

Highlands' Newspaper FREE

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On-going

- Swimming lessons at Highlands Rec Park Monday and Wednesday for ages 3 and up. \$10 per child per week. Call 526-3556 to register.

- At Highlands Wine & Cheese at the Falls on Main, complimentary tastings Sat. from 1-4 p.m. Wine flights Friday & Saturday from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

- "Evenings of Entertainment" Friday nights at Instant Theatre Company in Oak Square on Main Street. Tickets are \$15 with reservations and \$20 at the door. Show starts promptly at 8 p.m. Call for reservations. 342-9197.

- Pilates classes are moving to the new Women's Center at the Hospital effective Tuesday, March 22. The classes are Tuesday and Thursdays at 5:15 pm. All classes at the Women's Center will be \$10, or \$8 if you purchase a package of 10. Instructor: Sandie Trevathan

March 24

- At OEI - March Wine Dinner Thursday, March 24. 6 p.m. reception followed by 6:30 p.m. dinner at The Farm. Cost per is \$125. Please call 828-526-8008.

March 25

- Awards assembly at Highlands School K-3 at 8:30 a.m., and 4th-5th at 9 a.m.

March 26

- Satolah Volunteer Fire Dept. Annual Spring Benefit, 5 p.m. BBQ pork or fried chicken plates. Music by Curtis Blackwell and the Dixie Bluegrass Band and Foxfire.

- Saturday at 10:30 am. Family Easter Celebration at CBC. Huge Easter Egg Hunt with special prizes. Watch an Easter video and enjoy lunch. Bring your family and friends.

- Easter Egg Hunt at Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

- Mirror Lake Litter Pick-up at 9 a.m. Meet at Thorn Park.

March 29

- Rotary Blood Drive at the Conference Center 10 a.m. -6 p.m.

Volume 3, Number 12

Locally Owned & Operated

Friday, March 25, 2005

State shortfall rippling through county

By Kim Lewicki

Macon County, agencies and municipalities are bracing to see how looming state budget woes will affect them and that includes Macon County Schools.

At a quarterly superintendent meeting recently, Governor Easley said low-wealth schools will be fully funded

for the 2005-2006 school year. "But that doesn't help us because we're not 'low-wealth schools'," said Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Rodney Shotwell. "The \$77 million discretionary cuts that came down over the last couple of years are now permanent cuts."

At the March 21 School Board meeting, Shotwell expressed his

frustration at having to fund mandated programs, positions and benefits on less money year after year.

"Thirty years ago, the state funded facilities and ancillary programs," he said. "Now we have to look to the county to fund them. It's not fair for the local county commission to have to pick up

■ See **SHORTFALL** page 2

ETJ & annexation

Part 3 - water/ sewer districts

Editor's Note: This is the last of a three-part series on extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), annexation and water/sewer districts as explained by facilitator Geoffrey Willet at the March 7 and 14 Land Use Planning committee meeting. Part Two in the March 18 edition of Highlands' Newspaper dealt with annexation.

By Kim Lewicki

The creation of water/sewer districts are lumped in with ETJ and annexation when discussing aspects of expanding or controlling growth of a municipality.

W/S districts are one way for areas outside a town's jurisdiction to benefit from large-scale infrastructure construction or improvement without having to conform to a municipality's land-use or zoning ordinances.

At the March 14 land use planning committee meeting, facilitator Geoffrey Willet explained the pros and cons of water/sewer districts.

W/S districts usually entail a large land mass which means a bigger tax base than that of a municipality. Since they are usually operated on a county level, there is more manpower to concentrate on applying for state and federal grants and to manage the W/S district.

Some months ago, Macon County Manager Sam Greenwood told the land use planning committee that citizens in the Highlands Township could benefit

■ See **WATER/SEWER** page 11



Photo by Jim Lewicki

Highlands Fire & Rescue Dive Captain Philip Gates by the new trailer.

Dive team ready for rescues

By Erin Brown

Staff Writer

Water rescue has an element all it's own in the mountains. It typically involves rushing rivers and cold lakes. Now when the Highlands Swift Water Rescue and Dive Team gets called it'll be ready with the latest equipment on hand.

Three weeks ago Highlands Fire & Rescue got an \$8,000 swift water rescue trailer paid for with fire tax revenue.

"Every second counts in a swift water rescue," Dive Captain Philip Gates said. "So this trailer will help us with our response time."

Gates said the Highlands team is one of the only dive teams around this area and with the growth the town is facing he expects many more calls.

"There is no doubt that we needed this," Gates said.

The trailer is run by a generator with heating and air conditioning and can be pulled by a pick-up truck. Gates said that there is always a risk of hyperthermia when rescuing which is the reason the trailer is equipped with heat.

The team was established three years ago and has completed numerous rescues and body recoveries in the surrounding area including Bear Lake, Lake Hartwell, Mirror Lake, Lake Sequoyah and Nantahala Lake. They have also searched for victims in rivers and recovered a person in the Cullasaja River below Dry Falls.

In 2001 the team responded to two calls; in 2002 two calls; in 2003 four

■ See **DIVE TEAM** page 10



Highlands' Newspaper

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FREE every Friday; circulation 5,500; more than 100 distribution points

Toll Free FAX: 866-212-8913

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Production – Darlene Melcher

Circulation/Distribution/Tech. Support –

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Adobe PDF version at www.highlandsinfo.com

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Highlands, N.C. , 28741

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

– CORRECTION –

In the "Rezoning could lead to multi-family development" article in the March 18 paper, we reported that Zoning Administrator Larry Gantenbein said 1/2-acre would have to be left undeveloped. He said half the property would have to be left undeveloped. We apologize for our error and are happy to set the record straight.

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

What would Jimmy say?

Dear Editor,

I feel compelled to respond to this Habitat for Humanity debacle.

The Shaheen's letter said all the "problems" in this situation could be resolved. It's true. This should and could be resolved. Yes, Habitat for Humanity is a great organization, however, this local board seems not to be following "Building houses in partnership with God's people in need." If they were, then they would act as caring mentors to go the extra mile in explaining, teaching and listening to the expectations of both sides.

Try to put yourselves (the board) in the Green family's shoes. They were supposed to have been in this home in late fall. Not being in the house has caused many problems for them not to mention the extra cost they have incurred, the work they have put into this and the stress. The board has no stress, no frustration in this matter, at least not like Christal and Carlos.

Somewhere...somehow things were not clearly explained or documented for the Green's to read and digest. I make mention of the board's statement, "We've just had lots of problems with this family." Bet the Greens could say the same thing about the board.

To consider this to be the Christian organization it is supposed to be, then I would suggest that the board stop and pray over this matter and do the Christian thing they should have already done. Call Christal and Carlos in, shake hands and agree to not disagree about all of this. Let it go and start over.

The remark in Kim Lewicki's article about the relationship between Habitat for Humanity recipients and the local board and the liaison it picks for each family should be akin to that of a teacher and student.

If this board has to answer to no one, then that fact alone explains the color of this entire mess. And as the Shaheens' expressed, Habitat for Humanity, Macon County Chapter, you should be ashamed of yourselves and we are of you.

Bend and do the right thing. Carlos and Christal are wonderful and deserving young people.

What do you (the board) think Jimmy Carter (peaceable and kind man that he is) would think about all of this?

Pat Griffin
Highlands

... SHORTFALL continued from page 1

the state's slack."

More than 80 percent of Macon County Schools funding comes from the state, so any change in the state budget, or any shortfall creates a ripple effect in the schools' overall budget.

Each year another shortfall is announced.

"The state's economy has not recovered from the recession we experienced a couple of years ago," said Shotwell. "The manufacturing sector that used to drive our recovery is not here like in past recovery periods."

What that means is any money that does come in will be used to stay afloat in 2005-2006 instead of making schools better.

"If education is being cut by \$247 million dollars as has been suggested, it will have a major impact on our budget," said Shotwell.

This year education statewide was hit with \$77 million cut and Macon

County's share was around \$250,000.

"Not to mention previous year's cuts by the state that added another \$250,000 to our shortfall."

For the last few years, the county has come through for the school system with stopgap measures

"We are grateful the commissioners help us with meeting that funding gap. However, it is wrong for the county to continue to pick up the slack where the state government has been the major funding source," said Shotwell.

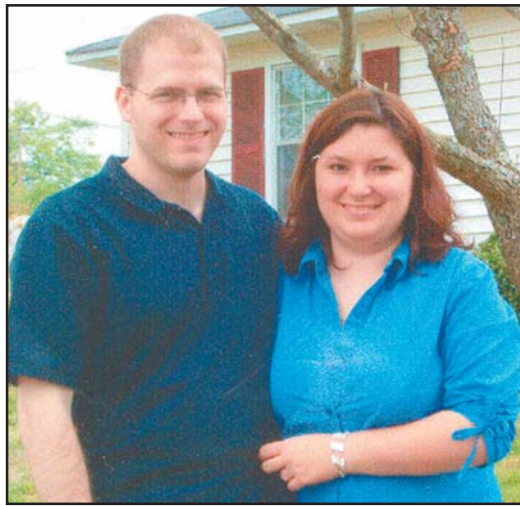
"For once, I would like to go to commissioners with a budget increase for inflation and pay raises, and not for picking up state programs."

Based on current information from the state, Shotwell said he's going to ask the county for a 10 percent increase. "But if the state can make some changes, I would ask for a lower percentage," he said. "Costs that are out of our control

■ See **SHORTFALL** page 21

An April wedding planned

Ashley Dawn James of Franklin and Anthony Jack Howell of Greenville, S.C., announce their engagement and upcoming wedding. Ashley is the daughter of Tommy and Brenda James of Scaly Mountain and the late Kathy James. Anthony is the nephew of Alan and Cindy Porter of Easley, S.C. The wedding will take place Saturday, April 2, 2005 at 2 p.m. at Holly Springs Baptist Church in Franklin, N.C. All friends and family are invited.



James and Howell

• OBITUARY •

Herman William Norton

Herman William Norton, age 81, of Aiken, S.C. formerly of Highlands died Sunday, March 20, 2005 at a Northside Hospital in Atlanta, Ga. He was a native of Macon County, the son of the late Ray and Agnes Baty Norton. He was married to the late Laverne Crisp Norton. He worked in security at the Savannah River Plant in Aiken, SC.

He is survived by two sisters, Edna Crisp and her husband, Guy of Highlands, and Nancy McClain and her husband, David, of Gainesville, Ga; two brothers, Robert Norton and his wife, Betty, of Greenville, S.C. and John Norton and his wife Darlene, of Roswell, Ga; sister-in-law, Lassie McCall Norton of Acworth, Ga., and brother-in-law, Louie Dapra of Daniel, WY; special friends, Brenda & Price Kneese of Aiken, S.C. Several nieces and nephews also survive.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, March 23 at 2 p.m. in the Chapel of Bryant Funeral Home in Highlands with The Rev. Roy Lowe and The Rev. Mark McClain officiating. Burial was in the Highlands Memorial Park. Nephews served as pallbearers. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the National Kidney Foundation of WNC, c/o Tim Ritz, 2 McDowell St. Asheville, N.C., 28801. Bryant Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.

Couple celebrates golden anniversary

Fred and Madge Munger of Highlands, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Friday, March 18. The couple married in West Palm Beach, Fla., in 1955. They have four children: Donna Henry and Gloria Munger of Highlands, Ricky Munger and Patricia Barnes of Clayton, Ga. They also have grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Fred and Madge Munger



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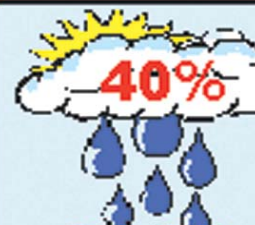
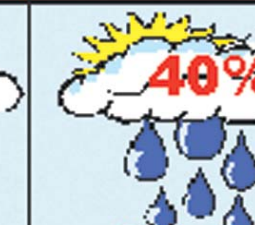
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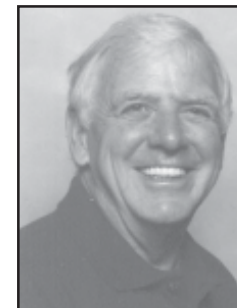
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• LAUGHING AT LIFE •

Insured Out

(my shorts are in a wad)

If I took every dollar I have ever given to insurance companies, I would have enough money to build a five story public restroom in Highlands, complete with gold plated accessories. I would certainly get more use from the restrooms than I have from my insurance policies. Forty cents of every dollar of my income is now given away for insurance of some kind and my shorts are in a wad.



Fred Wooldridge

I bought my first Florida home in 1958, a well built 1,200 square-foot, rectangular cookie cutter, made of concrete. During the next 23 years, that little house withstood seven major hurricanes without damage, but my insurance company didn't care and the premiums went up and up and up each year.

Since 1958, I have never made an insurance claim for windstorm damage. Not ever. I attribute this to two things. I have always bought well built homes and I prepared well for hurricanes. The insurance companies have taken my 47 years of premiums, raked off their profit, and given the rest to those insurers who bought poorly constructed homes or did not prepare for hurricanes. Because there is not enough money to pay for damages, the companies raise everyone's rates each year. I know I shouldn't, but I resent paying for that.

Because of the heavy hit Florida took last year, insurance premiums are sky rocketing. Construction companies continue to build homes that cannot withstand hurricane force winds and there are armies of home owners who just drive away and leave their homes to chance because the insurance will take care of it. A national insurance crisis is on the way, you can bet on it. Something's going to break, either the insurers or the companies.

Now that Highlands and Franklin know the meaning and feel of a very minimal hurricane,

take a few minutes and ponder whether your mountain home would withstand 160 mph winds. I know mine wouldn't. Next time you're a passenger in a car on the interstate, stick your head out the window while moving 80

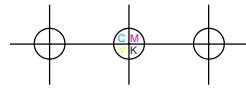
mph, keeping your mouth closed to prevent bugs on your teeth, and then double that. Got the picture? You can bet that insurance companies in these mountains are now reevaluating their assets and pay outs for making premium increases. Insurance companies are not in the business of losing money.

Our national building codes place restrictions on the building of shabby homes. Permits are needed and code enforcement officers are quick to stop construction if standards are not kept or the proper materials are not used. That's fine.

Yet, not too far away from where you live, workers are gluing and stapling together cracker box homes with the cheapest materials possible that will blow apart in any sizable storm. Because they're on wheels and called trailer homes, (the key word being "trailer.") they don't fall under the purview of regular building codes. What an unfunny joke that is! Each year, a huge portion of everyone's insurance premium pays for the rebuilding or replacement of trailer homes, which the insurance companies and the trailer builders know will blow away in any sizable storm. They keep building and insuring them and storms keep blowing them away. Hello!

Then there is my car insurance premium which goes up each year while the value of my car goes down. Shouldn't the premium drop as the car decreases in value? God forbid I have an accident, even if I am not at fault, I'll be taken off the "safe driver" list and can expect a heavy increase the following year. What makes a person an unsafe

■ See WOOLDRIDGE page 5



• MOVIE PIX •

The Last Samurai

The 2004, action/drama, starring Ken Watanabe, Matso Harada, Hiroyuki Koyki, and Billy Connolly, of all people. Also an appearance by Tom Cruise. Directed by Edward Zwick (Glory, Courage Under Fire), written by John Logan (Aviator, Time Machine), music by Hans Zimmer (who has done scores as diverse as Shark Tale, Ring and Black Hawk Down)

The Storyline: It's 1870, and Japan, the United States, and Nathan Alger (Cruise, also seen in Collateral) are all changing, and the changes are not welcomed by all. Nathan leaves home for a job to train and modernize the Imperial Japanese army, just emerging from the Shogunate and making strides to Western organization. He also leaves behind a disturbing past from his own military service in the American Indian Wars. He finds himself less than impressed with the Westernizing factions among the Emperor's advisors, and even less still with the fledging modern



**Stuart Armor
Movie Stop
Video**

army he is responsible for training. The Samurai and other traditionalists in Japan are determined to resist what they (correctly) see as the end of their era, and inevitably, the two forces clash. Nathan, while captive to the leader of the Samurai, Kasumoto (brilliantly portrayed by Ken Watanabe), grows to understand and eventually admire the dedication and honor of his captives, and his fate becomes tied to his supposed enemies.

The film really has an

impressive grandeur and drama, despite Cruise's involvement (now, I'm not saying he's not good in some roles, like Mission Impossible or Jerry Maguire) but without any doubt, the performance of the Samurai leader, his beautiful sister Taka (the almost love interest), and the rest of their companions are what makes the drama in this movie. An impressive array of weaponry and costuming add to the movie, as do so impressive (and rather graphically bloody, by the way), but it really is much more than a battle scene movie. The interaction between Cruise's character and his captors is convincing, and while the dialogue is limited by the language factor, the story moves along at a good clip, and actually the characters with the least lines are the most expressive.

If you like this one, some other action/drama/turning of an era stories are Last Emperor, Seven years in Tibet, Dances With Wolves, Troy, and Alamo.

Trott gives 'state of the town' talk

By Kim Lewicki

Mayor Buck Trott wants everyone to know two things — being the mayor of Highlands is the best job in politics and Highlands is in good shape all the way around.

"I'm not the only one who knows it, either," he said. "The politicians at the state and federal level say it's true."

Trott spoke at MountainTop Rotary Club meeting Friday, March 18 about the "state of the town."

One reason the job of mayor is a good one is because it is about as grassroots as it gets. "When we run into problems, we can put our hands out and touch them," said Trott. "That's something Washington politicians can't do."

The other reason is Highlands is fiscally sound. Trott said there are very few solvent towns in the country. "Many towns are either on the border of bankruptcy or in bankruptcy," he said. But not Highlands. Thanks to good business practices and healthy enterprise funds Highlands is in good shape.

He attributes Highlands' success to several things. A fantastic staff which includes a professional engineer in Lamar Nix whose expertise saves the town a lot of time and money; and the scrutiny the town consistently endures through the auspices of the Local Government Commission, the Institute of Government and the League of Municipalities.

As fiscally sound as it is, the town wasn't prepared for a \$1 million increase in the cost to upgrade the wastewater treatment from .5 million gallons a day to 1.5 million gallons. "It took 18 months for the state to get back to us and in the meantime the price of just about everything went up," said Trott.

The town and county are in the discussion stages concerning long-term funding to help with the plant's expansion.

Over the past few years, capital upgrades to the town include a better electric supply system. "Most of you have probably noticed that the

•See TOWN page 12

... WOOLDRIDGE from page 4

driver when someone plowed into the back of them at a traffic light?

Then there is health insurance. For the price of health insurance each year, one could insure 10 homes. Premiums are out of reach. Because God has blessed me with good health, I have practically never made a claim. I just pay and pay and pay. I know I shouldn't resent doing that, because I am healthy, but I do.

I will never collect on my life insurance policy because I've got to be dead to collect.

Finally, there is forced private mortgage insurance which protects the lender if an owner can't make mortgage payments. Shouldn't the lenders be buying that protection instead of us?

Excuse me, but I am plain and simple, just insured out.

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Fri: (4:20), 7:10, 9:20

Sat: (2:10), (4:20), 7:10, 9:20

Sun: (2:10), (4:20), 7:10

Mon — Thur: (4:20), 7:10

GUESS WHO rated PG-13

Fri: 7, 9

Sat: 7, 9

Sun: 7

Mon — Thur: 7

THE RING TWO rated PG-13

Fri: (4:15), 7:05, 9:15

Sat: (2:05), (4:15), 7:05, 9:15

Sun: (2:05), (4:15), 7:05

Mon — Thur: (4:15), 7:05

ROBOTS rated PG

Fri: (4)

Sat: (2), (4)

Sun: (2), (4)

Mon — Thur: (4)

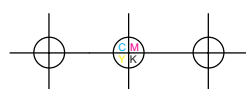
THE PACIFIER rated PG

Fri: (4:10), 7:15, 9:10

Sat: (2:15), (4:10), 7:15, 9:10

Sun: (2:15), (4:10), 7:15

Mon — Thur: (4:10), 7:15



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Interact Club on litter pickup



Highlands School Interact Club — MountainTop Rotary and Highlands Rotary clubs youth group — picked up trash Saturday morning from Highlands "tree" streets as part of the Doubleday family's effort to get and keep Highlands clean. From left are Alex Osteen, Stacey Wright, McKenzie Thompson, Alec Schmitt, Jason Aspinwall and Nick Kerhoulas. Representing Highlands Rotary was John Bauknight. Representing MountainTop Rotary was Kim Lewicki.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

• BOOK REVIEW •

with **Katie Brugger**

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000, by Paul Kennedy (1987, Random House: NY) 909.82K

Everything that has a beginning has an end. This is a basic principle of our universe. This principle applies to planetary systems, living creatures, and human societies. Looking back through history we see cultures rising to power and then fading away as another society rises.

It is easy to see this pattern as we look back, but harder to see in our own time. Many Americans believe that the United States of America will never see the end of its superpower status. We think we will be number one for all of time. A political philosopher, Francis Fukuyama, declared the "End of History" when the Cold War ended in the early 1990s. Most people interpreted that to mean America would always remain on top.

Now we have a president whose foreign policy is built around the belief not only that America always *will* be the greatest power, but that it *should* be the greatest power. Some members of his administration signed a declaration by The Project for a New American Century that explicitly calls for the

continued dominance of the U.S. for another hundred years (www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm). The irony is that the policies of this administration are bringing the inevitable end of U.S. dominance sooner.

What are the dynamics of the rise and fall of great powers? That is the subject matter of this far-ranging history by Paul Kennedy. The true measure of power, according to Mr. Kennedy, is the overall economic strength of a nation. A rising power is an economic engine, pumping out productivity into the world. A mature power uses the wealth it has generated to build a military to protect its interests. A declining power overextends itself militarily—"strategic overreach"—and the excessive military spending drains the treasury leading to greater and greater debt.

Mr. Kennedy focuses his study on the last 500 years. In this period Spain, Portugal, Austria-Hungary, the Netherlands, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and the United States have all

■ See BOOK REVIEW page 8

• MARRIAGE TIPS •

Vital signs of a healthy marriage

Many things in our lives need frequent checkups. Our cars, heating and air-conditioning units, our job performance and even our health status get evaluated



Greg and Deborah Brock

on some type of schedule. The idea is to identify an abnormality before it becomes a costly or dangerous problem. If a person's blood pressure is outside of normal limits then there is concern about the health of their heart. Something might need to be done before the heart totally malfunctions. The older something or someone gets the more often it needs to be checked over. Not enough people carry this evaluation philosophy over to their marriage. Marriages require preventative maintenance just like bodies and cars. There are even vital signs that can help determine the health of a relationship.

What are the vital signs of a healthy marriage? Dr. Gary Smalley says "in every relationship, especially marriage, there are at least five generally accepted indicators, or vital signs, of the health of that relationship."

Vital Sign 1: All Feel Safe to Think for Themselves.

Vital Sign 2: All Are Encouraged to Talk and Know Their Words Will Be Valued.

Vital Sign 3: All Enjoy a Sense of Safety and Value in Sharing Their Feelings.

On-Line Marriage Check-Up Resources

Marriage Checkup by Family First Staff "The check-up works best when both partners take it, and then compare answers. Save your answers and compare them from year to year." Printer friendly version free at <http://www.familyfirst.net/marriage/checkup.asp>

Marriage Test by Michael Smalley Can be taken online at <http://www.dnaofrelationships.com/assessments/marriagetest.html>. Interpretations are provided free online after the test is completed.

Greg and Deborah Brock lead marriage enrichment conferences all over the Southeast. They often coordinate weekend retreats and workshops for churches through South and North Carolina. gbfam3@comcast.net.

Vital Sign 4: All Feel Meaningfully Connected.

Vital Sign 5: The Personal "Property Lines" of all are respected.

(From *Making Love Last Forever* by Gary Smalley,

Word Publishing, Chapter 8)

Do a simple assessment of yourself first. Do you respect your spouse's property lines and allow them to think for themselves while encouraging them to feel safe sharing their feelings, knowing that they feel valued? Do they do all of these things for you? Are the two of you meaningfully connected? Trying to measure your marriage vital signs without a few resources is difficult. It might be like trying to take a temperature without a thermometer. You can determine whether the skin is hot to the touch but you will not get a numerical value. Without an actual value you don't know if the body temperature is really within a healthy range.

Every marriage may not have the same normal value but there needs to be some way to gauge how things are going before something detrimental happens. We suggest that you use a marriage checkup tool that could give you some definite information about your own relationship. These tools foster communication between the two of you. Use one now then together establish a time every six months where you can perform a checkup on your marital health.

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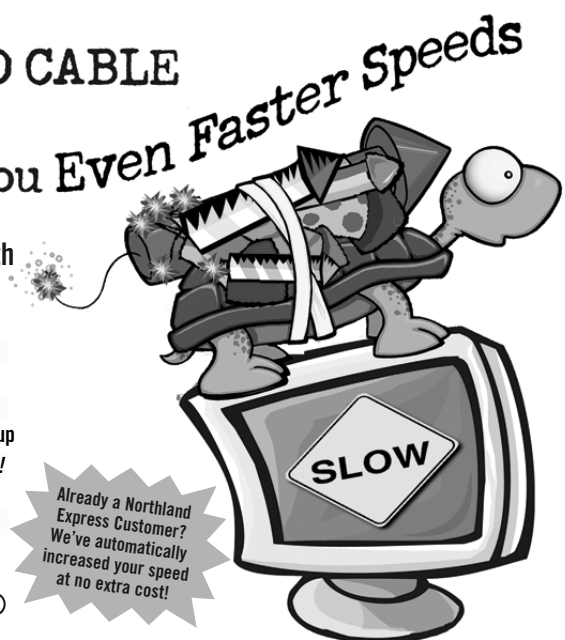
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Girls clean years of dust and grime



Photo by Kim Lewicki

The Girls' Clubhouse helped out at Highlands School Friday, cleaning the trophy case - including all the trophies - in the lobby. From left are Stephanie Puchacz, Paige Baty, Amanda Barnes, Elizabeth Gordon, Courtney Rogers and Sarah Power.

... BOOK REVIEW/ continued from page 6

taken their turns as world superpower. Mr. Kennedy splits these 500 years into three eras, and looks at the relative strengths and weaknesses of each of the competing powers within that era. This book is wide-ranging so if you are looking to understand specific events, such as the Crimean War, you won't learn anything about the details here. But you will gain a useful understanding of the sweeping forces that work across centuries of time. I first read this book a few years ago and it is one of those books that reframed my understanding of the world. (Another one in this category is *Up from Eden* by Ken Wilber)

The last section covers the years after World War II and the struggle between the U.S. and the Soviet Union for dominance. Published in 1987, Mr. Kennedy must have wished he had taken more time writing because he completely fails to anticipate the events of two years later that quickly brought down the Soviet empire. (Some might ask: does this render his whole work irrelevant? I think not—that is how unexpected the Soviet decline was to most experts.)

Mr. Kennedy also asks the question: Why was Europe dominant and not another region? I found his answer fascinating and relevant to today: "It was a combination of economic

laissez-faire, political and military pluralism, and intellectual liberty—however rudimentary each factor was compared with later ages—which had been in constant interaction to produce the 'European miracle'...Because that mix of critical ingredients did not exist in Ming China, or in Muslim empires of the Middle East and Asia...they appeared to stand still while Europe advanced to the center of the world stage."

As I read about these dynamics I thought about our country. The United States was a roaring economic engine in the 1800s and 1900s. During World War II we came into our maturity and began to build an awesome military machine that won the Cold War and made us the sole superpower. I am increasingly afraid, though, that we have entered the last phase, the declining phase. Today our military is strained almost to the breaking point. We are trying to cover the whole globe and it's not working. What became quickly, shockingly clear after the invasion of Iraq was that if a crisis developed in any other part of the globe *we would be unable to handle it*. That sounds like overreach to me. And this book makes it crystal clear that there is only one thing that happens to a nation accumulating debt at our pace: decline to second-tier status.

■ See BOOK REVIEW page 9



Local doctors go to Philippines

Under less than perfect conditions, three local doctors recently spent one intense week on the other side of the world operating on desperately ill patients.

On February 9, gynecologist Willis Sherrer, general surgeon Dan Richardson and anesthesiologist Leila Martin left their practices at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital to join a medical team sponsored by Atlanta's Piedmont Hospital on a surgical mission to Roxas City on the northeast portion of the island of Panay in the Philippines. The team, including plastic and reconstructive surgeons, an oral and maxillofacial surgeon, a pharmacist, and nurses, performed a variety of surgical procedures on local patients who might otherwise go untreated. The target beneficiaries of this program were indigents who have limited access to health care services.

Because the small hospitals they operate in lack many features of a typical American hospital, Dr. Sherrer and the other members of his team are not always able to diagnose and treat illnesses to their complete satisfaction. It can take weeks to get the results of a biopsy, and by then the team has returned home. But the good that is done makes the trip vastly rewarding; on this trip around 100 surgeries were performed in 4 1/2 days. In one operation Sherrer removed a 22-pound ovarian cyst from an ailing woman. A plastic surgeon on the same mission repaired over 30 cleft lips.

This was Dr. Sherrer's fourth surgical mission to the Philippines. In the past he has operated on patients in medical facilities that seem primitive by U.S. standards, in parts of the country that have since become too dangerous for Americans to visit because of increased fears of terrorism. In 1998 his medical team was working in Cagayn de Oro on the southern island of Mindanao, when they were informed of a nearby plane crash. Local officials requested they postpone their scheduled operations in anticipation of the arrival of crash survivors. When

none arrived after a day, they were told rescue attempts had been suspended because of torrential rain and "unfriendly tribesmen." It was later determined that there were no survivors.

This year, on the day after the team left Manila for Roxas City, a bomb exploded in the financial district of that city outside the Inter-Continental Hotel (a block from the hotel the team stayed in) killing six people and wounding many more. Dr. Sherrer says the Muslim extremist group Abu Sayyaf claimed the bombs were a Valentine's Day gift to Philippine president Gloria Arroyo.

Willis Sherrer's wife Pat, director of the MBA program at the Athens, Georgia campus of Piedmont College, traveled with the medical team this year. On a past trip to the Philippines with the group, she filled in as a surgical nurse when no other options were available.

The group was invited by the governor of the Province of Capiz, Vicente B. Bermejo, and was sponsored in part by the Rotary of Metro Roxas, although the American medical team pays their own expenses and provides many of the medical supplies they use there. They worked under special permits to practice medicine in the Philippines. Says Governor Bermejo, "Our province is truly blessed for being chosen by Piedmont Hospital to be the recipient of the surgical Mission."



Dr. Sherrer and "staff" in surgery in Roxas City in the Philippines.

... BOOK REVIEW continued from page 8

How bad is our debt problem? The federal budget is no different from our family budgets. If we spend more than we earn, we go into debt. If we spend more than we earn every year, we accumulate debt. The interest on this growing debt will mushroom. The higher the debt, the higher percentage of our monthly spending is eaten up by interest costs.

In 2004, the U.S. federal debt was \$7.4 trillion and we paid \$322 billion in interest—and it was that low only because interest rates were at historic lows (www.publicdebt.treas.gov/opd/opdint.htm). To put this figure into perspective the 2004 budget included

these amounts (www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2004/tables.html):

Military budget \$379.9 billion

Dept. of education \$53.1 billion

State Dept. \$27.4 billion

Dept of Homeland Security \$26.7 billion

Health and Human Services: \$66.2 billion

And there is no end to our spending spree in sight: "The CBO already projects a federal deficit of \$2.3 trillion over the next 10 years. Making the Bush tax cuts permanent, as the president urges, would add another \$1.9 trillion." ("Security Flaws," by Paul Starr, Ameri-

■ See BOOK REVIEW page 10

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Holy Week Service Schedule

• Maundy Thursday, March 24

Seder Meal and the Celebration of the Last Supper at 6 p.m.
Space is limited and reservations are requested.

• Good Friday, March 25

Tenebrae Service at 7 p.m.
A service of darkness and passion.

• Easter Sunday, March 27

Worship Celebration of the Resurrection of Christ at 8:30 & 11 a.m.
The Chancel Choir will lead a service of scripture and music.
Breakfast and Children's Egg Hunt at 9:45 a.m.
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... DIVE TEAM continued from page 1

calls; and in 2004 one call.

"You know a lot of people don't think about that side of the rescues, but there is that aspect to it when you have to pull a body out of a lake," Gates said.

The team has also performed non-rescue tasks — recently cleaning of the in-take valve of the town's water pump, the Mirror Lake drain and the swimming pool drain at the Highlands Rec Department. The team includes nine divers: Ryan Gearhart, Wayne Henry, Jody Zachary, Jimmy Tate, Jimmy Petrone, Robbie Forrester, Eric Pierson, Allan Bryson and Philip Gates.

JMCA studying egg releases of adelgid predator beetle

This spring Clemson University and JMCA will conduct a groundbreaking research project to study the viability of *Sasajiscymnus tsugae* (Sst) "ladybird beetle" egg releases on the Cashiers - Highlands plateau.

The project involves research conducted by 12 trained volunteers to determine if Sst predator beetle eggs released in the local environment will successfully mature into biological control agents of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

If this research is successful the egg release program could be considered for expansion in the future.

Egg releases of Sst beetles would be more efficient and less expensive than raising predator beetles to maturity under laboratory conditions. This is a research project and is not intended to suppress HWA.

Selected volunteers will need to make a significant commitment of time and effort to monitor egg releases on HWA infested hemlock trees over a period of some eight weeks in April and May. It is estimated that volunteers will spend ½ hour up to 2 hours counting eggs, monitoring hatch and maturation several times a week during the two-month span of the project. In addition to the eggs, Clemson University will provide training, equipment and forms for this purpose. Periodic status meetings are also required. Agreement by volunteers to perform these tasks is a condition to be considered for the research.

Volunteer researchers will identify accessible hemlock trees that have sufficient HWA infestation to provide a food source for hatching Sst beetles. Selected trees must not have been treated with pesticides. This project will contribute to the scientific knowledge concerning Hemlock Woolly Adelgid predators but should not be considered to be a treatment to suppress HWA.

Beetle Ball set for June 4

It's a great party at the Conference Center with live music, food, games, silent auctions and fun galore—all for a good cause—to save the hemlocks. The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is rapidly infesting our hemlocks, and the Jackson Macon Conservation Alliance is working to stop it. The best hope seems to be a tiny "ladybird beetle" that preys specifically on the adelgid. JMCA's "Preserve the Hemlocks" campaign raises funds to support a beetle-rearing facility at Clemson University. Proceeds from the Beetle Ball will support that fund. Have a ball and send more beetles out to save our hemlocks.

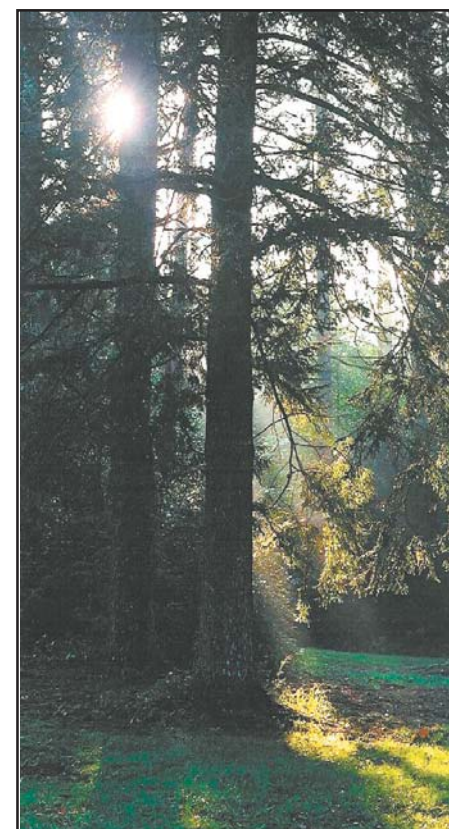


Photo by Cynthia Strain

Hemlock at dawn

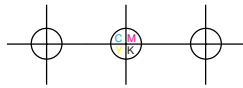
... BOOK REVIEW continued from page 9

can Prospect 01/05)

How is our debt financed? People and governments buy U.S. Treasury securities. Japan is our greatest national creditor, China is second. Currently Japan is holding \$840 billion in U.S. treasuries (*Washington Post*). If one day they decide that we have gone too deep into debt, they may stop lending us money. How does this affect our foreign policy? We can't alienate these nations or they may stop buying our bonds!

If the U.S. is declining, who are the future powers? China certainly. India probably. This isn't just my opinion this is the prediction of our intelligence agencies. "By the year 2020, China and India will be vying with the United States for global economic supremacy, the nation's top intelligence analysts predict ... Headquartered at the CIA in Langley, Va., but independent of the spy agency, the National Intelligence Coun-

■ See BOOK REVIEW page 14



... WATER/SEWER continued from page 1

Highlands' Newspaper - Friday, March 25, 2005 - Page 11

from the county's affiliation with a W/S district for precisely that reason. "We can go after more grant money than Highlands can," he said.

Since the business of operating, maintaining and expanding water and wastewater treatment plants is extremely time-consuming and expensive, Willet said many municipalities are "getting out of the business." "So, these W/S districts mean a bigger tax base which means money to fix problems and hire personnel," he said.

Macon County is the lead agency behind a feasibility study to see if it would be beneficial to the county and outlying country clubs on the U.S. 64 east corridor to form a water/sewer district. The study is also measuring ground water supplies.

"This was initially started in response to the recent drought which caused Highlands Falls Country Club to have to buy water from the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital," said committee member Clem Patton. "Now Highlands Falls says it has all the water it needs." W/S districts and authorities are considered a way of pooling well-water resources and combining a distribution system," said Patton.

Currently, the sewer systems at area country clubs are a combination of septic, and package plants.

From a municipality's point of view, the cons of W/S districts are mostly about giving up control. With a W/S district and no land use plan or zoning outside a municipality's borders, the town has no control over what happens.

"Water/sewer access without a good land use plan means anything could happen," said Taylor. "If the outlying country clubs were considered part of town through annexation or ETJ, Highlands would have control."

Committee member John Cleaveland wondered if areas outside the town limits could tap Big Creek — Highlands' source of water. But Willet said there were riparian laws to protect municipalities from such circumstances.

Furthermore, Town Administrator

Richard Betz said DENR has already established there isn't enough surface water to serve another surface water plant, so a permit wouldn't be issued for that.

However, at two million gallons a day capacity, Betz said the Highlands plant technically has enough water to supply areas under scrutiny by the W/S district.

Committee member Griffin Bell wondered if Highlands wants the county telling Highlanders what they can do with their water.

"Do those who consider themselves Highlanders — even though they

are living in country clubs outside the town limits — want to be governed by the county or by Highlands?" he asked. It is Highlands they feel connected to, not the county, he said.

Patton said the country clubs are reacting to the town's long-time position that it wouldn't supply them with water or sewer.

"If people want to develop out there, or if they need water and the town won't give it, they will get it anyway they can," he said. "The town saying 'no' is a way to control development, but the

town can't control development forever," he said.

Members said since the town is in the business of supplying water and treating sewer, and can extend the infrastructure, perhaps it should do so to prevent multi-jurisdictional governing boards in the Highlands vicinity.

Pros and cons of ETJ, annexation and water/sewer districts will factor into the committee's final land use plan which will be presented to the Town Board early summer.

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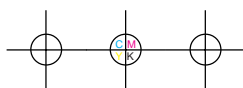
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Highlands School Book Fair



Proceeds from the book fair on this week at Highlands School, go toward supporting the reading program at the school. About 25% to 30% of sales proceeds go toward new books, Accelerated Reader tests and reading incentives. During the March 22 PTO Chili Dinner and the Book Fair, Storyteller Nancy Reeder entertained students with Cherokee folk tales.



Photos by Kim Lewicki

... TOWN continued from pg 5

frequency of outages have dropped off," he said. "That's due to the expertise of Yogi McCall our electrician and Lamar Nix. "We never had an "as built" system, it just evolved and it's really improved over the years."

A big project coming down the pike is the "Water Remediation and Restoration" project aimed to get silt out and keep it out of area lakes.

Thanks to a concerted lobbying effort, much of the \$16.2 million is supposed to come from the federal government through the Dept. of Agriculture. "When people in Washington hear that our drinking water supply is in jeopardy, they sit up and listen," he said.

Following Hurricane Ivan, a silt island appeared in the middle of Big Creek. "It's 150 feet long, 30 feet wide and sticking three feet out of the water," said Trott. "It's going to cost \$600,000 to remove it."

Silt coming down Big Creek clogs the water intake valves. Lately divers have been keeping them clean.

Since the majority of silt in lakes comes from roads, part of the money for the remediation project will be used to pave roads alongside creeks and lakes.

Everyone is in the "budget season" so the town is waiting to hear from the county and the county is waiting to hear from the state before committing to funding.

Dead Sea Scrolls seen by Methodists

By Carlton Joyce

Contributor

On Tuesday, March 22, a Bible study group from the Highlands United Methodist Church viewed the "Ink and Blood" Exhibit in Knoxville, Tenn.

The 11 adult Sunday schoolers were lead by Cindy & Louis Baston as a continued education series for in-depth background study of the basis of our Christian faith.

The exhibit traces the scriptural sources from 500 BC to present day, the developmental stages of the Bible throughout history including translation/corrective changes, martyrdom and persecution within the Christian church, and the transition periods of manual transcribing to modern day printing including the E-Bible for computers.

The fascinating exhibit included fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls discovered in 1948 in caves bordering the west coast of the Dead Sea. They are the oldest Hebrew Old Testament records believed to have been moved for the Jerusalem Library around 65 AD before the Romans leveled the city in 70 AD.

Jewish and Christian biblical archeologists are still active in the Caves of Qumran seeking additional secreted scrolls and piecing the scroll fragments together for translation in the Hebrew style and script of the time. Multiple challenges must be overcome to realize the full scholarly benefit to be derived.

An operating replica of the first Gutenberg Press was demonstrated by a knowledgeable experienced docent.

The highly recommended and worthy exhibit will move to a distant unannounced city April 18.

Today - 2,000 Years Later

About two thousand years elapsed between the time the scrolls were deposited in the caves of the barren hills surrounding the Dead Sea and their discovery in 1947. The fact that they survived for 20 centuries, that they were found accidentally by Bedouin shepherds, that they are the largest and oldest body of manuscripts relating to the Bible and to the time of Jesus of Nazareth make them a truly remarkable archaeological find.

Since their discovery, the Dead Sea Scrolls have been the subject of great scholarly and public interest. For scholars they represent an invaluable source for exploring the nature of post-biblical times and probing the sources of two of the world's great religions. For the public, they are artifacts of great significance, mystery, and drama.

Interest in the scrolls has intensified in recent years. Media coverage has given prominence to scholarly debates over the meaning of the scrolls, the Qumran ruin, as well as particular scroll fragments, raising questions destined to increase attention and heighten the Dead Sea Scrolls



Photo by Carlton Joyce

Lou and Cindy Batson, Wayne and Geri Crowe, Naomi Chaistain, Carlton and Patricia Joyce, Barbara James, Charles and Tillie Arwood and Sally Bernstein.

mystery.

Did the scrolls come from the library of the Second Temple or other libraries and were they hidden to prevent their destruction by the Romans? Was the Qumran site a winter villa for a wealthy Jerusalem family or was it a Roman fortress? Was it a monastery not for Essenes but for a Sadducean sect? Does this mean we need to revise our view of Jewish religious beliefs during the last centuries of the Second Temple? Do the Dead Sea Scrolls provide clues to hidden treasures? Does the "War Rule Scroll" (object no. 12) refer to a pierced or piercing messiah?

The Dead Sea Scrolls, which date back to the events described in the New Testament, have added to our understanding of the Jewish background of Christianity. Scholars have pointed to similarities between beliefs and practices outlined in the Qumran literature and those of early Christians. These parallels include comparable rituals of baptism, communal meals, and property. Most interesting is the parallel organizational structures: the sectarians divided themselves into twelve tribes led by twelve chiefs, similar to the structure of the early Church, with twelve apostles who, according to Jesus, would sit on twelve thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Many scholars believe that both the literature of Qumran and the early Christian teachings stem from a common stream within Judaism and do not reflect a direct link between the Qumran community and the early Christians.

Who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls? How did the Qumran library come to be? Whose scrolls were they? Why were they hidden in the caves? Today, with specialists and scholars throughout the world poring over the newly released scroll texts, solutions to these mysteries undoubtedly will be proposed. But these solutions will themselves raise questions—fueling continuing public interest and scholarly debate.

– www.ibiblio.org/expo/deadsea.scrolls.exhibit/intro.html

A solo trek on the 'Foothills Trail'

By Nancy Welch
Contributor

Robert Keller sat at a downtown coffee shop sipping a large cup of latte. The lanky man with a winning smile spread a topographical map out on the round table and began explaining his challenge.

"I plan to hike the foothills trail," he said, pointing at a spot on the map. "It begins here at Table Rock State Park in South Carolina and ends at Oconee State Park in Georgia."

The trail he planned to take was 76 miles long and he planned to complete it in eight days.

"The trail traverses various terrain including the tallest peak in South Carolina," he said. "After reaching that peak, it will be mostly down hill. Actually up and down hill, but it won't be as grueling as the first part."

Keller planned to take the hike solo, carrying a 75-pound pack, the heaviest the veteran hiker has ever endured. (He eventually trimmed it to 67 pounds.)

"I'm traveling solo," he said. "I enjoy the solitude and the challenge. The weight will make it even more of a challenge. But even more than the physical challenge is the emotional challenge."

He said he has been hiking for 27 years and enjoys going with groups, but looks forward to going at his own pace and enjoying the scenery.

Keller, who is employed by the Highland Hiker, said his first hike was about 3.5 miles in the Shining Rock area in Pisgah National Forest. His appreciation for walking the forests began when he was 19 and read about the Appalachian Trail. There have been many hikes since then.

"I started preparing for this hike in December," Keller said. "I would go out hiking every chance I could and then began walking to work from Cook Road. It's 1.7 miles from there to work, so I was hiking 3.4 miles a day."

Each day he would carry more and more weight and on his days off he would take longer hikes.

His first concern was where he would stop the first day.

"It's 4 miles to the first camp site and 10 more to the next," he said. "I would like to make it that far, but I'm not sure it's a good idea for the first day."

Prior to the hike, he was trying to figure out how to cut the weight in his pack. He had to take food, of course. This, he said would consist of trail mix, beef jerky, Ramen noodles and other dried foods.

"I'm also carrying meals ready to eat (MREs) like the military uses," he said. "The only thing is, because it is dehydrated, it is very heavy."

He said he has divided up the food into days and meals.

"I won't be surprised by any meal," he said, laughing.

As far as clothing, he said he would be taking layers.

"You never know what to expect of the weather up here in March," Keller said. "It can go from sub-zero to as high as 60 degrees."

He said he would be carrying the latest in techno materials.

"They pull the moisture away from the skin," he said. "The fact is, if you're wet, you're cold. If you're dry, you stay warmer."

He said the real reason he is going is to get out and see things nobody else is going to see.

"There is just extraordinary nature people don't get out and see up close and personal," he said.

Keller was not without technical gear and called in the end of the first day with a short report.

"I saw a lot of people," he said. "And I decided to stop at the four-mile campsite. Once I made that decision, my mind was at ease."

From his journal:

"Regarding Campsite CS3 -

"Nice view of both sunrise and sunset, with light so the Piedmont visible at night. Drawbar Cliffs to north make for a spectacular backdrop. I had to get my water from a poor source about 300 meters back. The better campsite in terms of a water source is 300 meters farther down the trail. Had I checked my map more carefully I would have known of a stream



Robert Keller about to embark on the Foothills Trail that begins at Table Rock State Park in South Carolina and ends at Oconee State Park in Georgia.

being so close and would have camped there. However, the view of the Piedmont is not as nice as at CS3 due to huge boulders surrounding the site.

"The ruins of the old homestead make for a nice campsite. Presumably water is available from a spring or creek just southwest of the ruins. Day-hikers often visit here from Sassafras Mountain access point A9.

"A big sign here said old growth timber had been harvested there in 1971 and the area replanted with white pine. Trail is on an old logging road here."

On Sunday, March 13, Robert had a great disappointment. Blisters on his feet caused him to stop and reconsider going on.

"I lanced one blister, basically performing minor surgery with my pocket knife," he said.

From his notebook on Sunday:

"Made it as far as A3 (F.VanClayton Highway) and decided it foolish to push farther. Had to pitch a virgin site. General tiredness combined with blisters and the lateness of the afternoon (15:01 when I got here) all contributed to my decision to camp here. Must admit to feeling sorry for

myself. Thank God I've been able to speak with Jenny! (his fiancée)"

"After consulting the map it became apparent there was not good place to be picked up for a lot of miles after A4. So ... I decided to call it quits and arranged to have Jenny meet me (Monday) at A4. I don't think I could have finished the trail, but I could have done more if it weren't for the access issue. Oh well ..."

Keller said it was certainly a disappointment to quit the hike to early, but said, given the circumstances, he would make the same decision again.

"I really thought I had broken the boots in well, but had not taken into account the weight of the back pack," he said. "And as the blisters began bothering me, I started to favor the right foot and really feared I would roll-over an ankle. Even the most seasoned hiker must use common sense or put himself in danger."

"This summer I plan to take short day hikes," he said. "That way I can familiarize myself more with the trail and the camp sites and water sources. They weren't always where the map said. You really can't always trust a map!"

• HIGHLANDS EATERIES •

SPORTS PAGE



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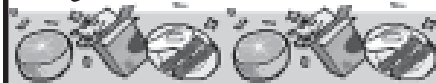
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Dr. Thomas F. Lindsay

New family physician ready for patients

Dr. Thomas F. Lindsay is now accepting appointments for his medical practice, set to open in Cashiers on April 4.

The area's newest physician, Dr. Lindsay's offices are located in the Cashiers Medical Center, on NC 107 South. Appointments can be made by calling 743-9747.

A native of High Point, N.C., Dr. Lindsay was in family practice in Brevard for 14 years before deciding to relocate to this area. He earned his medical degree from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1988 and completed both his internship and residency in family practice at East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C.

In addition to his private medical practice, Dr. Lindsay has also worked as a part-time emergency room physician throughout his career; most recently at Transylvania Community Hospital in Brevard. He has already begun working in the emergency room at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital.

He is board certified in family practice and is a member of the American Academy of Family Practice and the N.C. Academy of Family Practice.

... BOOK REVIEW continued from page 10

cil coordinates the production of intelligence reports that combine the views of all 15 of the nation's intelligence agencies... 'In the same way that commentators refer to the 1900s as the American Century, the 21st century may be seen as a time when Asia, led by China and India, comes into its own,' the council writes in its report, *Mapping the Global Future*. 'A combination of sustained high economic growth, expand-

ing military capabilities, and large populations will be at the root of the expected rapid rise in economic and military power for both countries.' ("Prediction: India, China will be economic giants," Friday Jan 14, 2005 *USA TODAY*)

Mr. Kennedy only hints at another factor in the decline of great powers: the loss of economic productivity. Kevin Phillips discusses this at length

in his book, *Wealth and Democracy* (review 10/03/03) A feature of a declining power is the pursuit of wealth for its own sake. Mr. Phillips uses the term "financialization" to describe the economy of a great power in its last stage of decline: the country stops producing things, it only manipulates money (banking, stock market, insurance, etc.).

Tom Toles drew a political cartoon in 2004 entitled "The New Economy: Each country does what it's best at."

Underneath the title are three panels. In the left one a man is making something and it is labeled "China: Manufacturing." In the center panel a woman is sitting at a computer and it is labeled "India: Software design." The third shows a man in front of a desk, speaking to a woman behind it, and this panel is labeled "U.S. Loans." The man is saying, "I'd like to take out a third mortgage on my house so I can buy more stuff." The loan officer replies, "I'll have to ask China or India for the money."

• ARMCHAIR TRAVELER •

Beijing – 3,000 years of world-changing history and culture

By Phyllis Picklesimer

After years of seeing pictures of gray-clad, Mao-jacketed, androgynous people, arriving in today's Beijing is like stepping into the sunshine after exiting a cave.

It is a city of high-rise office buildings and hotels with broad Soviet-style boulevards, but still a city that cherishes its 3,000 years of history and culture. After the town was completely razed by Genghis Khan, it began its new existence when his grandson, Kublai Khan, selected it to be his winter residence. Today it is approximately the size of Belgium and home to over 12 million people.

A visit to Beijing is best begun at Tiananmen Square with its Gate of Heavenly Peace, certainly a misnomer during the protests of 1989. As is true everywhere in China with its population of over a billion people, every place is crowded with Chinese exploring their past. The immense size of the Square, 880 yards long and 550 yards wide lends itself to grand pageantry including being the site of the launch of the Cultural Revolution. Tiananmen Square is a popular destination for families with its small food stands and other vendors and with plenty of room for kite flying and running. The Mausoleum of Mao Zedong is also located within the Square. There are still very long lines of people awaiting their chance to enter and see him resting in a crystal coffin.

Across the street and through the Gate of Heavenly Peace, is the sprawling Forbidden City with its 800 palaces, halls, pavilions, and gates. Enter through the Meridian Gate, along with throngs Chinese, to view what was, until 1911, barred to all but a few. A moat and a 33-foot wall of almost four miles surround the Forbidden City.

As one progresses through the multiple gates into the inner reaches of the "palace" so too was the progression from the ceremonial areas to the private living quarters of the emperor, his empress, servants, concubines, and eunuchs. There is the impressive Hall of Supreme Harmony for ceremonies, and the Hall of Preserving Harmony for banquets to name only a few of many. Then on passing through the Gate of Heavenly Purity into the Palace of Heavenly Purity, the visitor finds themselves in the area with the emperor's private rooms. Also found there is the Palace of Terrestrial Tranquility containing the empress's quarters.

It is impossible not to be awed at the sheer size and magnitude of the Forbidden City with its enormous scale and many-terraced wooden buildings surrounded with very large open spaces. For the tourist, it also presents a challenge. It is impossible to explore it all, even

in a full day. Most visitors visit its main halls and pavilions, but no matter how much is viewed it is well worth a tour.

As a souvenir of your visit, it is possible to dress in imperial costume as emperor or empress in several kiosks in the Forbidden City. Then have your picture taken among suitable props.

On a smaller scale, but most beautiful is the Temple of Heaven area with its famous Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests. It was here that the emperor was taken with great ceremony to pray for the harvests. The Hall is best known for its



From the summit, the view south shows the line of halls and gates stretching back along the axis of the Forbidden City, as well as the more humanly scaled palaces in the flanking areas.

three-tiered blue-tiled roof. It has 28 wooden supporting columns and a carved and gilded ceiling that is magnificent. Remarkably, it was built without nails or cement. After visiting the temple, wander its grounds and ordered gardens.

Farther a field is the Summer Palace with grounds and gardens covering many acres and the large Kunming Lake. It was here the court retired to escape Beijing in the summer. Just as the Forbidden City is comprised of multiple buildings so too is the Summer Palace. The names of some of its pagodas and pavilions conjure a sense of the tranquility sought here. There is the Pagoda for Listening to Orioles, House of Clean Water and Cool Breeze, Pavilion for Perceiving the Spring, the Garden of Harmonious Interest, and the Pavilion of Great Happiness to name but a few.

The Summer Palace is most famous for its Long Corridor along Kunming Lake and the Marble Boat. The Long Corridor stretches for 800 yards and is covered and painted with mythical scenes. It is the longest painted corridor in the world. The Dowager Empress Cixi, the Dragon Empress, had the Marble Boat constructed. It is an incongruous sight with its marble paddlewheel boat base and wooden pavilion atop it. A day spent meandering the Summer

Palace's charming paths and serene gardens, many with water features, is a refreshing change from the bustle of downtown Beijing.

Of course, all must make the requisite trek for the not-to-be-missed visit to The Great Wall. No visit to China would be complete without it. Begun in the 5th century, it was constructed over 2,000 years. It snakes through China for over 5,000 miles and is the only man-made structure visible from the moon. Its purpose was not only for protection, but it also allowed the rapid transmission of information from areas with no roads to the capital.

You can walk up to the top of the wall (something of a climb) or take one of the small cable cars about the size and appearance of a sled to the top. Standing on the Wall, one is immediately struck with the enormity of such a project conceived at its point in history. Walk along and marvel at its width, amount of brickwork, and terrain. It meanders up, down, and around, snaking back upon its self at times. It is certainly not the shortest distance between two points.

On a tour to The Great Wall, the Ming Tombs can also be visited. This was the burial area for the Ming emperors. Visitors progress down The Spirit Way in the same way the emperors were carried to their mausoleums. The Way is a walkway lined with larger-than-life-size real and mythical animals and personages of the court.

The tombs themselves are interesting with their complex of buildings above ground while the actual burial places are below ground in sprawling "palaces" containing goods for the afterlife. It is possible to enter the tomb of Emperor Ding Ling. His 13,000 square foot tomb is 88 feet below ground. Within are the coffins of the emperor, empress, and his favorite concubine.

China has made great strides in modernization since the end of the Cultural Revolution. The Chinese are very proud of their history and come in droves to visit historical areas. It is also apparent to any observer that family is very important and children doted upon. As they prepare for the Olympics, many villages surrounding Beijing have been annihilated and disconcertedly replaced with huge apartment complexes of Baroque style painted amazingly in light blue, cream, terracotta, and yellow among other also startling colors. Beijing itself seems to vibrate with a palpable energy of people expecting a better future. My visit left me with a desire to return to once again experience a work in progress.

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Love is in the air...



Rev. Brian Sullivan
Episcopal Church of the
Incarnation

Every year at this time, we all feel something in the air. The weather is warming, the town is filling, and the smiles are beaming. Year after year this change happens, without fail. One feeling that intertwines with these more obvious things, but is universally felt, is the feeling of love.

As Christians every year at this time, we celebrate something very profound and somewhat hard to put our minds around. We celebrate a love so deep that it actually affects us, like the sun shining more often and the air warming – the same thing happens on a more profound level to our spirit. God poured himself out for creation, taken on the form of a human, a person like you and me, God made one message loud and clear – I LOVE YOU! This message was new, different, radical, because it was not only for the beautiful, the rich, the religious, the holy, the righteous, the spiritual; it was for the poor, the ugly, the misfits, the prisoners, the enemies, the greedy. God's love is for everyone, and the best part, it is FREE. The word for this radical, free, transforming love is grace. It is a gift for you and me, for them, and us, for everyone. Better yet, there is nothing that can separate us from God's love.

Can you feel that in the air? The gift of a person pouring out love for you is the gift we as Christians celebrate at Easter. More incredible still, this gift (as with any gift) draws out of us an instantaneous response. The hard part is discerning what that response will be. Some preach it from the pulpit surrounded by followers, or speak it with authority at a party; others respond in less obvious ways through simple actions to our neighbor. How you respond, makes all the difference in the world. Your response to this gift literally makes ALL the difference in the world. The love God pours out for creation lives within everyone. It can change the world if we let it. One person at a time the infection grows until all of us are responding in love, a love so deep it surpasses human understanding.

Love is in air – how do you pass it on?

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Wed: Supper – 6 p.m.; Bible Study – 6:45 p.m.

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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

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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

Sun: School – 9:30 & 9:45 a.m.; Worship – 8:30 & 11

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

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA

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Rev. Clifford Willis

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg. – 7 p.m.

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Worship – 6 p.m.

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

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SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Wayne Price

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study – 7

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Rev. Maureen Killoran (part-time) 526-9769

Sundays: Worship – 11 a.m.

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Sundays: Fellowship & Worship – 11

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cashiers, Rev. Sam Forrester, 743-2122

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



• HIGHLANDS UPCOMING EVENTS •

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On-going

- Swimming lessons at Highlands Rec Park Monday and Wednesday for ages 3 and up. \$10 per child per week. Call 526-3556 to register.

- At Highlands Wine & Cheese at the Falls on Main, complimentary tastings Sat. from 1-4 p.m. Wine flights Friday & Saturday from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

- "Evenings of Entertainment" Friday nights at Instant Theatre Company in Oak Square on Main Street. Tickets are \$15 with reservations and \$20 at the door. Doors open at 7:45 p.m. Show starts promptly at 8 p.m. No entry after show begins. Call for reservations. 342-9197.

- Pilates classes are moving to the new Women's Center at the Hospital effective Tuesday, March 22. The classes are Tuesday and Thursdays at 5:15 p.m. All classes at the Women's Center will be \$10, or \$8 if you purchase a package of 10. Instructor: Sandie Trevathan

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

- Mountainview 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.

March 24

- At OEI - March Wine Dinner Thursday, March 24, featuring Domaine Serene Vineyards & Winery, Northern Willamette Valley Oregon. Dinners feature a 6 p.m. reception followed by 6:30 p.m. Dinner at The Farm. Cost per person for the Dinner is \$125. Please call 828-526-8008.

March 25

- Awards assembly at Highlands School K-3 at 8:30 a.m., and 4th-5th at 9 a.m.

March 26

- Satolah Volunteer Fire Dept. Annual Spring Benefit, 5 p.m. BBQ pork or fried chicken plates. Music by Curtis Blackwell and the Dixie Bluegrass Band and Foxfire.

- Saturday at 10:30 am. Family Easter Celebration for the entire community. Huge Easter Egg Hunt with special prizes. Watch an Easter video and enjoy lunch. Bring your family and friends. Held at Community Bible Church.

- Easter Egg Hunt at Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

- Mirror Lake Litter Pickup at 9 a.m. Meet at Thorn Park.

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.

April 2

- The annual Senior Games spring flea market is Saturday, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. in the County Community Building gym, 1288 Georgia Road, Franklin. Sale booths rent for \$20 each. Refreshments will be available for sale. For more information call Senior Games Coordinator Teresa Holbrooks at (828) 349-2090.

April 3

- A workshop for women will be held at The Instant Theatre Company's Studio on Main from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The workshop is lead by Susie Volk, M.A., M.S. Ms. Volk is a professional counselor, coach, and consultant. Her passion for mythology as inspired her to create this workshop for women who want to live fuller and happier lives. The workshop is designed as an interactive process, enriched by story telling, guided imagery, art, meditation, movement and ritual. If you would like to create order in your life, learn to access your own power and use it wisely, develop a personal identity and give life to new parts of yourself, then this workshop is for you. The cost of the all-day workshop is \$80. For more information on, and registration for, this workshop please call Ms. Volk at (845)

256-0160.

April 5-7

- NC Competency Test for highschoolers at Highlands School.

April 9

- Job Fair sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Conference Center. Call 526-5941 for more info.

April 11

- Adult softball organization meeting 6 p.m. at the Rec. Park.

April 15-17

- At OEI - Burgundy Wine Weekend at The Old Edwards Inn and Spa Friday, April 15 - Sunday, April 17. For additional information or to make reservations, please call 828-526-8008.

April 18 & April 20

- An American Red Cross Adult CPR with AED, Infant/Child CPR, and First Aid Basics course, will be sponsored by the Macon County Public Health Center. The course will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2005 from 8:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. at the Macon County Public Health Center at 1830 Lakeside Drive. You may take individual parts or the entire course. Participants must pre-register and pre-pay at the Macon County Public Health Center before Monday, April 18, 2005. If you have questions, please call Jennifer at 349-2439.

April 19-20

- High School Comprehensive Test for 10th Grade.

April 23

- Highlands-Cashiers Earthday Celebration. Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Village Green, Cashiers (Weather Permitting) Live music and fun, free admission Hosted by UCWA, JMCA & H-C Land Trust Call (828) 526-9938 ext 230 for more info.

April 30

- The Nature Center is offering a workshop for adults on stream salamander communities, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Teachers can receive 3 science contact hours towards one CEU. Learn to identify species, collect and measure aquatic salamanders, and examine the relationship between stream microhabitat use and body size. Bring shoes for wading. Cost: \$15. Pre-registration is required due to limited space. To register, call 526-2623 by April 16.

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

The following are the Highlands Police Department log entries for the week of March 17-23. The only names printed are of public officials and/or people who were arrested.

March 17

- At 10:15 a.m., a resident reported losing a cell phone.

- At 4:30 p.m., a suspicious vehicle was reported at Mountain Brook Center. But it was unfounded.

March 18

- At 8:20 a.m., officers responded to an alarm at Highland Hiker. All was secure.

- At 3:15 p.m., a homeowner called police about non-payment of rent from tenants. Eviction proceedings were explained.

March 19

- At 1:45 p.m., a resident reported losing a cell phone.

- At 11 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Mirror Lake Road about a domestic squabble.

March 20

- At 8:48 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Mirror Lake Road about a domestic squabble.

- At 11:19 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Mirror Lake Road about a domestic squabble.

The following are the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department log entries for the week of March 16-23

March 16

- The dept. responded to an alarm at a residence on Sparkling Lake Drive. It was false.

March 18

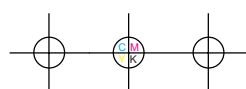
- The dept. provided mutual aid to Cashiers. The call was cancelled en route.

March 19

- The dept. responded to a call of a man slumped over the steering wheel of a vehicle on N.C. 28. It was unfounded.

March 22

- The dept. was first responders to assist EMS with a medical call at a residence on Joe Pye Trail. The victim was transported to the hospital.



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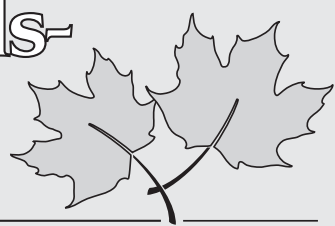
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Dr. Lindsay practiced in Brevard, NC, for 14 years prior to relocating to Cashiers. A native of High Point, NC, Dr. Lindsay earned his medical degree from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill in 1988 and completed both his internship and residency in family practice at East Carolina University in Greenville, NC, finishing in 1991. He is also an experienced emergency room physician.

He is board certified in family practice, and a member of both the American Academy of Family Practice and the North Carolina Academy of Family Practice.

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PT SECURITY GUARD POSITION – Sat. & Sun. 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Call 828-526-4161.

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HOME FOR SALE NEARLY NEW 3 bed, 2 bath– King Mountain Club, Atlanta side of Highlands. Immaculate. Large lot borders USFS – Creek on back of property. View of Scaly Mtn. 2-car garage, wood-burning fireplace, gas furnace - stove, large kitchen, wood floors, all on one level. Year-round caretaker, pool, tennis court, stocked trout pond. Asking \$399,000. Easy to see Call Sandy at (TLC Assoc.) 828-526-9766. 3/18

STORE FOR RENT – on 4th Street. Call 864-630-0808.

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS JO LAURA CHAPMAN

Any persons, firms, or corporations having claims against Jo Laura Chapman, Deceased, are notified to exhibit them to J. Wiley Hicks, Personal Representative of the Deceased's Estate, at the address of the Estate's undersigned attorney, on or before June 29, 2005, or be barred from their recovery thereafter. Debtors of the Deceased are asked to make immediate payment to the above-named Executor at the same address.

DATED: March 16, 2005

John R. Mayer
Attorney at Law, PLLC
511 Smallwood Avenue
Post Office Box 750
Highlands, N.C. 28741
(828) 526-3731
(828) 526-3734 FAX
jack@jackmayerlaw.com



... SHORTFALL continued from page 2

are pay raises mandated by the state and insurance premiums."

Shotwell would like a joint meeting with county commissioners to talk about long-range physical plant needs and budget concerns.

Meanwhile, Macon County Manager Sam Greenwood said the "fifth state budget crisis is becoming more relevant."

"My best estimate of potential state or federal impacts on Macon County government operations from funding cuts, mandates, etc., is approaching

\$700,000," he said. "This figure doesn't take into consideration cuts by other agencies such as schools which will incur cuts as well."

He said the county can't assume the proposed state and federal funding cuts will occur. "However we know from experience that other agencies such as schools will look to the county to make up the losses as will county departments."

Greenwood said the county's budget, including long range capital

expenditures and debt financing is programmed to live off the tax base and other revenue sources. "By tightly following our financial schedule, Macon County doesn't require tax increases," he said. "Plus, by keeping our financial reserves solid, we maintain the best credit ratings and keep our capital financing costs as low as possible."

Greenwood said he doesn't intend to ask the commissioners for a tax increase. "All necessary cuts will be made in the upcoming budget process to live within available revenue. This will mean

all agencies funded by the county will live under the same rate."

At Monday night's meeting the school board also considered several policy changes for the 2005-2006 school year:

One concerning illegal drug violations by students; one concerning advertising and commercial activities; one prohibiting harassment and bullying; one about use of tobacco products on school property; and one on gifts and bequests to schools.

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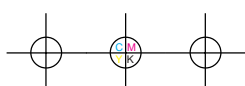
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Experience the charm of a bygone era with this 5 bedroom, 4 bath, Joe Webb log cabin, built in the 1920's. Located, within walking distance of town and situated on over 7 acres, this rustic Big Bear Pen cabin has loads of personality. Enjoy the great mountain views from your covered deck or relax by the fire of the native stone fireplace. Laurel accents, wood beams, and hardwood floors make this the perfect mountain retreat. Property can be subdivided and comes with most furnishings. Just reduced to \$1,298,000. MSL#55142

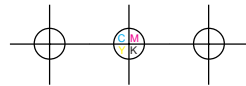


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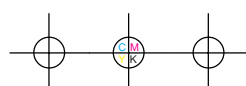
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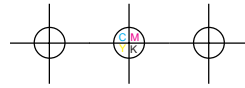
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HIGHGATE, just inside the gate with Stone / Board and Batten exterior. Includes a Pavilion and Decks outside for summer entertaining. Inside on the main level, 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, living room / stone fireplace, dining room and kitchen. Lower level has its own private parking and entrance plus, living area, bedroom and bath. Low maintenance yard all for only \$525,000. Furnishings can be purchased separately. MLS #55177



This wonderful 38 +/- acre piece of property features a view of Whiteside and Blackrock Mountains, a small stream that gurgles through the property and over 100 feet on the rushing Norton Big Creek. This was a terraced farm and has a small cottage to begin your enjoyment of this property right away. A great setting. Offered at \$2,500,000.



Renowned Atlanta Interior Decorator's custom built Country French home. First time on the market. Over 4 acres with great view of Satulah Mountain. 2 master suites, one on the main floor and one on the upper level. Antique wood and French tile floors. Stone masonry fireplaces in the kitchen, living room and screened porch. Top of the line appliances including a Viking stove. One of a kind beautiful mountain home. Furnishings can be purchased separately. Offered at \$1,295,000.



WILDWOOD. Lovely home features a level lot with easy access and winter view. Two story living room with stone fireplace and large windows that lets the light flood in. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2 car garage. Huge outdoor living room with fireplace and open deck. Offered at \$635,000.



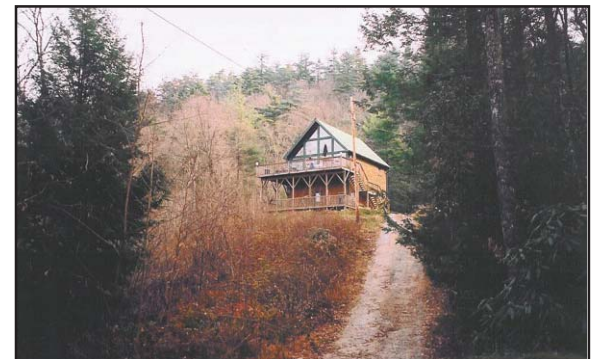
Close to town on Mt. Lori. This home has 3 bedrooms, 3 baths and multiple decks. The main level family room has a floor to ceiling stone fireplace, vaulted ceilings, kitchen, dining room and the master bedroom and bath. There are 2 additional bedrooms and a bonus loft room on the upper level as well as a lower level game room/family room with a 2nd fireplace that would be a great area for guests and children. This home has a one car garage and sits on just over 1/2-acre near the top of Mt. Lori. Offered fully furnished at \$395,000.



This is a great Starter Home with a level yard for children to play! There are two bedrooms and two baths with an extra room that could be an office or den. Enjoy the deck off the master bedroom or the porch off the living room. This home was built in 1947 and has been thoughtfully improved and maintained over the years. Bring your updating ideas - there are wood floors under the carpeting and chimney for a wood stove. You even have a great garden space in the backyard and a one car detached garage. Offered at \$285,000.



Big, big view and in town as well. Located atop of Satulah Mountain, this house built in 2000 with many new updates has it all. There are 4 bedrooms and 3 and a half baths. There is a large foyer and living area on each level with 2 fireplaces. The screened porch has incredible views as does the open deck, both living rooms, the master, the dining room 2 other bedrooms. Offered fully furnished at \$1,385,000.



Wonderful 2 bedroom, 2 bath home on 6.10 +/- acres. Located off Far End Road in Horse Cove. This custom built home has too many features to list. Home has a good stream on the property and a great mountain view. Offered at \$265,000.



Unique with a Contemporary Flair, this 3 bedroom, 3 bath plus lower level office/den features large rooms with tall glass windows to enjoy the 1.61 +/- acre grounds and one of a kind hand placed waterfall. Custom wood touches are evident throughout the interior with private living spaces a large garage/workshop has numerous possibilities. Offered completely furnished at \$1,295,000.

