stevie Potts

I can't say "Good-bye," as I will see you again
What a privilege to have known you
Your generosity, giving all that you had and then some,
to anyone in need, is such a rare quality today,
Thank you for showing us the important things in life,
through your example.
I am a better person for having known you.
You will be dearly missed, until we meet again.

– Patce Thornton

Family appreciates kindnesses

Dear Editor,

We would like to thank everyone for their phone calls, cards, visits, food, prayers, love and support during this time of our loss.

We would also like to thank the wonderful and caring staff of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital and Highlands-Cashiers Hospice, and Dr. Patti Wheeler. The nurses and staff went above and beyond their call of duty to comfort and care for Edna during her illness.

May God bless each of you as he has blessed us through you.

The Family of Edna Houston

• OBITUARY •

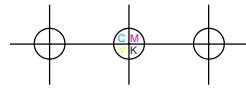
Frank Stephen Potts

Frank Stephen Potts, son of John Stephen and Vellamae of Highlands, died January 19, 2005 while staying in Roatan, Honduras.

Stevie was born in Highlands July 8, 1953 and graduated from Highlands School in 1972. He owned several businesses, his last being Sassafrass Gap Campground. After the sale of the campground, he spent his life sailing on his much loved boat "The Dreamchaser" and traveling.

He is preceded in death by his father Steve. Surviving family members are a son, Arthur, his mother, Mae, younger sister, Sherry, and two younger brothers Terry and Robby. Memorials may be made to First Presbyterian Church of Highlands or Highlands Land Trust.

A memorial service was held at First Presbyterian Church Monday, Jan. 31 at 1 p.m.



• FORUM •

Normalcy slowly returning

I have never been much for routines. My father was always an ace at living, what I thought, was a monotonous life. It's amazing, the more things change the more they stay the same. What's even more incomprehensible was how accustomed I had grown to that sound; the steady sound of my father's breathing. Some days it was more labored than others, but nonetheless, he was breathing, even if it was with the help of a respirator.

The apparent lack of communication was agonizing. I had so many questions to ask him. What do you remember, was the biggest.

Most days I just sat quietly and read my book, a trashy novel I picked up in the crowded gift shop. At first, I tried reading something enlightening, but gave up on that because I needed something to distract me from the fact that my father might not wake up the same person that he had been before his aneurysm.



Erin Brown

The doctor told me that during surgery my father had, "lost his blood pressure several times," and that there might be some damage to the brain, due to a lack of oxygen. This weighed most heavily on me as the days passed. Finally, after 11 days on the ventilator

and a tracheotomy in his throat my father awoke and I was met with another shock.

When I arrived at the hospital that day, it was the same as all the others. I said hello to the people who made my coffee.

"Mocha, latte with two shots of espresso," the young girl said smiling in Jazzman's coffee café.

"That's right," I said with a small chuckle.

With the grande latte in my cold hands I walked across the lobby, entered the elevator and pushed the button for the second floor. When I reached the frosted accordion doors

•See FORUM page 12

• TOWN BOARD AGENDA •

The Feb. 2 Town Board meeting was canceled due to inclement weather. The next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for Wednesday, February 16, at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Town Hall. The agenda is as follows:

- I. Call to order.
- II. Approve agenda.
- III. Approve minutes of January 19 Regular Board Meeting.
- IV. Reports.
 1. Mayor.
 2. Committees.
 3. Town Attorney.
 4. Engineer/Public Services Administrator.
 5. Police Chief
 6. Planner/Zoning Administrator.
 7. Treasurer.
 8. Town Administrator.
- V. Old Business.
 1. Review of application for permit to use Town streets & sidewalks for construction - Highlander Newspaper.
 2. Review WHLC rent for Big Bearpen Antenna.
 3. H. C. Dodson—encroachment on Satulah Vista Lane.
- VI. New Business.
 1. Bids on Wastewater Treatment Plant.
 2. Resolution proclaiming Rotary International Day.
 3. Set business license fee for pawn shop.
- VII. Adjourn.

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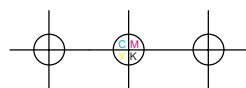
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LO 26	LO 30	LO 32

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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Invasion of the bear snatchers

Just when you thought it was safe to leave your wooden bear outside for all to admire, you pick up the paper and learn that a ring of bear snatchers is working the Highlands area. Twigs proprietor Mal Phillips learned the hard way when a couple of snatchers swiped his bear from the front of his store in broad daylight, with a witness looking on. Now that's brazen....or maybe dumb.



Fred Wooldridge

The thieves had to be from Miami where anything, not bolted down, is immediately stolen. My son, living just north of Miami, chains his Nativity scene to the tree in his front yard at Christmas time. Each figure is then bolted tightly to the stable. Nativity scene snatchers are common in that area and there is a good chance these guys are now working around Highlands.

Living in a high crime area does have some rewards. Years ago, while living in Miami, my very old washing machine went kaput and was not worth fixing. So I pushed the appliance out near the street in the front of my house and put a large sign on it that read "For Sale, Runs Good, Only \$50.00." I included a fake phone number. POW, you guessed it, the next morning the washing machine was gone and my disposal problem was solved. My only fear was that the thieves would return it once they learned they had been duped. This also is a good way to get rid of old car batteries, which no one will take. I simply put the battery in a gift box with a bow on top and leave it in the front yard overnight. TA DA, the battery disappears.

Highlands used to be a place where homes were always left unlocked and the grocery stores kept all their stuff outside at night because no one would think of stealing. Found wallets and purses were turned in with the money intact. When tools fell from a truck, the finder would put an ad in the paper, looking for the owner.

Before timed parking, I once forgot to pull the keys out of my Wrangler and left it parked, unlocked, right on Main Street. Duh! When I

returned the next day, there was a note in the front seat saying I should be more careful with my keys. It was signed, "Have a Happy Day." I found the keys under the front mat. Oh Highlands, those days of trust and innocence are rapidly waning.

But let's get back to the Twigs caper. This was obviously a crime of opportunity not well thought out. Here is what I think happened. Heading out of town, these morons spot the bear in front of the store and on impulse pull over and throw it in the back of their station wagon. They roar off, but each time they rounded a curve or slowed for the next bend, the bear would roll back and forth, side to side, trashing the inside of their car.

At some point there was a conversation about the witness at Twigs that went something like this. "That lady got a good look at us. Do you think she got our license plate number?" They drive a short distance. "The cops are going to be watching every road out of Highlands." They drive another short distance. "Don't take the curves so fast. That *&%\$#@ bear is trashing the back of the car and smashing the rear speakers." They drive a short distance further and the car stops. The bear is pushed out onto the road.

I'm betting these idiots are in custody before this column goes to print. If it turns out they are from Miami, Mal may have a problem. These crooks will want to sue him for the damage his bear did to the inside of the getaway car. They will probably find a Miami lawyer who will take the case.

I am currently not worried about my own personal bear because he is inside for the winter. In the spring I just may hot wire Kramer (that's what I call him) to the house current, which, of course, is against the law. But this will solve two problems. First, the bear snatchers will be in for a shocking experience and, secondly, that nasty little Scotty dog that runs loose in my neighborhood, using my bear as a fire hydrant..... well, use your imagination.

The Terminal

The 2004 PG comedy/drama, starring Tom Hanks, Stanley Tucci, and Catherine Zeta-Jones, written by Andrew Niccol and Sacha Gervase, directed by Steven Spielberg, music by John Williams.



Stuart Armor

The Storyline: Victor Navorski (brilliantly portrayed by Hanks, Forrest Gump, Catch Me if You Can, Ladykillers) is a man with a mission. We don't find out what the mission is for quite a while, because as he enters JFK airport, he is immediately caught up in a bureaucratic nightmare.

His country of origin, Krakozhia, is swept up in a revolution, rendering his entrance visa invalid, so he cannot go, nor can he stay, so he waits. And waits. And waits, as Frank Dixon, bureaucrat extraordinaire (Stanley Tucci, Imposters, Midsummer Nights Dream) desperately tries to find a way to make Victor someone else's problem.

So it would seem that not a whole lot of story can happen here, but there is a world of drama in the microcosm of the airport.

Now this is not an action film, but the story does move along at a good clip, as Victor deals with immigration, sadistic janitors, love-struck fools, and the difficulties of trying to live in an airport for months on end. He finds several ways to earn a buck, make a few friends, learn English, fall in love, and get a nice suit of cloths.

Along the way, he makes quite an impression on the people around him, most people anyway. Dixon the bureaucrat and Victor have become forever joined as the bane of each others existence. Things go up and

down, figuratively speaking, of course, Victor stays right on the ground, right where he is, until somehow, some way, things work themselves out. And I'm not going to give away the salient points here, but you kinda get the idea that things are going to work out for our

Slavic sojourner.

Brilliant, talented, amazing performance by Hanks, who can portray any type of character, comic, dramatic, cute or tragic. Both in voice and accent (he's speaking Bulgarian, by the way, and with a good accent, too), and body carriage, he transforms himself into a flawless Victor.

Tucci could not be better as the bureaucrat, both mildly evil as well as sort of funny. Zeta-Jones does a passably good job as the love interest, although her part in the story is really only an afterthought. The supporting cast of Victor's friends and cohorts are great; Hanks could not have played his part with this crew to play off of. All in all, a great performance in a cute, well written story.

The story, by the way, is based on the true events that befell Merhan Nasser, an Iranian refugee, who has been in Charles de Gaulle airport from 1988 to the present.

Spielberg and Hanks have worked together before, in Saving Private Ryan, a great piece of work. More of his best include Hook, Schindler's List and Always. Can't think of any movies that are much like Terminal, but some more of Hank's best work are Big, Man With One Red Shoe, Apollo 13, and a League of Their Own.

... PARENTS continued from page 2

of seven courses over two semesters. "That means they can earn eight credits instead of seven," said Bomengen. With more time for courses, comes more course choices, she said.

Coinciding with that she is working on having teacher aides proctor ITV courses instead of certified teachers which would free them up to teach

additional courses available through the block sessions.

Parents are urged to fill out the survey and mail it back in the postage-paid, addressed envelope right away.

"The participation in this process tells me that people care about how we do school, said Bomengen.

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The weekly Theatre Games class for 1st through 4th graders is held every Monday from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at The Studio on Main at 310 Oak Square.

These classes will continue to meet through the Winter and Spring school semesters.

Students are accepted on a first come first serve basis. The classes for 5th-8th and 9th-12th grades are fully enrolled. Instant will again offer a theatre camp for students of all ages this summer.

For more information please call the ITC office at (828) 526-1687.

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Feb. 4-10

BOOGEYMAN rated PG-13

(4:20), 7, 9:20 — Friday

(2), (4:20), 7, 9:20 — Saturday

(2), (4:20), 7 — Sunday

(4:20), 7 — Monday to Thursday

HIDE AND SEEK rated R

(4:15), 7:10, 9:15 — Friday

(2:10), (4:15), 7:10, 9:15 — Saturday

(2:10), (4:15), 7:10 — Sunday

(4:15), 7:10 — Monday to Thursday

THE AVIATOR rated PG-13

(4), 7 — Friday

(1), (4), 7 — Saturday

(1), (4), 7 — Sunday

(4), 7 — Monday to Thursday

RACING STRIPES rated PG-13

(4:10), 7:05, 9:10 — Friday

(2:05), (4:10), 7:05, 9:10 — Saturday

(2:05), (4:10), 7:05 — Sunday

(4:10), 7:05 — Monday to Thursday

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Chris Cutshaw

• HEALTHY LIVING •

Make the Personal Commitment for a Healthy Lifestyle

How many of us "revolt" against exercise and nutrition because we are fed up with non-results? Face it, we are a quick fix society. We invest in the newest diet craze, exercise equipment, or diet pill that promises results only to find the equipment gathering dust, our unused paid gym membership wasted, a partially used bottle of diet pills taking up space and facing us with a non-return on investment.

In all honesty, the ball is in our court and it is always our own personal fault we never reach those desired results. It takes much commitment to dedicate our precious time and energy to the work it takes to get to our goals.

Even those "quick-fix" methods lay down the black and white of it stating the basic rule we all know all to well — consistent exercise and a healthy eating lifestyle in addition to the product to get the results promised.

Many of us hate to admit failure so we either give up totally "revolt" or we make excuses and blame it on the item or theory as bogus. But we ultimately invest in the next product that comes along that promises to do it for us. Be sure to read the small print where it says it will take 6-8 weeks to see results and only if you combine this with exercise and proper nutrition.

Stop the madness! It comes down to a basic personal decision to commit. Commit to conquer our laziness and procrastination on every level and make a lifestyle change.

The ball is always in our own court. There is no such thing as a quick fix in this department. First make a goal and then make achievable smaller goals and allow time limits to achieve them. This will get you closer to the desired outcome with much less pressure. Always remember moderation is the key to life! Whether it is eating, drinking, stressing, even exercising too much creates an imbalance in our lives.



Alaina Rastelli
Mountain Fitness

Anything and I mean anything in excess is not healthy.

A healthy lifestyle not only should consist on a personal level but a community level. There is a huge need for a fitness-oriented culture in Highlands. We live in a wonderful mountain town with a landscape with much potential for a vibrant fitness culture.

I've lived here in Highlands for past four years and have enjoyed playing in these mountains. I love hiking, trail running and mountain bike riding — only a few of the healthy activities that these mountains have to offer. Obviously, since I own the gym I supplement those activities with a daily maintenance routine in the gym. This routine increases my ability and enhances my strengths in my chosen field of outdoor activity. I always enjoy talking to friends about what trail we just conquered or hear about that yoga pose my friend finally nailed after practicing for the last 3 months. It's determination, it's fun, it's something to be proud of including in your life. We should be proud that we take the time and energy every day for ourselves to exercise and eat healthy. When we do this, we set examples for our family, friends, co-workers, and community. We're telling them "I take care of myself. It is important for me to be healthy so I may have the energy for you ...my family, friends, co-workers, and community."

It comes down to the basic principle of eating right and exercising daily. Make this part of your lifestyle and be proud of that decision. Own the responsibility that with this decision it takes personal work, but small goals will get you to the main agenda — higher quality of life.

On this path you will have ups and downs, but as the saying goes it's not the destination but the journey that matters. What we go through on the way is what makes us strong,

■ See **HEALTHY LIVING** page 7

• BUSINESS NEWS •

Highlands' Newspaper - Friday, Feb. 4, 2005 - Page 7

High Country Cafe Now Open



Photo by Jim Lewicki

Same crew, same spot, different name – High Country Cafe is open on the Cashiers Road next to the Community Bible Church, serving breakfast and lunch. Open 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wed.-Mon. Closed Tuesdays. Owner June Webb talks with patrons Robbie Forrester and Terry Watson.

... HEALTHY LIVING continued from page 6

dependable human beings with integrity intact. When we can depend solely on ourselves to get ahead it is much easier for us to let others depend on us. Share yourself and your fitness goals with a friend and include them on this part of your life.

Life is short. We have the power to decide what we will do with our time during this lifetime. Let us all choose a healthy life and influence all those around us.

Living in a small mountain town has its pros and cons. Let's collectively make the pros stand out and enjoy our mountain town by creating a fitness-minded community. Don't cater to an indulgent lifestyle. The key word is moderation. Live it, create and become all that you want. Set your aspirations high and set goals to get there. We have the power within to make our dreams a reality.

I'll leave you with this poem:
Time holds many certainties.

The sun will rise, carrying you with its new dawn.

A day passes one part of your life story.

You, a part of others lives.

The day, one setting for all.

Together we belong to one. Yet at the same time....

The strong may conquer the towering mountain, seeing the golden fields and dark valleys which they have yet to travel.

There are those who have never challenged the day's strength, as the sun's setting holds a hollow weariness. Questions unsought, unanswered, unchanged.

It is the challenger who gives his/her heart to give life to the day.

Defying its coldness, sharing its warmth, becoming part of its meaning, growing in its wealth of feelings.

Be strong my friend. For you are the author and character in scenes of your own life.

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Why SOAR races matter

"Highlands' third annual SOAR race is coming up and still people don't really understand its purpose."

This from race organizers who began planning the 2005 race as soon as 2004 winners crossed the finish line.

The SOAR race is a way to raise money for The Special Operations Warrior Foundation which funds the education of children of Special Operations personnel who die in the line of duty.

"The Special Operations Warrior Foundation strives to relieve Special Operations personnel of the one concern, their families," said officials. "Concern that might distract them from peak performance when they need to be - and when America needs them to be - at their very best."

Thanks to the foundation, Special Operation soldiers and personnel know that should they die, their children will be guaranteed an education. Today, more than 500 children have parents in America's Special Operation forces.

With nearly 100 children eligible each year for college in the years 2003 through 2010, the Foundation's estimated financial need through 2010 is \$34 million.

Special Operations personnel are conducting more missions, in more places, and under a broader range of conditions than ever before. These mis-

sions entail high operational tempos, heavy and unpredictable deployment schedules, personal hardships and, by their very nature, inordinate casualties both in operations and training. Since the Iranian hostage rescue attempt in 1980, America's Special Operations Forces have suffered casualties at over 15 times the rate of conventional forces. Most of these casualties occur at an early age, at the beginning of their careers,

which means they haven't had the time to plan for their children's future or put money away.

The Warrior Foundation provides or identifies funding, based on need, to cover the full costs of a college education: tuition, fees, room, board, books, and supplies.

Scholarships offered are all grants, not loans, and can be used in private universities, state or community colleges, and vocational-technical training and career institutions.

Family services assistance is offered to

the children and spouses from the time they enter Warrior Foundation family. Once the children reach age fourteen, the Foundation counselor provides the family with college planning, academic and financial aid counseling.

The foundation assists active duty Special Operations Forces (SOF) families in furthering their children's education as well.



"I cannot thank the Warrior Foundation enough. They gave me an opportunity that I know my father wanted me to have. They simply are the best."

- Stephanie Matos

Two SOAR races set for 2005

Though months away, the Special Olympics Adventure Race committee is busy planning for the third annual SOAR race held in Highlands.

This year there will be two races - a spirit race for those with the spirit but maybe not quite enough brawn and an adventure race for hard-core racers. Organizers decided to sponsor two races when several of last year's contestants couldn't finish the all-day race.

The races are set for June 25 and an auction set for June 23.

The Special Operations Adventure Race committee calls on you to consider putting this charity on your list of donations for 2005. Many Highlanders and Highlands merchants have been great supporters and we are very grateful for their donations.

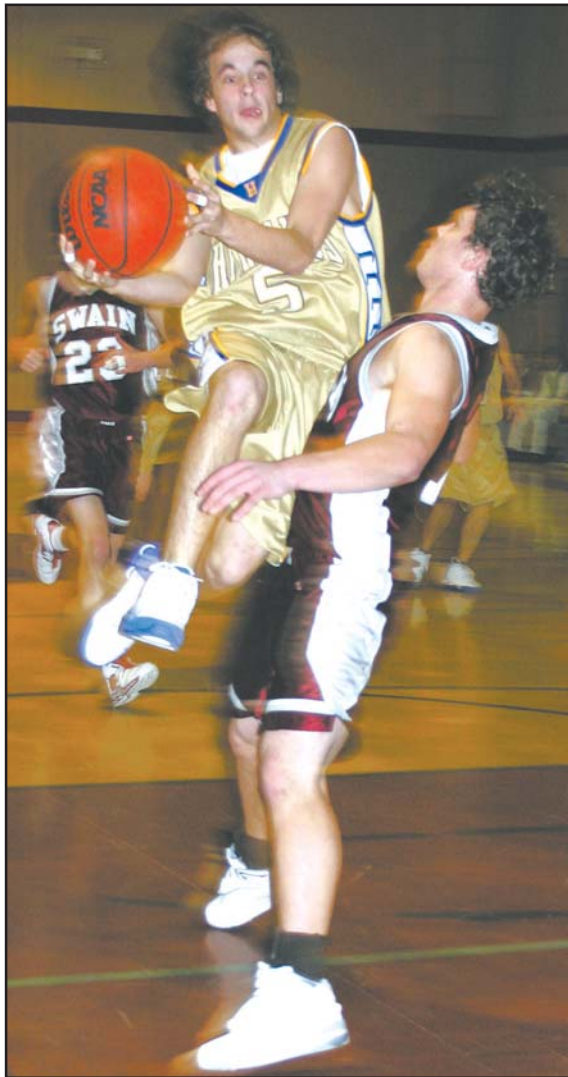
The race committee members work all year and are dedicated to this cause. We hope you will make it your cause, too.

All interested volunteers can call Nancy Horwitz at 526-0224.

HS B-Ball

The fighting Highlanders, looking for a win, hosted Swain County Maroon Devils on Tuesday at the Rec Park. The Lady Highlanders won in overtime while the varsity boys burned the Devils 75-62. See Highlands School Basketball game lineup for Robbinsville, Rosman and Swain on page 10

Right, Senior starter Matt "The Man" Keener soars over Swain defense to sink a lay-up, bringing his total number of points to 4. Men's varsity played a tough game, winning 75-62.
Photo by McKenzie Thompson



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MtnTop Rotary plants 'Friendship Tree'



All over the world, Rotary clubs are organizing Centennial Community Projects to celebrate 100 years of Rotary International. Highlands MountainTop Rotary celebrates the past while saluting the future by planting a Paul Harris Friendship Tree at Highlands School. In the early days of Rotary, founder Paul Harris planted trees in each town he visited. From left are Rotarians Duncan Greenlee, Curtis Matthews, Steve Gillam, Monica Bomengen, Nick Bazan, Ginger Slaughter, Bonnie Earman and Bill Hogue. David & Lamar Billingsley donated the tree.

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Highlanders drop games to Robbinsville, Rosman but burn Devils

By Matt Keener
12th Grade

The fighting Highlanders, looking for a win, hosted Swain County Maroon Devils on Tuesday at the Rec Park. The Lady Highlanders won in overtime while the varsity boys burned the Devils 75-62.

The Lady Highlanders wanted a win but knew they would have to fight for it. The game was close to the end, going into overtime. This was the second overtime this year, but the Lady Highlanders were not going to be denied the win this time. Allison Winn hit a three pointer in overtime to put Highlands up by two, and Highlands held on for the win. The final score for the ladies was 60-58.

Kayla McCall led Lady Highlander scoring with 28 points. Allison Winn made 11 points.

The boys were pumped up after watching the girls win. They came out strong, putting everything they had into the game. The score was close all the way up to the fourth quarter when Swain's leading scorer Corey Sutton, who was held to only 5 points, fouled out of the game. That's when the Highlanders took it to the Maroon Devils, pulling away in the fourth quarter to win by 13.

Highlands burned the Devils with a final score of 75-62. The leading scorers of the night were Alec Schmitt with 26 points and Andrew (Trout) Kerhoulas with 18 points and 4 blocked shots.

Highlands had it tough against two of the top teams in the state during the week of Jan 24 through the

28.

The Lady Highlanders fought a fierce battle against the Robbinsville Knights but came up short in the fourth quarter. Robbinsville held out and won the game 70-54.

Kayla McCall led the Highlanders in scoring with 13 points while Becca Wyatt netted 11.

The boys' varsity game was just as exciting, coming down to the wire, but Robbinsville boys held out to win by 8 with a final score of 67-59.

Alec Schmitt and Matt Rice led the Highlanders in scoring with 20 and 19 points, respectively.

The Lady Highlanders hosted the Rosman Tigers on January 28. The Tigers were ranked eighth in the state for Girls 1-A basketball.

The Lady Highlanders came out knowing it was going to be tough and made a valiant effort. "The girls gave it their all, and that's all I can ask for," said Coach Bill Lanford.

The girls came up short again, losing to the Tigers 65-52. Angela Aspinwall led all scoring, putting up 15 points. Allison Winn dished out 7 assists and put in 9 points.

Highlander boys knew they had an even tougher game against Rosman. Rosman boys are ranked first in the state for 1-A basketball. The Highlanders held close to the first ranked Tigers in the first half, but Rosman proved why they are number 1. In the second half they opened up the lead for an 85-58 victory.

Allen Shearl netted 19 points against the Tigers while Matt Rice dropped in 10 points.

HS gym nearing completion

At the Jan. 24 Macon County School Board meeting, Superintendent Dr. Rodney Shotwell said there's a good chance the new gym will be ready for the second round of the section 1A tournament set for Feb. 23. "The parking lot won't be paved, but the bleachers are in, the utility lines are laid and all interior painting should be completed by then," he said.



• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Leaving the 'Land of the Dead'

Understanding the significance of Lent



by Dr. Marcus J. Borg

The season of Lent is about being born again, about following the path of death and resurrection, about participating in Jesus' final journey.

To become somewhat more concrete, some of us may need to die to specific things in our lives—perhaps to a behavior that has become destructive or dysfunctional, perhaps to a relationship that has ended or gone bad, perhaps to an unresolved grief or to a stage in our life that it is time to leave, perhaps to our self-preoccupation, or even to a deadness in our lives (you can die to deadness.)

It is possible to leave the land of the dead. So, the journey of Lent is about being born again—about dying and rising, about mortality and transformation.

On Ash Wednesday, Feb. 9, we Christians are traditionally reminded of our own mortality in a very vivid way, as the ashes are marked on our foreheads in the sign of the cross. In the sign of the cross we hear the words spoken over us, "Dust thou art and to dust thou wilt return." This is a reminder not just of our physical mortality, but of the very path of Lent itself. We begin this season of Lent not only reminded of our death but marked for death, and that path of death is about our transformation.

The journey of Lent is about being born again by participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus, about that journey from Galilee to Jerusalem.

The journey of Lent with its climax in Good Friday and Easter, is about embarking on the way of Jesus on that path of mortality and transformation that is at the very center of the Christian life.

When you think of it, who of us does not yearn for this? Who of us does not yearn for a fuller connection to life? Who does not yearn for an identity that releases us from anxiety and self-preoccupation?

To be born again, it seems to me, corresponds to our deepest yearning. May we this Lent experience that internal transformation that is at the center of the Christian life. May we experience being born again.

• PLACES OF WORSHIP ON THE PLATEAU •

Blue Valley Baptist Church

Rev. Oliver Rice, Pastor (706) 782-3965
Sundays: School – 10 a.m., Worship – 11
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
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 p.m.
Wednesdays: Boy Scouts of America mtg. – 6:30
p.m.; Young women's activities – 6:30 p.m.

Christ Anglican Church

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Clear Creek Baptist Church

Pastor Everett Wilson, (828) 743-3379
Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
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;
Youth "The Rock" meeting.

Tuesdays: Women's Bible Study – 9:45
Wed: Supper – 6 p.m.; Bible Study – 6:45 p.m.

Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

Rev. Brian Sullivan – 526-2968
Sundays: Choir – 9 a.m.; Adult Sunday School
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
Tuesdays: Men's Cursillo in Jones Hall – 8
Wednesdays: Liturgy Mtg – 4 p.m.; Christian
Education – 5 p.m.; Supper & Program – 6 p.m.
Thursdays: Holy Eucharist – 10 a.m.
Sunday Service is telecast on cable channel 14

First Baptist Church

Dr. Daniel D. Robinson, 526-4153
Sun.: 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 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. J. Hunter Coleman, Pastor, 526-3175
Sun.: Worship – 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
Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

Highlands 7th-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 – 8:30
& 11 a.m.

Wednesdays: Supper – 5:30 p.m.; Bible Study &
activities – 6 p.m.

Holy Family Lutheran Church – ELCA

Rev. Delmer Chilton, Pastor,
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Macedonia Baptist Church

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Sundays: School – 10 a.m.; Worship – 11
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Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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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
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Wed: Adult Bible Study & Youth – 7 p.m.
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Shortoff Baptist Church

Pastor Rev. Wayne Price
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Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
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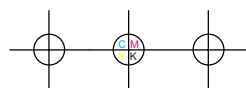
Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

Westside Baptist Church

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Sundays: Fellowship & Worship – 11

Whiteside Presbyterian Church

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



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... FORUM continued from page 3

of the CVICU I picked up the phone.

"CVICU, this is Nedra."

"Hi, Nedra, this is Erin. Can I come in to see my dad?" I asked.

"Hold on let me check," she said.

I could hear her stand up and peer over at room one, my father's room.

"Sure, I'll open the doors," she said warmly.

The coffee long gone at this

point, I saw a strange sight. My father was sitting upright in his hospital bed and was watching me walk towards him.

He mouthed to me because tracheotomies prevent any vocal chord function, "Hi, baby. I love you so much."

It was enough to make me break, but somehow I didn't. I spoke to him.

"Hi, daddy. I love you too."

The nurse seemed surprised that I could understand him, but I could, and it was truly a miracle.

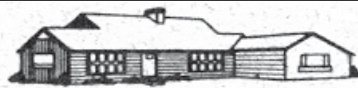
Most of that day I sat and talked to him, but as I sat there, I noticed that he wasn't picking up on most of what I was saying. The nurse told me he was still trying to process everything, and it would take some time for him to understand just what had happened.

▪See FORUM page 13

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... FORUM continued from page 12

The biggest break in the clouds came 15 days after his harrowing journey to Memorial Medical Center.

With the tracheotomy finally capped he could speak to me, but I realized quickly that while his body was doing remarkably well, his brain had some catching up to do.

Along with pneumonia, my father had contracted ICU psychosis. This, I later learned, thanks to "Nurse Suzanne," was caused by several factors; among them, lack of sleep due to constant 24-hour care, ICU bright lights, heavy medication and the constant noises of staff, phones and life-saving machines. The psychosis had an extremely adverse effect on my dad. He was totally terrified for his life and was convinced that the doctors and nurses were the enemy. My attempts to reassure him and to inform the staff proved only marginally productive. I write this to prepare anyone else, either facing surgery or having a family member who will be sedated for an extended length of

time. The confusion and delusions will fade, but the heart-wrenching need to communicate and reassure can prove at best, frustrating. My respect for the medical profession has become profound, and it brought my father to tears when he thanked his surgeon and attending physician, Dr. Christopher Walls, for his life.

I am relieved to announce that my father is now in physical therapy and his mind is almost as quick as it was a month ago. His routine now is practicing what his routine was before this whole ordeal, and I'm loving every minute of it.

Soon after Erin joined the Highlands' Newspaper staff, she was called to Savannah, Ga., to tend to her father who had suffered a "Triple A" aneurysm. He was operated on in Memorial Hospital in Savannah and is currently undergoing rehabilitation. She will be returning to Highlands soon.

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of Jan 26-Feb. 2. The only names are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

Jan. 26

• At 5:30 p.m., a motorist was cited for speeding 50 mph in a 35 zone on Upper Buttermilk Road.

• At 6:10 p.m., a missing person was reported but he had just checked out of his hotel early and left town.

Jan. 27

• At 6:45 a.m. officers were called to a home on Raoul Street to handle a domestic affair between family members. They were told to stay away from each other.

• At 11:15a.m., officers responded to an alarm at the Stone Lantern. All was secure.

• At 8:30 p.m., a motorist was cited for making an unsafe movement.

Jan. 28

• At 5:20 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at a residence on Big Bear Pen Road. All was secure.

Jan. 30

• At 1:15 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at Wachovia Bank. All was secure.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department log entries for the week of Jan. 26-Feb. 2.

Jan. 27

• The dept. provided mutual aid to Scaly Mountain Fire & Rescue and stoodby when it was called to a brush fire.

Jan. 29

• The dept. responded to a call of a tree on a powerline on N.C. 28 south. The dept. stoodby until the Town electric dept. arrived.

Jan. 30

• The dept. was first-responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a home on Laurelwood Drive. A person had fallen out of a wheelchair. There was no transport.

• The dept. responded to a one-vehicle accident on N.C. 106. There were no injuries.

Inclement weather rules for HS

When Highlands School's schedule is adjusted due to weather or other conditions, the following actions are taken:

We will either have two-hour delays or outright cancellations. No one-hour delays, no early dismissals.

• The schedule change is taped on the school telephone answering machine message;

• The change is posted on the school website at www.highlands-school.org;

• The Highlands (WHLC) and Franklin (WNNC) radio stations are notified;

• The three television stations, WLOS (channel 13), WYFF (channel 4), and WSPA (channel 7) are notified.

These actions are all taken by 5:30 a.m.

If the weather is bad, before leaving your house, please take time to check the

radio, television, website, or school phone.

If school is delayed for two hours, parents are NOT to drop off children before 9:15 AM. We cannot guarantee your child's supervision and safety until then. If a child is dropped off before 9:15 AM, we will contact the parent to retrieve the child and supervise him/her until school is open.

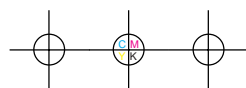
If sleet or snow begins falling during the school day, we will not have a locally called early dismissal unless there is a true emergency OR Dr. Shotwell calls off school for the entire county.

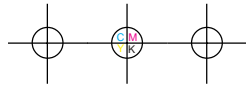
It is too dangerous to send the buses out before the roads are treated with salt and gravel. We advise strongly that parents who pick up their children wait until the regular dismissal time to do so. It will be safer for everyone that way.

HS PTO seeks board members

Openings for 2005-2006 PTO are vice-president, secretary, parent representative from each school level, teacher representative from each school level and volunteer coordinator.

For more information on volunteer positions with the Highlands School PTO, please contact Susie deVile Schiffli at (828) 526-2880.





Commercial district in land use committee's sights

By Kim Lewicki

The land use planning committee is still at it – updating the current plan to reflect today's Highlands community.

The group continued categorizing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the commercial arena – mainly the central business district.

The strength that could positively affect implementation of the committee's ideas is the town's sound financial standing, they said.

"That means it would be possible for the town to hire personnel to eliminate the litter problem in Highlands," said member Griffin Bell. "And hire help for the zoning department for the purpose of enforcement."

The group came up with several physical weaknesses or weaknesses in the commercial zoning ordinance — no impact fees; no penalty for con-

tractors not finishing work on time; no centrally located public space; lack of enforcement ability to eliminate litter; lack of enforcement ability in regard to watershed and zoning.

Members agree there are still many opportunities in regard to downtown planning but agreed the practice of "grandfathering" non-compliance will always effect the outcome of a plan.

"I just don't like this 'grandfathering' thing," said Slaughter. But Town Planner and Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein said the town can't make people conform to ordinances passed "after the fact."

"Not unless you're going to monetarily compensate them for either loss of business or property," he said.

Opportunities involved around making the central business district more "livable" through upgraded sidewalks, landscaping and streetscaping.

Specifically the group wants to address sidewalk flow and landscaping in the central business district; review type of brick used on sidewalks for safety; catalogue historical buildings consistent with village character; review incompatible land uses in B3; additional residential units in central business district above shops; enhance entrances into town; town/private partnership to buy land for greenspaces.

... REC PLAN continued from page 1

Officials want to know if citizens are interested in more greenways and trails, protected open spaces, skateboard parks, indoor swimming pools, picnic facilities, athletic fields, arts & crafts classes, expanded recreational centers, more gymnasiums, more playgrounds, fitness centers, community parks, boating & fishing access, bicycle paths, and cultural events.

A survey will also be mailed to county residents, but officials would really like to hear from the public at area

Threats to the central business district include too much B3 zoning, said members and the possibility of "Big Box" stores and restaurants. But Gantenbein said big boxes aren't a threat within the corporate limits of Highlands because there just isn't any land. "The possibility lies outside the town limits," he said.

At the Feb. 7 meeting, members will learn more about Highlands historic districts and homes.

forums, said Barr. Public Input Forums are also scheduled at the Nantahala School, Tuesday, Feb. 8 from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and at the Franklin Community Building on Thursday, Feb. 10 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Macon County officials and Haden-Stanziale, a Charlotte-based planning firm, will conduct the forum.

Macon County is following in the footsteps of Jackson County which recently completed its long-term recreation plan for the county.

Cast hard at work on HCP's March performance 'Stepping Out'

"Hear that beat, those dancing feet." No it is not on 42nd Street, but right here in Highlands.

That tapping is coming from the Martin-Lipscomb Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street where the Highlands Community Players' cast of Stepping Out is hard at work learning their dance steps for the upcoming production in early March.

The actors brought together for the play, with their various personalities, backgrounds and dance skills fit perfectly the type of characters described by the script. Some are experienced dancers while others know only a few aerobic steps. Choreographer Mary Adair Leslie, who also plays Vera in the show, is plotting the dance steps, while director Tanji Armor plans the overall "blocking" for the production.

Helping Armor with the production are Production Manager Donna Cochran, last seen on the HCP stage as Ouiser in Steel Magnolias, and Stage Manager Jenny

King.

The plot of the play centers on a group of nine women and one man who meet in a church basement to work out their needs and frustrations through dancing. Suddenly the group is asked to perform for a charity event. Will they come together as a dance ensemble? Will Mavis, the dance instructor-ex-chorus girl, played by Misty Thomas, be able to instill her enthusiasm for dance in this disparate group? Plan on coming to see the fun.

The comedy written by playwright Richard Harris will be presented March 3 through 6 and also on March 12 and 13. Evening performances are at 8 p.m. and Sunday matinees are at 2:30 p.m. Individual tickets are \$15.

Ticket reservations for season subscribers can be made February 21 and 22. General audience tickets go on sale February 23 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at the HCP box office at the Performing Arts Center.

Reservations can also be made by phone by calling 828-526-8084.

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• UPCOMING EVENTS •

On-going

- At Highlands Wine & Cheese at the Falls on Main, wine flights Friday & Saturday from 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- The Instant Theatre Company's free Improvisation classes for adults meet Wednesday evenings (weather permitting) February through May, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in the ITC's Studio on Main at 310 Oak Square. Auditions for musicians and singers are held 7:30-8 p.m. also on Wednesdays. Call the ITC office (828) 526-1687 to register for the free Improvisation class, or to schedule a music audition.
- Pilates classes are Tuesdays & Thursdays at 5:15 p.m. at the Rec Park. The cost is \$8 per class, but the first class is FREE. Participants need to bring a mat if possible.
- At the Bascom-Louise Gallery - Open Studio with a Live Model 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the gallery. All participants bring their choice of art medium and \$10 to pay for the model and facilitator. This class is for artists 18 yrs. and older or under 18 with written parent permission.
- At the Bascom-Louise Gallery - Art Leagues of Macon County exhibit at the Bascom-Louise Gallery. This exhibit features the Art League of Highlands and the Macon

County Art Association.

- Al-Anon Group meets at noon on Thursdays in the Community Room at First Presbyterian Church.
- The Mountain View group of Alcoholics Anonymous meets in the remodeled basement room of the Presbyterian Church sanctuary, Mondays in Highlands at 8 p.m.; Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. (women only); Wed. and Fri. at noon.

Feb. 3

- There will be a memorial gathering for Jack Chambers who recently passed on. The memorial will be at the Cyprus Restaurant on Wednesday, at 7 p.m. The cost of the dinner will be \$25 per person. There will be an open bar, as Jack would have wanted. Since seating is limited, make reservations by calling John Baumrucker at 526-3605. Please join us in the celebration of this kind, generous and wonderful man.

Feb. 4

- Angel Medical Center in conjunction with the Scrapbook Station at Whistlestop Mall in Franklin is having a Scrapbook Crop on Saturday, from 9 a.m.-9 p.m. in the AMC cafeteria. Cost is \$20 per person. All proceeds benefit Relay for Life. Lunch and snacks will be provided throughout the day. Classes will be given during the day on paper piercing, mini books, a beginner's class and much more. A mini store will be available to pur-

chase items throughout the day for your scrapbook needs.

Feb. 5

- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy-to moderate 5-mile hike (with an elevation gain of 300 feet) in Panthertown Valley to three waterfalls and the base of Big Green Mountain. Meet at Cashiers Wachovia Bank at 9:30 a.m. Call leader Carl Blozan, 743-1765 for more information.

Feb. 6

- The youth mission to Bolivia will be having a spaghetti dinner Sunday, Jan. 30, 12:15 p.m. at the Highlands United Methodist Church. Cost: \$8 for adults; \$4 for children.
- The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 2.5 mile hike on the Standing Indian Campground loop trail. Call leader Kay Coriell, 369-6820, for reservations or more info.

Feb. 9

- On Wednesday from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Highlands Rec Park, officials will be on hand to hear from the public about ways to develop a comprehensive recreation master plan for Macon County.

Feb. 11

- The 8th grade at Summit Charter is organizing a Tsunami relief benefit concert at the Methodist Church in Cashiers at 5:30.

Feb. 21-23

- Tickets go on sale for Highlands Community Players "Stepping Out." Season Subscribers - Feb. 21 & 22; General Public, Feb. 23 at PAC. Call 526-8084.

Feb. 25

- Feb. 25 is the deadline to register and pay for the American Red Cross Adult CPR with AED and Infant/Child CPR course Tuesday, March 1, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Macon County Public Health Center at 1830 Lakeside Drive. For info, please call Jennifer at 349-2439.

March 3-6 & 12-13

- Highlands Community Players presents "Stepping Out" at PAC. Call 526-8084.

March 10 & 12

- Beekeeping School for Beginners sponsored by the Macon County Beekeepers Assoc. will be held two days - Thursday from 7-9 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the N.C. Extension Office in Franklin. To register, call Hillrie Quin at 526-2385.

March 28

- Macon County School Board meeting held at Highlands School library at 6 p.m. Commissioners are hoping for a good turnout from the community.

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Franklin Highlands 18 Miles

Whistle Stop < Fun Factory >

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Bridal Veil

Dry Falls

Bartram Trail

Scaly SnowTubing

Sky Valley, GA. Golf & Skiing

Dillard, GA Highlands 14 Miles

Highlands Cove

HOSPITAL

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Hwy 64e

HIGHLANDS

Glen Falls

Chinquapin Mt Trail

Hwy 28s

Chattooga & Bartram Trail

Sliding Rock

Chattooga Trail

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