

# Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020

## PRIMARY 2020 Q & A: PART 4

### Four Republicans are vying for the District Court Judge position

By Brittney Lofthouse

A new District Court Judge is slated to be elected this fall for

the 30th Judicial District — marking the first time Judge Richard Kent Walker will not be seeking

re-election since he was first appointed to the post in 2007.

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 6

### HS girls varsity Basketball team is Regular Conference Champs

By Brian O'Shea  
Plateau Daily News

The Lady Highlanders varsity basketball team hit the road on Tuesday, Feb. 4 to take on Nantahala and won 73-36, clinching the regular season conference championship.

The win over Nantahala put Highlands at a 5-0 conference record throughout the regular season. Highlands Coach Jake Page said he's proud of the girls achievement but the season is not over.

"It's a great feeling," said Page. "I'm happy for the girls, they earned it. We worked hard but we're not done yet. Cherokee is

coming up and that's going to be a big game."

The Lady Highlanders established a sizable lead early in the

game against the Lady Hawks and Page said everyone stepped up to contribute to the win.

"I like to compete, and my

girls have the same attitude," said Page. "It doesn't matter who we're playing, winning or losing, starting or on the bench; you always have to be ready to go. This has always been one of our goals and I'm so proud of all of my girls."

Highlands Brook-

• See CHAMPS page 15

### HS & MS cheerleaders are on packed competition tour



High School cheerleaders taking a break. See story on page 10.

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## SINCE THE HCA/MISSION MERGER: PART 1

### HCA's billing system raises concerns in district

By Brittney Lofthouse

Gibbins Advisors, the independent monitoring firm hired to monitor HCA Healthcare after its acquisition of Mission Health spent last week continuing its WNC tour of community meetings and town halls.

Residents, patients, as well as current and former employees of Mission Health have attended the meetings held throughout western North Carolina, most of whom explicitly aired their grievances with the merger.

During the town hall held in Franklin at the Robert C. Carpenter Community building, Jesse Urban expressed his concerns with the billing practices of HCA.

According to Urban, he visited his Primary Care Doctor in Highlands as he always has. The services he sought were primary care services, however, when taking a closer look at the billing codes used for his visit, his insur-

ance was billed for "outpatient services," which carries a significantly higher cost.

Urban said he contacted the doctor's office to check on what he assumed as an error, only to learn that the doctor's office assumed they were still a primary care provider, however HCA's billing was changing the primary care visits to outpatient services, something that is being replicated throughout facilities now owned by HCA across the country and region.

Other Highlands residents began seeing these fees on their primary care visit invoices back in the fall.

Carolina Public Press reported on a similar complaint made by Francis Sconzo in Transylvania.

"Since last fall, Mission Health patients have experienced a new charge on their bills after visits to a primary care office for

• See HCA page 5

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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### Balancing tourism and quality of life

Last week I had the honor of meeting with students from Anne Porter's Hospitality and Tourism high school class. After giving the students a Town Hall tour, we discussed the tourist industry here on the plateau. I blathered on about how tourism is a pillar of the Highlands and Cashiers economy, and how the town and chamber supported the tourist industry. I also covered the current issues of short-term rentals and the collection and distribution of the room occupancy tax.



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

As the class departed for another class, I realized that Ms. Porter's class curriculum is very relevant to these students in that many of them may eventually work here or at other locations in the tourism and hospitality industry. If they go to universities like Western Carolina, they can major in this business.

I also discussed with the students the future challenges and pressures that a growing tourism industry places on a community like Highlands. While the revenue from this industry is essential to the economic vitality of the community, I shared some of my concerns about maintaining a balance between smart tourist growth and preserving this beautiful and attractive community.

This concern about maintaining a balance in not just relevant to Highlands, it is a concern throughout the world. Elizabeth Becker wrote *Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel and Tourism*, in 2013. In her book she pointed out that large populations of tourists, about 1.4 billion people a year, place environmental and sociological pressures on historic sites, ecologically sensitive environments and communities.

Becker expresses concern for what she calls "rapacious tourism."

George Stone published an article in *National Geographic* last September 27 entitled *Sustainable Tourism*. The article appeared on World Tourism Day, which is kind of a knock off of Earth Day. Stone identifies four areas for a sustainable tourism model.

First, the environment must be protected. Some tourist venues are being compromised by the sheer volume of visitors.

Second, the tourist industry has to address climate change. I recently read that on a long tourist destination flight the fuel needed to transport each passenger generates enough CO<sub>2</sub> to melt three square meters of arctic ice.

Third, the consumption of plastic at tourist venues needs to be minimized. Finally, the economic development of tourist communities needs to be expanded. With a growing tourist venue workforce availability, housing, healthcare and displacement are challenges to be met.

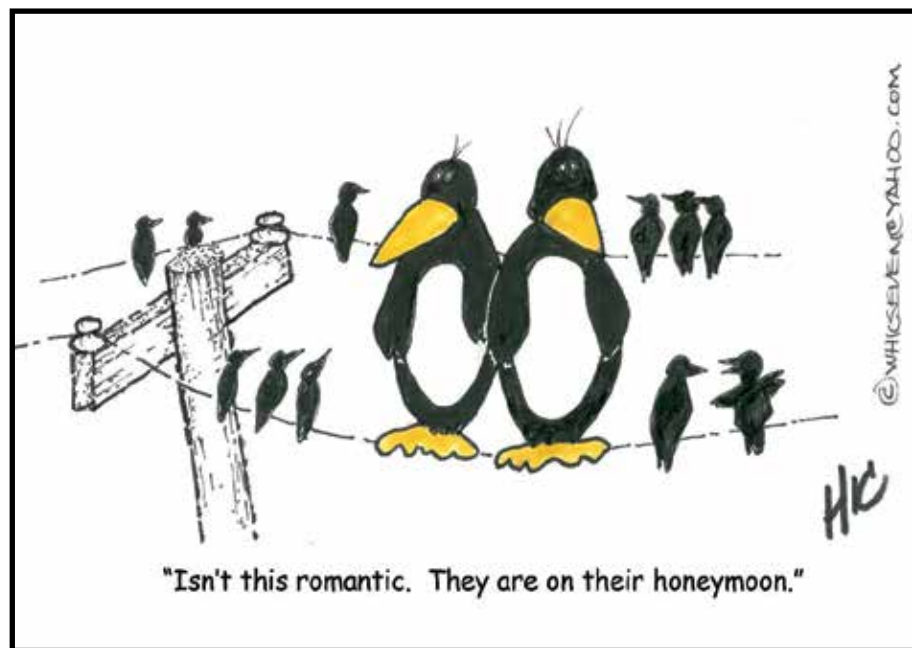
With that said, the major pillar of our local economy is tourism. The question to me is how do we build a sustainable, eco-friendly tourist industry of the future?

So, I go back to the class I met with and the young people that will be our future workers and community leaders. They, too, will have opportunities and challenges in developing and sustaining our tourist industry.

The mayor cannot address nor solve these problems, but the community working together can. I have been in discussions with the new leadership of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is aware of these issues and will be doing a comprehensive economic plan in the near future.

In addition, the Town of Highlands is about to begin a comprehensive community plan that will foster effective community partnering. We will bring in a consulting firm to guide our planning board and community stakeholders through the process. Our shared goals should be to make strategic plans that insure economic sustainability, community vitality and preservation of this beautiful environment that we all treasure.

## • HIC'S VIEW •



## • OBITUARY •

### Philip H. Silverthorn

Philip H. Silverthorn was born September 25, 1956 in Bradenton, Florida to Philip Silverthorn and Doris Silverthorn. He passed on February 1, 2020 in Highlands, NC.

He leaves two beautiful daughters, Annamaria and Evangelina, his mother, Doris Silverthorn of Scaly Mountain, NC, brother Gary Silverthorn and sister Sheri Fannon of Bradenton, FL, sister Susan Silverthorn of Scaly Mountain, N.C. and several nieces and nephews, as well as an amazing number of great friends and "brothers."

Phil attended Manatee County schools and graduated from Manatee High School. He attended Troy State University. A talented musician, he played music with many

• See OBITUARY page 5

## • WEATHER •

Thu, 13-Feb	Fri, 14-Feb	Sat, 15-Feb	Sun, 16-Feb
53°F 25°F	39°F 16°F	40°F 23°F	50°F 24°F
Occasional morning rain	Chilly with sunshine	Chilly with some sun	Milder with some sun
RealFeel® High: 50° Low: 38°	RealFeel® High: 37° Low: 20°	RealFeel® High: 43° Low: 17°	RealFeel® High: 54° Low: 27°

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#### Letter Policy:

We reserve the right to reject or edit letters-to-the-editor. No anonymous letters will be accepted. Views expressed are not necessarily those of Highlands Newspaper.



A woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a black strappy swimsuit, is relaxing in a hot tub. She has her eyes closed and her hand is resting on her forehead. The hot tub is surrounded by lush greenery and a stone wall. In the background, there is a small wooden structure with a thatched roof.

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by Old Edwards

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## ...HCA continued from page 1

an annual checkup, blood pressure check or some other routine matter. When the bill for their visit arrives, there's a new charge listed: an outpatient fee that can run \$100 or more without the patient having set foot in one of Mission's hospitals or having seen a specialist," reported Carolina Public Press.

According to Sconzo, prior to the merger, he would pay \$35 for a copay to see his doctor with the insurance he has, but now, the new billing codes require him to pay more than \$100 for the same services.

Urban noted that he believes the billing code changes is far from an error and instead part of the general practices of HCA, which has resulted in lawsuits in other states.

Jesse Urban said he's afraid another class action law-

suit for this kind of fraudulent billing issue might be the only thing that resolves it.

Reported in December, HCA Healthcare is facing a class action lawsuit that alleges it charged exorbitant, undisclosed "surcharge" fees to patients who visited the emergency department at several of its Florida hospitals.

The lawsuit was Southern District of Florida and names three HCA hospitals in the state — Poinciana Medical Center, Fort Walton Beach Medical Center and Palms West Hospital — and alleges that three patients who visited their emergency departments were hit with the fees by surprise, the Miami Herald reported.

In one case listed in the suit, a Missouri man visiting Kissimmee, FL, went to Poinciana's ER and was billed \$23,865, of which \$4,000 was a surcharge.

HCA did file a motion to dismiss this suit as well, which was granted last week when U.S. Judge Roy K. Altman said in an order that the fees were disclosed on the internet on

•See HCA page 22

## ...OBITUARY continued from page 2



Silverhorn with daughters Annamaria and Evangelina.

different groups, writing and recording songs. He was an outdoorsman, did organic farming and raised farm animals - while raising his two daughters, as he said, "his most important job."

He greeted his many friends as "brother" - friends from school, surfing buddies, musician and work friends - from the Gulf he loved to the mountains he loved

Phillip discovered he had cancer in December 2019, put up a brave fight, and was hospitalized in late December. He fought bravely.

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# •WORD MATTER•

## A Third Way – Moderation Anyone?

I've often expressed my disdain for political parties. In his farewell address, George Washington warned Americans about the dangers inherent in a system dominated by political parties. The hyper-partisanship we're experiencing right now, and have been for over two decades, is testament to his prescience on this issue.

A Congressman from New Jersey, elected as a Democrat in a district carried by the President, is changing his party affiliation to Republican. He's certainly able to do this. In fact, I often wondered what would have happened if, during his impeachment in the Republican-controlled congress, Bill Clinton would have changed

his party preference to Republican. I mean, that's all it takes, right? What if Donald Trump did the same thing? He's been a Democrat before... two or three times. He's been a Republican before. He's been an Independent before. What effect would this have with regard to his impeachment? Hard to imagine either party impeaching one of their own, right?

Could either party actually deny any elected official the right



**Bud Katz**

to switch to the other? Would the switcher have to change all of his or her opinions and positions so as to fall in line with current dogma? Would loyalty oaths come into play?

With that in mind, can someone, anyone, explain to me why any political party has relevance or value to American voters?

In the grand scheme of things, if a person ... a Congressman, for example, can simply turn his back on the people who voted for him and change his affiliation because he thinks it might improve his chances for re-election, what does declaring one's self a Democrat or Republican really mean? Would the world tip over if our elections didn't rely on these apparently meaningless designations? I believe we'd survive, perhaps even flourish as a representative democratic republic without polarizing, partisan, designations.

I don't mean to beat this particular issue to death but the canyon between Republicans and Democrats, or red and blue, right and left, is clearly not in the interest of the American people. Are there really all that many ideologically pure people on either the left or the right? I could cite a number of different sources indicating that the so-called "far left" or "far right" in our nation weigh in somewhere between twenty and thirty percent, leaving somewhere between forty and sixty percent living where reside, somewhere in the political middle.

The major American political parties exist for the sole purpose of defining blocks of voters who tend to be receptive to certain messaging on certain, mostly social issues. Most Americans, regardless of where they line up on immigration, for example, don't want either open borders or children separated from their parents. Most people, regardless of where they line up on abortion, don't like the idea of it but don't necessarily want to deny a woman her right to reproductive freedom. No one ... literally no one wants to pay more in taxes, but everyone has an opinion as to where the federal government should place its spending priorities. Many people are uncomfortable with notions such as marriage between same sex couples but relatively few want the heavy hand of the federal government tipping the scale one way or another.

Both parties seem to tack their platform planks to the extreme elements of the base. Whatever became of thenotion of trying to do the best for the American people?

There's a word for folks who don't subscribe to the absolutism of the extremes within their respective parties. They're called moderates. These are people who lean somewhat left or somewhat right. It's the extreme elements on both sides who want to make American life binary; either this way or that way, with no discussion, or negotiation, or God forbid, compromise.

At no time in this tender missive have I chosen to champion or condemn one side of the political spectrum versus another. I can find things to like or dislike about both of them. That's because we're not dealing with one or the other. We're dealing with organizations that profit from our polarization. We call them Republicans or Democrats, but what are they, really? And moreover, what contribution do the designations make in the lives of the American people?

Maybe, instead of blind alignment with someone else's set of ideas and principles based on some arbitrary designation – Republican or Democrat – far right or far left – perhaps we should consider a third way. Let's call them American Moderates.

## ...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 1

The Republican race for the Judge spot filled up quickly and includes Macon County Attorney Rich Cassady, Clay County Attorney Mitch Brewer, and Haywood County attorneys Kaleb Wingate and Jim Moore. Whoever gets the most votes during the primary will continue on the campaign trail and face off against Swain County Democrat Attorney Justine Greene in November.

### **Rich Cassady**

Rich Cassady was raised in Reynoldsburg, Ohio, because his father did not want to mine coal in Eastern Kentucky, where the paternal side of his family was from. Cassady installed telephones for what was originally Ohio Bell and later, Ameritech.

He joined the U.S. Navy when he was 20 years old and served nine years honor-

ably; his active service ended in 1997. During his time in the Navy, Cassady served onboard the U.S.S. John Young (DD-973), a Spruance class destroyer, and did two tours in the Persian Gulf in support of the 1st Gulf War. His last duty station was in Hawaii, where he earned his Bachelors degree in three years attending Chaminade University of Honolulu. In 1998, he attended the University of Mississippi School of Law and graduated in 2001.

During his time in the Navy, Cassady married and had a daughter. The marriage ended in 1997. In 2000, he married his current wife and has raised his step-son since he was five years old. Cassady's step-son recently completed five years in the U.S. Army and received an Honorable Discharge. Cas-

• See PRIMARY page 8

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## Will You Be My Valentine?

Valentine's Day is THE day for letting those you love know how much you care for them. People show their love in different ways, and it's not always cards, chocolates and flowers (although advertising screams otherwise). We are drawn to any story of first love, love at first sight, a "match made in heaven," but in today's world there are dating sites to find your perfect match, and I happen to personally know of at least three couples who have had success!

Dating sites may be the thing to do now, but matchmaking has been around for centuries. While thoughts of Yenti, the matchmaker in Fiddler of a Roof come to mind, (and it's perfectly fine for you to break out in song), there's another kind of matchmaker you may not realize happening every day. Real estate brokers are matchmakers, too.

Yes, real estate has their own version of Match and eHarmony. There's that one I won't mention that rhymes with pillow. If you think pillow with Zzzzs for sleeping, you've got it. The site will tell you most everything you want to know, based on information gathered from multiple listing services, public records and personal information entered by those trying to FSBO their home. The one thing the site won't do, because it can't, is add the human touch to the picture.

Those sites can be used as a reference, but when it's time to make your choice, the best way is to ask a real estate matchmaker, your Realtor. There are plenty of fish in the sea, although recent reports are stating home shortages are creating a seller's market. You only want one house, so why do you think you need to browse hundreds to find "the one?"

Face it, for some people, shopping is hard, and today's internet shopping can make it harder rather than easier. If you have only 10-15 homes to find out about with the hopes of finding "the perfect one," chances are you'd be very happy with your selection and live a very long and happy life together.

What if that number goes from 15 to 50? Or 100? Or more? Totally exhaustive, and chances of finding a home that's better for you is debatable. When you work with a Realtor, your matchmaker, they cull out the homes that aren't right for you

based on your past interactions and stated requirements you've given them. Not only that, but they'll follow through all the way until your transaction is closed and recorded. So, it's fine to use those sites as a reference, but unless you're a housing expert in the area in which you're looking, it's not the wisest solution.

Using other industries as an example, I know people that can build a computer, and know where to buy and implement all the necessary equipment to make it tailored just for them or their clients. I don't know how to do that, so it would be foolish for me to try. I know someone that makes patterns for lace shawls and coverings, as well as knits, crochets, etc. I don't know how to do that, so I buy ready-made or custom made. Same goes for a clothing- just because you have a sewing machine and some cloth doesn't mean you can make something you'd wear, and it probably wouldn't be cost effective anyway. In other words, just because you have the tools at your ready, doesn't mean YOU'RE ready to use them.

Let's get back to those fishies.

In the last year, in the Highlands



Jeannie Chambers  
Chambers Realty & Vacation Rental  
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Township, looking at homes, townhomes and condos, there were 215 properties sold. The main way to compare listings is to compare them with properties that have sold within the last year. Another way is to look at the active properties that are competing properties, but the latter is much less reliable. You can list as much as you want, but the sales price is the key.

Of the 215 properties sold last year, the

most competitive market were homes between \$250,000 to \$750,000 and comprised 114 of those 215 sales. Although there were sales upward to \$4,500,000, those special properties aren't the norm.

Next time you're looking for a home that's a "match made in heaven," consult YOUR Realtor. While there are always plenty of fish in the sea, they can help catch the right one for you.

• Jeannie and Tucker Chambers are Realtors/owners of Chambers Realty & Vacation Rentals at 401 N. Fifth Street in Highlands. [highlandsiscalling.com](http://highlandsiscalling.com). With matchmaking experience of a combined fifty years, they can help you find your match.

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## ...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 6

sady comes from a family of veterans, as his maternal grandfather, father, himself, and son are (or were) veterans.

Upon graduation from Ole Miss, Cassidy clerked for the senior most judge in the State of Mississippi, Circuit Court Judge R.I. "Rip" Pritchard III for two years. Cassidy said the job served as the equivalent of a Masters program in law.

Cassidy then worked for two insurance defense firms in Hattiesburg and then Gulfport, Miss.

After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Cassidy moved to Macon County in 2006, where he has practiced law ever since. Cassidy practices primarily criminal defense law in federal and state court, family law, and personal injury.

"I am running for District Court judge for several reasons," said Cassidy. "First and foremost, I have the life and legal experience to handle this position. All

of us running for this position are asking the voters for the power to sit in judgment of them, their children, their grandchildren, and their neighbors, friends, and fellow community members.

"Over half of the types of cases a District Court judge handles are civil; primarily family law and custody cases. I tell people that I have not always been a lawyer. What I mean by that is that my adult perspective is not through the lens of being a trained attorney. I did not go to law school until I was 30 years old. By that age, I had served nine years honorably in the U.S. Navy, had an unsuccessful marriage, a 7-year old daughter, and had worked installing cable television the year before I went to law school for the same company my father worked for when he raised his family.

I have lived the life, or something similar to it, of those who will come before me seeking justice and/or my judgment. Another reason for my running is to keep this particular position in Western NC.

If I lose this primary, then the most likely result is that this seven-county district will have five of its six District Court judges from Haywood County. So, if law enforcement or lawyers from Cherokee County cannot find Judge Sellers (of Clay County) they will have to make a 200-mile round trip drive to get to Waynesville and one of five Haywood County lawyers that are district court judges. Same for Clay and Macon counties, just not quite as far."

### Mitchell Brewer

Mitchell Brewer was born in Wilson, N.C., and attended Barton College (formerly Atlantic Christian College). He married his wife, Taylor (Calder) Brewer, after graduating from college. Brewer went to law school at Campbell, where his first child, Grant, was born. Brewer graduated and after licensure, relocated to Hendersonville with his family where he opened his first private practice.

After his second son, Can-

non, was born in 2008, Brewer and his family relocated to Garner, N.C., and continued practicing law. Brewer's family turned to five with the birth of his third son, Owen. Brewer then relocated back to Western North Carolina in February 2014 and now calls Hayesville home. Brewer spends time with his family, friends and does his part to help his community.

Brewer attended Ralph L. Fike High School and Wilson Technical Community College where he was awarded an Associates Degree in Applied Sciences (Criminal Justice) and graduated with honors, transferring to Barton College in 1998. During undergraduate school, when he was not doing tree work, he worked in security, delivered furniture all over eastern and middle North Carolina, and built truck bodies and operated forklifts for a truck body manufacturer. Brewer graduated summa cum laude from Barton College in 2000, married, and worked for the State of North Carolina, Department of Health and Human Services' Interstate Compact on Juveniles, transferring juvenile probation and helping return runaways.

Brewer went to law school at Campbell University at Buies Creek, N.C., and started practicing law in 2005. He practices criminal law, motor vehicle law, domestic relations, family law, civil matters, special proceedings, estate matters, and business formations.

"I am hoping to serve the people of the 30th Judicial District comprised of Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Clay, Cherokee, Graham and Swain counties because I understand the culture and the many challenges facing the residents of these counties," said Brewer. "I also have a very appropriate background that has allowed me to experience and see first-hand the application of our courts on veterans, single mothers, people with substance use disorder and other mental conditions. I also worked in numer-

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 13



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# • FINANCIAL MATTERS •

## Passage of the SECURE Act



Michael P Henderson,  
CFP® CKA®  
Founder/Wealth Advisor  
Crossover Point Advisors

401(k), and profit-sharing types of plans.

**Small business owners can band together to offer retirement plans to their associates**

The new law allows for the facilitation of open multiple employer plans (MEPs) by allowing completely unrelated employers to participate in an MEP and eliminates the IRS's "one bad apple" rule, which stipulates that all employers participating in a MEP may face adverse tax consequences if one employer fails to satisfy the tax qualification rules

for the MEP.

Roughly half of private-sector workers in the US still don't have access to a retirement plan through their employer. Open MEPs can help deliver low-cost, high-quality retirement plans for millions of small business workers.

**• Penalty free withdrawals from their retirement plans of up to \$5,000 per parent upon the birth or adoption of a child.**

Note: the withdrawals must fall under the IRS definition of "qualified", but the 10% penalty would not apply for pre-59½ withdrawals, and you could put the money back into the plan later.

**• Generally, distributions from an inherited IRA must now be taken within 10 years.**

The "stretch option" for the required minimum distributions (RMD's) for most non-spouse beneficiary IRA's is gone. For people who have inherited IRA's from someone other than their spouse, until now, they've been required to take minimum distributions each year based on their life expectancy. For non-spouse IRA's inherited after January 1st, 2020, this no longer applies for most people. The IRA would now need to be emptied within 10

years. You can take the distributions over time or in a lump sum, but the account must be emptied by the end of the 10th year.

There are exceptions however to the 10-year rule. These include assets left to a surviving spouse, a minor child, a disabled or chronically ill beneficiary, and beneficiaries who are less than 10 years younger than the original IRA owner or 401(k) participant.

*• Investment advice and financial planning services offered through Crossover Point Advisors, an SEC Registered Investment Advisor. The opinions expressed in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. All performance referenced is historical and is no guarantee of future results. Crossover Point Advisors does not provide legal or tax advice. Please consult with your tax or legal professional for more information*

As expected, and written about in these pages, the SECURE Act (Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement) indeed passed and was signed into law by The President in January. This legislation is considered by many the most significant change to retirement plans since 2006.

Unexpectedly, the portion of the bill I focused on the most in my column back in September didn't survive, i.e. the "step up in cost basis". That's potentially good news for non-spouse heirs that stand to inherit highly appreciated assets such as land and securities.

Here are some of the things that did make it into the bill:

**• An increase in the age required to begin taking Required Minimum Distributions (RMD's) from your IRA's.**

Essentially because Americans are living longer, this was changed from age 70½ to 72. However, if you turned 70½ in 2019, you would still need to take a distribution in 2020.

**• It repeals the maximum age for traditional IRA contributions which was 70½.**

Once again, with a more active aging population, the government recognizes some people are working longer and would like to fund their retirement plans longer.

**• Small business owners can receive a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for starting a retirement plan.**

The new law provides a credit for new start up retirement plans for smaller employers (less than 100 employees) over a 3-year period beginning after December 31, 2019. It applies to SEP, SIMPLE,



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## Sign up now for spring soccer & baseball

Macon Couth Youth Soccer Club is taking registration for the Spring season through Friday, February 14th. Register online at [maconsoccer.net](http://maconsoccer.net) for ages 5-14.

Macon County Little League registration for ages 4-16 is underway. Registration will go through March 8th. Register online at [www.franklinlittleleague.com](http://www.franklinlittleleague.com).



# Highlands cheerleaders give their all at recent competitions



High School cheerleaders reach new heights.

— Photo submitted

**By Sayla Roman and Brian O'Shea  
Plateau Daily News**

Highlands High and Middle School cheerleaders have been training hard for months to prepare for several competitions. The most recent competition in Greenville, S.C. scheduled for Feb. 8 wasn't meant to be due to snowy road conditions.

HHS and HMS cheer team began their competitive season on Nov. 23, 2019 and after traveling four hours to Greensboro, HHS was awarded first place in their division with zero deductions.

HHS Marilyn Valerio said the team did well considering it was several of her teammates' first time competing.

"I feel like there was a lot of good things and bad things," said Valerio. "We definitely could've done much better than we did, but for a lot of them it was the first time stepping out on the floor and they did really great."

HHS and HMS both received high scores in multiple categories.

"We scored really high in the jump

category," said Highlands Coach Kristin Huneycutt. "We received almost full points for difficulty and execution. The judges also made the comment that our pyramid had a great foundation, but they wanted to see the difficulty increased. In preparation for the next competition we will work on cleaning motions and transitions and increasing difficulty."

Huneycutt said feedback from competitions is beneficial.

"After each competition, coaches receive scoresheets and feedback on the routine," she said. "For the competition we were at, I received some really great feedback on what can be improved and what looked good."

HHS Jordan Powell is the squad's only boy and said he's enjoying his time cheering.

"It was a bit strange at first, but after a while it became normal," said Powell. "I'm treated just like the girls on the team. Taylor and Maddie were on the team last year and told me that they needed a guy on the team. I had already kind of wanted to be a cheer-

leader, but them requesting was the last little push."

Huneycutt said Powell has been very useful to the team and several of his teammates have deemed him an incredible back spot for the flyers.

HHS Haley Small said she has a great time going to games and cheering competitively.

"The cheer team is like a family," said Small. "There are some people who don't think cheering is a sport, but it pushes you and gets you out of your comfort zone."

HHS Alexandra Clark is trying out cheering for the first time and said it's challenging.

"It's a new sport for me that I've never done before," said Clark. "You have to do a lot to learn the routines and stunts for competitions, and there's a lot of drama, but it's a lot of fun. Win or lose as a team, no matter what happens we have each other."

Second on the agenda for both cheer teams was the North Carolina Cheerleading Coaches Association (NCCCA) competition in Raleigh on Feb. 3. Highlands didn't place at the NCCCA, but Huneycutt said both teams did well.

"High School did extremely well, they have added a lot of difficulty to their routine since November," said Huneycutt. "Their routine was not perfect, but they rallied and I am very proud!"

HMS has gone through several changes this year and Huneycutt said they roll with it

as it comes.

"They have lost members and gained members," said Huneycutt. "Their routine has changed multiple times. The middle school team did amazing! I am so proud of them. The routine was not perfect, but they went out there and did their best!"

Other high schools that competed at the NCCCA include Currituck County High School and South Rowan High School. Middle schools include River Road Middle School, Swift Creek Middle School, Maiden Middle School, Ellerbe Middle School, Rockingham Middle School, Edwards Middle School, and Durant Road Middle School.

HMS Tate Wilson said she was anxious during the six-hour trip to the NCCCA in Raleigh.

"The drive there was really nerve-wracking," said Wilson. "When I got on stage, I was thinking oh my gosh I can't believe I'm up here. I've worked so hard for this and I know I deserve to be here. I think we did our best, maybe try a little harder next time, but we did what we could."

HMS Soraya Lopez said it's not all about going home with a trophy.

"I was nervous at first but once we started I calmed down," said Lopez. "No one fell and it was really fun. Even though we didn't place, just by being there we won in our hearts."

HMS cheers for home middle school

•See **CHEERLEADERS** page 22



The Middle School cheerleaders show their spirit.

— Photos submitted



# • THE INK PENN •

## What to do for Valentine's Day?

One thing we won't be doing for Valentine's Day this year is going out to eat. This holiday is supposedly the busiest night for dinner out no matter what day of the week it falls on, and when it lands on a Friday or Saturday, watch out. Chances are I'll cook a nice dinner at home. Then again, most of the dinners I fix are nice, just not fancy.

As for gifts, who knows? We've long since reached the stage where gifts are not expected and are a pleasant surprise when they're given. These days, when one of us sees something we want, if it's within reason, we buy it. If it's not within reason, then we don't need it as a gift. And, we both know what we like better than anyone else does.

That means when I want new jewelry, it works out better if I choose it myself—not that I need another piece of jewelry. The same goes for clothes. What can I never have enough of? Books. I can always use more books, but it's hard

for my husband to keep track of what I have or haven't read when I can hardly keep track myself.

For Christmas, my generous husband gave me gift certificates for DSW, Chico's, and Barnes & Noble. Isn't it funny that even though the funds all come from the same place, paying for something with a gift certificate seems different? Somehow more special?

I managed to use one of them when I went shopping with a girlfriend on New Year's Day while our husbands watched football. I didn't have anything particular in mind, but I had my certificates with me. When we walked in DSW, I said I couldn't think of any shoes I needed. How serendipitous that I stumbled across yet another pair of red shoes I couldn't live without. I already have two pairs of red winter shoes, but these were Sperry topsiders for the spring.



Kathy Manos Penn

I also have a birthday in January. You can see the gift-buying season is never-ending at our house, at least for my poor husband. That's why I asked for two very specific things for my birthday. Christmas before last, he gave me a CD player for my office. This year it stopped working, and after much back and forth with the manufacturer, I found a local repair place for it. As one birthday gift, I asked that my husband take the CD player to have it repaired.

The second gift I requested was a map. That's right. I've created a fictional Cotswolds village for the cozy mystery series I'm writing, and I asked him to draw a map of the village for me. I'm not spatial at all. Neither can I draw. I sketched out a barely legible version of what goes where and distances, and he drew it to scale.

I can't help him out for Valentine's Day, as I can't think of any other special re-

quests. He hasn't asked for anything other than a pony in years, and you can rest assured, he's not getting one of those. Since his joking refrain whenever we're going out is, "I don't have anything to wear," it's possible I may take him shopping on Valentine's to pick out some new clothes. Does he need any? Maybe, maybe not, but at least he'll come home with something he likes.

Heck, if we go shopping Valentine's Day, maybe we can time it to come home with takeout for dinner. That's it, takeout food and a movie from Amazon Prime for the two of us. Quite the romantic evening, don't you think?

• Kathy is a Georgia resident. Find her books *"The Ink Penn: Celebrating the Magic in the Everyday"* and *"Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch"* at Books Unlimited in Franklin and on Amazon. *"Lord Banjo the Royal Pooch"* is also available at Highlands Mountain Paws. Contact her at [inkpenn119@gmail.com](mailto:inkpenn119@gmail.com), and follow her on Facebook, [www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/](https://www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/).

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# ...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 8

ous occupations and understand why the courts are integral to the remedies businesses and working people face.”

## **Kaleb Wingate**

Kaleb Wingate, 31, is the only candidate on the Republican Primary Ballot that was born and raised in Western North Carolina, currently living near Main Street in Waynesville.

After law school, Wingate returned home to serve his community as an Assistant District Attorney. He prosecuted hundreds of cases throughout all seven counties in the district and was able to gain a vast amount of experience in District Court. In addition, Wingate was assigned to Superior Court in Haywood County where he prosecuted serious felonies such as drug trafficking, bank robbery, vehicular homicide, and sexual assault.

Wingate now operates his own law firm where he handles various types of cases including, but not limited to, DSS,

involuntary commitments, small claims, and criminal defense. Wingate is known as a hard-working and modest attorney who understands the law and cares about his community’s needs.

“I genuinely want to serve my community,” said Wingate. “I’m not doing this to finish out my state retirement or because I am disgruntled with one or more of our current District Court judges. I want to give back to the community that has given so much to me. I also promise to be accessible to everyone in all seven counties including being open to the idea of having an office centrally located in our district.”

## **Jim Moore**

Moore was born in Warren, Ark., in 1961 to Jim and Elwanda Moore. Folks in Haywood County knew Moore’s parents through Moore’s Mountain Realty in Maggie Valley and through Elwanda’s work as a legal secretary for numerous lawyers in

• See PRIMARY 2020 page 16



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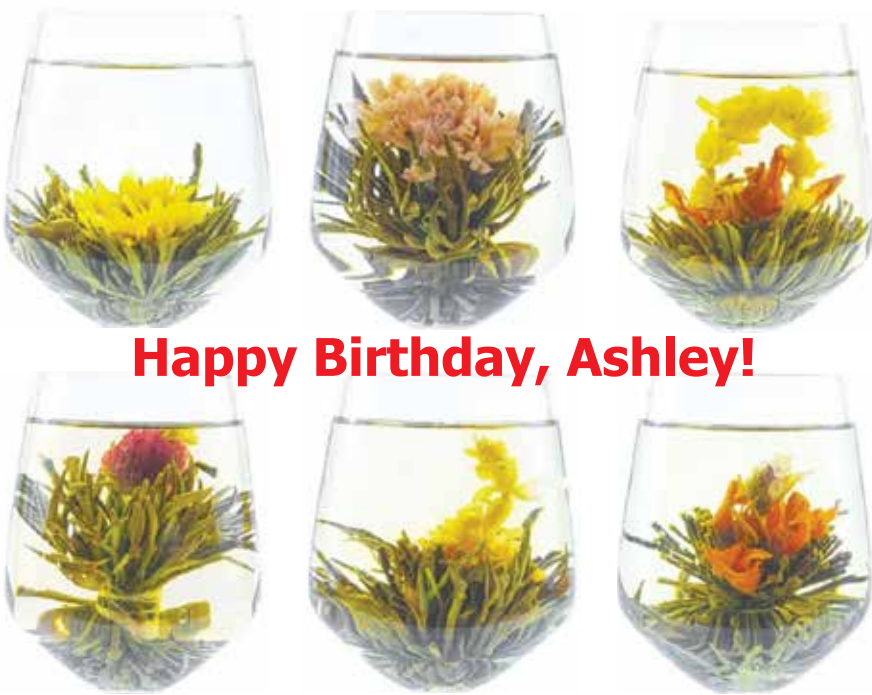
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# • HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

## Ongoing

- Movies at the Playhouse Fri & Sat 1, 4, 7; Sun. 1 & 4; Tues-Thurs 1, 4, 7.
- Ice Skating at K-H Founders Park – Thurs., 1-8p; Fri. & Sat 1-10p; Sun. 1-5p..
- The Bascom is open Friday - Monday 10am-5pm (Sundays 12pm - 5pm). Visitors are welcome to enjoy the newly updated Story Walk Trail throughout the week.
- At the Highlands Recreation Dept. pool. Public Swim Monday-Thursday 11a-7p Friday and Saturday 11a-6p and Sunday 1-6p.
- Fibber Magee's Clothing Thrift Store on Laurel Street is open Tues.-Friday 10a to 4p and on Saturday from 10a to 2p.

## First Mondays

- Shortoff Baptist Church non-denominational Men's Mtg at 7p.

## Mondays

- At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit classes with Tori Schmitt at 5:30pm.

## Mon.-Wed.

- Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt 5:30-6:30.

## Mon. & Thurs.

- The Joy Program at HUMC 11:30a to

1:30p. Includes a free lunch and a variety of programs and games. All seniors are welcome. For more info, call Kristy Lewis at 526-3376.

## Mon. & Fri.

- Gentle Yoga at the Rec park at 9:15-10:15 a.m.. All levels welcome.

## Mon., Wed., Fri.

- Heart Healthy Exercise Class Monday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30am-9:30am.
- Step Aerobics with Tina Rogers 8-9a.

## Mon., Wed., Thurs.

- Pickle Ball at the Recreation Department Gym 10:30am - 1pm

## Tuesdays

- FREE Community Table Dinner at the Community Bldg. at 6p.

• The Highlands Writers Group meets Tuesday, at 3pm in the downstairs boardroom at The Bascom. Writers at all levels of proficiency are welcome. For additional information, contact Bud Katz, 828-526-3190 or budandlynn@me.com.

• The Humanist Discussion Group meets from 10:30-11:30 am in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

## Third Tuesday

• The Macon County Poultry club meets to discuss topics related to raising backyard chickens. For more information please call 828-349-2046 or 828-369-3916.

• Highlands Area Indivisible Group meets at 5 pm in the Meeting Room at the back of the Hudson Library.

## Tuesday and Thursdays

- At the Rec Park, Dance2Fit with Tori Schmitt at 7:30am.
- Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with many different styles of exercise at Rec Park.

## Wednesdays

• At Community Bible Church, 5-5:30p - Dinner – Free (Donations Appreciated) 5:45-7p - G.R.O.W. Get Real on Wednesdays – Classes offered on money management, addiction, discovering your spiritual gifts and personality type, studying the bible, evangelism, parenting, marriage, grief, and more. All are welcome! Visit [www.cbchighlands.com](http://www.cbchighlands.com).

• Power Flow Yoga with Nalicia Allio a certified Yoga Instructor 12-1pm and 6:30-7:30pm.

## First Wednesdays

• Family Movies at the Hudson Library at 3:30pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

## 3rd Wednesdays

• Recently released movies at Hudson Library at 2pm. Call 828-526-3031 for titles.

## Wed. & Fri.

• Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are held in Highlands @ the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., at noon. And held six times a week in Cashiers at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rte 107, Cashiers. For meeting times in Cashiers go to website [www.aawnc80.org](http://www.aawnc80.org) or call (828) 349-4357.

• Duplicate Bridge 12-4pm at Rec Park.

## Thursdays

• Storytime at Hudson Library, 10:40 am. Open to the public

• NAMI Support Group for individuals dealing with mental illness and the family members of individuals dealing with these challenges from 7 – 8:15pm at First United Methodist Church Out Reach Center on West Main Street in Franklin Call Donita (828) 526-9510.

• Hip Hop classes with Tori Schmitt at 6:30-7:30 at the Rec Park.

## 2nd Thursdays

• Sapphire Valley Needlepoint Guild meets at the Highlands Rec Park at 10 a.m.

## 3rd Thursdays

• Kidney Smart Classes in Franklin: from 4:30-6pm, Angel Medical Center, Video

Conference Room, 3rd Floor, 120 Riverview St. Contact Majestic 828-369-9474.

• Highlands Town Board meeting at 7p in the Community Building on US 64 east and Poplar Street.

## 4th Thursday

• At the Hudson Library, Kids Zone LEGO Club. Intended primarily for kids in grades 1-5, LEGO Club allows creativity and STEM skills to develop together as kids enjoy making LEGO creations.

## Thurs. Feb. 13

• There will be a Macon County Board of Commissioner Candidate Forum Monday at the Macon County Public Library beginning at 4:30. While the forum will focus on Commissioner Candidates, ALL candidates running for office from District Court Judge to Congress have been invited to attend to meet with voters and will have an opportunity to speak. Commissioner candidates will take part in a Q&A beginning at 5:30.

## Sat., Feb. 15

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 8-mile hike, elevation change 1100 ft., from Camp Branch to the Bartram Trail, then down Locust Tree Branch, a loop exploration of very old logging roads. Meet at Westgate Plaza at 9 am, drive 16 miles round trip. Call leader Gail Lehman, 524-5298, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

• Vision 2020 lasagna dinner/meeting at Hudson Library in meeting room at 6 p.m. BYOB. RSVP to [hwkncrw@earthlink.net](mailto:hwkncrw@earthlink.net).

## Sat., Feb. 22

• At The Farm at OEI, Chef, restaurateur and author Hugh Acheson of 5&10 in Athens, GA. For more information, call 787-2620 or 787-2619

## Sun. Feb. 23

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a strenuous 6-mile hike, elevation change 1000 ft., on the Bartram Trail from Wallace Branch to William's Pulpit for lunch with a great view of Albert Mtn., then to a spur of a Forest Service road, and bushwhacking up to Gibson Ridge, scrambling over and through blow downs to return by the Bartram trail. Meet at Westgate Plaza at 11 am, drive 6 miles round trip. Call leader Katharine Brown, 421-4178, for reservations. Visitors welcome, also dogs.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take an easy 1.5 mile hike, elevation change 200 ft., on Lakeside Trail, around the Sheriff's department and through the Environmental Resources Center to see if there are wildflowers beginning to appear. Meet at the Health Dept. on Lakeside Drive at 2:00 pm. Call leader Kathy Ratcliff, 526-6480 for reservations.



## VISION 2020

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Which 2020 Candidate agrees with YOU most?

What does EQUAL ACCESS have to do with YOU?

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## ...CHAMPS continued from page 1



From left are Highlands Ava Schmitt and Brooklynn Houston boxing out for a rebound against Nantahala on Tuesday.

lyn Houston said being regular season conference champs is a great way to send off the seniors on the team.

"It's really exciting and we worked hard all season for it," said Houston. "It's nice to send the seniors out like that, they deserve it."

Highlands senior Kedra McCall said it wasn't a pretty win, but they'll take it.

"At halftime, Coach said he's not going to tell us what we're doing wrong because we all knew," she said. "We were all aware we had a rough first half and we came out and played our game in the second."

McCall added that winning the regular season conference championship felt amazing.

"It's awesome to end my career on a note like that," she said. "We've gone undefeated in conference and we plan on keeping it that way. We've shown who we are this season. We've had rough patches, but no matter what we just learn from it

and play as a team."

Highlands senior Bailey Schmitt said it's great to win the title as a senior.

"It's exciting," said Schmitt. "I hope we keep winning like we have the past couple of games and keep up that streak."

Highlands Jordan Carrier said going 5-0 in regular season conference was tough.

"It feels good and it wasn't easy," said Carrier. "We beat Hiwassee Dam twice and they're tough. We want to win out the rest of the season and win the conference tournament."

Highlands takes on Blue Ridge on Feb. 14 at home, which is also Senior Night. Carrier said every game against the Lady Bobcats is a challenge.

"We hope to win every game, but it's more of a mind game with Blue Ridge to see who's tougher," she said.

Highlands played against Cherokee at home on Wednesday after the Feb. 8 game was rescheduled due to weather.

Scores weren't available by press time.



From left are Highlands Ezra Branham and Bailey Schmitt shutting down any hopes of making it to the hoop.



Highlands Ava Schmitt on a fast break against Nantahala.



Highlands Kedra McCall blocks a Nantahala pass on Tuesday.

# ... PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 13

Waynesville.

After graduating McGehee High School, in McGehee, Ark., Moore enrolled at Southwestern College at Memphis, (now known as Rhodes College), earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree as a major in Political Science in 1983. He moved to Macon, GA, and entered Walter F. George School of Law, graduating in 1986.

While in his last year of law school, he proposed to his "law school sweetheart," Connie Cort from Asheville. That summer, Moore passed the North Carolina State Bar Exam and married Connie and began living in Waynesville.

Moore and Connie have been married for 34 years. They are the proud parents of Art, Ashley, and Connor. Moore has enjoyed coaching his kids in baseball, soccer, and basketball. Moore and his family are members of Grace Church in the Mountains in Waynesville. Moore has volunteered in the church produce food pantry, participated in the annual church fair, been both Junior and Senior Warden, and just finished serving as finance chairman for the church. Moore is currently a member of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

Connie is an attorney and currently representing victims of family violence and family members involved in DSS cases. The couple live on a small farm with horses and several rescued dogs.

For 34 years, Moore has been a trial attorney, both as a private attorney and as an Assistant and then Chief Assistant District Attorney for the 30th Prosecutorial District. As an Assistant District Attorney, he was assigned to all seven counties in the District. Moore served Western North Carolina as an assistant district attorney for 17 years. Moore worked with Federal, adjacent State, and other law enforcement authorities outside of the District Attorney's district in deciding which agency would best be able to pursue the best

chance of conviction. Moore has prosecuted tens of thousands of criminal cases in both District and Superior Courts of Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Graham, Clay, and Cherokee counties. As a private attorney, Moore has successfully handled thousands of cases such as criminal (misdemeanors and felonies), divorce, annulment, child custody, child support, alimony, equitable distribution, enforcement of property settlement agreements, termination of parental rights, DSS, juvenile, civil (\$25,000 or less), domestic violence protective orders, and appeals from Magistrate Court decisions.

"It is important to me that the

resolution.") This length of time can be caused by many things, being the number of court dates in a particular county, backlog at the state lab, or getting a defendant's lawyer to come to court. Talking to folks, victims do not feel they have much of a voice and even less input on outcomes. That has to be addressed, even if it is as simple as clearing the first row or rows of seating behind the DA's table to give folks the best opportunity to at least hear what is going on."

**Brewer:** "I see a rapidly growing area trying to digest many new forms of challenges while also working through old issues and growing pains caused by loss of jobs and the "frontier" nature

of those appearing in front of me are protected."

**Moore:** "Justice delayed is justice denied. The sheer increase in the number of pending cases in both domestic and criminal courts causes cases to be continued too long simply because there are not enough hours in the day to take care of them all. I would be willing to do my part in managing courtroom time by being in the courtroom as early as the defendant and witness are asked to be there to deal with matters even prior to calendar calls. I would be willing to discussing cases prior to court with both sides of a case to manage their time for efficiently. I would also be willing to assist other courts that I am not assigned to should I finish my court early."

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish if elected?*

**Cassady:** "If I am limited to 'one thing,' it would be to keep the western counties' voices heard in our District Courts by keeping this position out west," said Cassady. "I would also hope to provide solutions for some of the issues mentioned earlier."

**Brewer:** "I want everyone who comes before me to know that they were heard and I did not do anything but give complete attention to their matter with great regard for them, their family and the conditions they are facing."

**Wingate:** "I promise to encourage the resolution of cases in a timely manner and make decisions without bias or prejudice and without regard to political or socioeconomic status."

**Moore:** "I hope that my efforts to increase the speed by which matters are heard and by establishing a feeling in my courtroom that everyone will be heard and have the laws applied fairly and impartially will increase both the honor and integrity of our District Courts in Western North Carolina."

*Any additional information you would like to include for voters?*

**Cassady:** "This is a partisan race. Republican primary voters need to know that I am the only

life-long Republican in this race. One of my opponents joined the party for the specific purpose of running for this position as a Republican; which he clearly sees as advantageous. Another of my opponents left the party when he voted in Democrat primaries in 2012 and 2014. He did not have to join the Democrat party to do that, but he did have to leave the GOP to do so. I am the only veteran in this primary. My life demonstrates my commitment to my country and my community."

**Wingate:** "I am a Christian, Conservative, and a proud Republican. I strongly encourage you to research all of the candidates for this position by speaking with law enforcement officers, clerks of court, attorneys, and all court personnel about their interactions and observations. You will hear the combination of my experience and being a native of WNC makes me the most qualified for this position. I would be grateful for your vote on March 3."

**Moore:** "I am the best candidate to achieve these goals as I am the only one who has been a prosecutor and a defense attorney and has also handled child custody cases (each of my opponents only has two of these three criteria that make up a great majority of cases heard by a District Court Judge), and I have lived in this District longer than any of the other candidates which is why I have had a successful career in understanding and arguing cases to the people of this District. In other words, I believe I have a good feel for the District and the values of its people."

*Highlands Newspaper will continue candidate profiles next week with Republican candidates running for District 11 of the United States House of Representatives in part 5 of our Primary 2020 series.*

*To view parts 1, 2, and 3, of the Primary 2020 series, go to [www.highlandinfo.com](http://www.highlandinfo.com), click on news and read issues, Jan. 23, Jan. 30 and Feb. 6, respectively.*

## Voting Guide

Voters are headed to the polls today (Thursday) for the first day of early voting across North Carolina. Early voting will be held from 8 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and continue until February 29 at 3 p.m.

Macon County hosts two early voting locations, one at the Robert C. Carpenter Building in Franklin and the other at the Highlands Civic Center. This year, there will be only one Saturday to early vote -- February 29 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is February 25 at 5 p.m.

The primary election will be held on Tuesday, March 3 with polls opening at 6:30 a.m. and closing at 7:30 p.m.

Justice System be respected and that everyone feels like they got a fair trial and that they were heard during that trial," said Moore. "I believe my over three decades of experience from all sides of the courtroom make me the best candidate to provide that sense of fairness and trust."

*What do you see as being the biggest challenge facing the justice system in WNC and how would you approach it?*

**Cassady:** "This depends upon who you ask and what that litigant is seeking from District Court. If you listen to the concerns of folks living in Cherokee and Clay counties, a major concern is what they perceive to be low bonds. If you talk to victims and perhaps law enforcement, it's the length of time it takes to bring a criminal case to final resolution (to the extent district court is 'final

of the region. The terrain has led to silos of suffering and many financial hardships that the people just accept and try to make do. Most counties are doing well with their budgets but resources and other services cannot adequately provide for the better wellbeing of juveniles, elderly and other vulnerable residents. My rulings and analysis will be filtered through this understanding but my efforts will be to help my colleagues come up with solutions to these conditions.

**Wingate:** "The opioid and methamphetamine epidemic which also contributes to property crime. Also, the number of cases in our system compared to our resources. I promise to work hard, follow the law, and protect our community while ensuring the statutory and constitutional rights



# Second snowfall of 2020 - Sat., Feb. 8

The morning of Saturday, February 8 snow started falling lasting into late afternoon. About 4 inches fell leaving elements on the plateau shrouded in white.

Saturday night the Snow Moon rose full and bright casting shadows and illuminating the day's snowfall.

This was the second snow of 2020. The first fell a week before, Friday, Jan. 31.

The effects of both began dissapting within 24 hours which made the fleeting experience extra special.

From left:

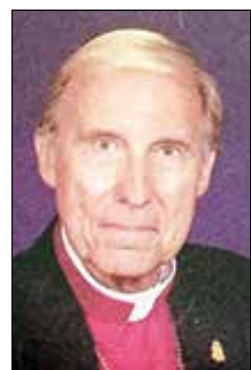
Snow Moon Rising  
Snow Moon Shadows  
Snow Cones  
Snow Angel

- Photos by Kim Lewicki





# • SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



## Is it Really Worth it?

Archbishop  
John S. Erbelding

As we live through our modern times which bring us periods of endless challenge and at times discomfort, do we ever review the daily news and utter these words: Is it really worth it?

It seems that Daniel Webster wrestled with the same question when in an address titled "On the Flag and the Eagle" given in 1874, he expressed this thought: "How much is all this worth?" Maybe it's time we asked ourselves the same question.

How much is it worth to live where we wish? To work at what one wishes? To worship as one wishes? How much is it worth to have the right to live with loved ones? To listen to the laughter of children? To be unafraid of approaching footsteps.

How much is it worth to own personal property? To have personal privacy? How much is it worth to preserve human dignity? How much is it worth to choose leaders? To vote in an open and honest election? To have a voice in making and administering the laws of the land? How much is it worth to come and go, to think and speak, to read and question, to have an education offered to everyone? How much is it worth to freely express an opinion, fearlessly to move from place to place, with an openness of life, and enjoyment of the great and good earth that God has given, with peace of mind and quiet conviction?

Still blessed beyond belief, still precious beyond price, is the freedom our forebears paid for -- the freedom which is God-given, which yet, has to be everlastingly earned and deserved over and over again, and can never safely be permitted to become commonplace.

How much is all this worth? All this must be worth the willingness to work, to defend, to give allegiance, to be a loyal participating part, to live with honor, justice, and respect for law, and to keep the commandments.

Andrew Jackson, in his farewell address, left us with

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

## Looking for a church home?

Wayfarers Unity Chapel is a non denominational, inclusive church located at 182 Wayfarer Lane, off Highway 246 in Dillard, GA, just 1.7 miles from Highway 441

Social time begins at 9:30 and services begin at 10 a.m. on Sundays

Visit our website [www.wayfarersunity.org](http://www.wayfarersunity.org) for more information, or call 706-746-3303

## Proverbs 3:5

### BLUEVALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

Sunday night services every 2nd & 4th Sunday at 7

Wednesdays: Mid-week prayer meeting: 7 p.m.

### BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

828-269-3546 • Rev. Jamie Passmore, Pastor

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

### CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Wes Sharpe, Pastor 828-743-5298

Sundays: School at 9:30 Worship 10:30

Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

### CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley, GA • 706-746-2999

Sundays: 10 a.m.; Worship

Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

### CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

Rector: Jim Murphy, 252-671-4011

464 US Hwy 64 east, Cashiers

9:30a Sunday School; 10:30a Worship Service; Mon. 6p Bible Study & Supper in homes

### CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

Sun. 10:45am, S.S. 9:30am. Wed. 6pm supper and teaching.

Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

### CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

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

Wednesdays -- Supper at 6 p.m.

### COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

[www.cbchighlands.com](http://www.cbchighlands.com) • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC

Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30am: Sunday School 10:30am: Middle & High School; 10:45am: Child. Program, 10:45am: Worship

Wed.: 5pm Dinner (\$7 adult, \$2 child), 6pm CBC U.

### COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKYVALLEY

706.746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447,

Pastor Gary Hewins

Worship: Sun. 9 a.m., with Holy Communion the 1st & 3rd Sun.; Tues: Community Supper 5:30 followed by Bible Study.

### EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning • 526-2968

Monday-Friday: Morning Prayer at 8:15a. Sundays: 8 am

Holy Eucharist Rite I; 9 am Sunday School; 10:30 am Holy

Eucharist Rite II. Childcare available at 10:30

### FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • [www.fbchighlands.org](http://www.fbchighlands.org)

Dr. Mark Ford, Pastor • 220 Main Street, Highlands

Sun.: Worship 10:45 am; Sun.: Bible Study 9:30 am

Wed.: Men's Bible Study 8:30 am; Choir 5p; Prayer Mtg 6:15p

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors

526-3175 • [fpchighlands.org](http://fpchighlands.org)

Sun.: Worship 8:30a Adult Ed.: 9:30a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

Mondays: Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast 8 a.m.

Wed: Choir: 6p

### GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

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[www.gracecashiers.com](http://www.gracecashiers.com) • Pastor Steve Doerter: 743-9814

Services: Sundays 10am - Wed. - 7pm; Dinner - Wed. 6pm

# • PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

### HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

Hwy 107N. • Glenville, NC • 743-2729 • Nathan Johnson

Sunday: School 9:45a, Worship 11a & 7p, Bible Study 6p

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

### HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

Sundays: Worship: 11

### HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson

670 N. 4th Street (next to the Highlands Civic Center)

Sun.: Morning Worship 10:45a., Evening Worship, 6p.

Wednesday: Prayer Service, 6:30 p.

### HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Pastor Randy Lucas 526-3376

Sun: School 9:45a.; Worship 9:09, 10:50.; Youth 5:30 p.

Wed: Supper: 5:15; youth, & adults activities: 6; Handbell rehearsal, 6:15; Choir Rehearsal 7. (nursery provided); 7pm

Intercessory Prayer Ministry

### HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Sun: School and Adult discussion group 9:30 a.m.;

Worship/Communion: 10:30; Early-Bird Christmas Eve service of

Lessons and Carols, Sunday, Dec. 22, 10:30 am.

All are welcome.

HEALING SERVICE on the 5th Sunday of the month.

### MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

8 miles south of Highlands on N.C. 28 S in Satolah

Pastor Zane Talley

Sundays: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 11, Choir: 6 p.m.

Wed: Bible Study and Youth Mtg.: 7 p.m.

### MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

at St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church, Franklin • 828-524-9463

### MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

Sun: 10:30 a.m. at Big Ridge Baptist Church,

4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

Weds: Bible Study 6:30 p.m.; Youth Group 6 p.m.

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Rev. Fr. Jason K. Barone -- 526-2418

Mass: Thurs. 12:10; Fri. 9am; Sun: 11 a.m.

### SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Marty Kilby

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 Donald G. Bates • 526-3212

Sun.: School: 10 a.m.; Worship: 10:45 a.m.; Worship: 6 p.m.

### SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

Wednesdays: Prayer & Bible Study: 6 p.m.

### ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass: Thurs. 9am, Fri., 11am; Sun. 9am

### THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

1448 Highway 107 S., Office: 743-2359 • Rev. Rob Wood

June-Sept: Sunday Services: Rite I, 8a, Rite II, 9:15 & 11a

Nursery available for Rite II services

Sept 6-Oct 25- Informal Evening Eucharist- 5:30 p.m.

Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

### UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive, Franklin • [uufranklin.org](http://uufranklin.org)

Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

### WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am



**From Highlands Police Chief****HPD requests information**

An investigation by our department has led to multiple embezzlement by employee charges.

Twenty-one (21) felony charges have been secured and warrants have been issued for Kristeena (Kristi) Byrd Gray of Franklin NC.

Ms. Gray was employed by the 4th Street Market in Highlands from June 2019 to December 2019. We were contacted when the management of 4th Street Market realized the checks written for cash did not

match the amount of cash loaded into the ATM machine.

During the course of this investigation, it has been determined that 4th Street Market has suffered a loss of over \$31,000 in US currency.

If anyone has any information in regards to this case, please contact my office.

– **Chief W. Harrell,**  
**Highlands Police Department**  
**828-526-94321**

**• BIZ/ORG NEWS •****Santa and Mrs. Claus visit Rotary**

From left: Rotarian Bob Kieltyka, Allan and Marti Dearth (aka Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus) and Sherry Holt, President Rotary Club of Highlands.

Allan Dearth, Highlands' Santa for the past seven years, spoke to the Rotary Club about Shop-With-A-Cop a holiday shopping and gift giving experience for Macon County children 5-12 years old. The event was the dream child of Sheriff Robbie Holland and his wife Marci 26 years ago and now serves over 400 Macon County annually. Dearth reminded Rotarians that they are all Santas when they support SWAC.

Highlands Police Chief Bill Harrell,

who also spoke at the meeting, said that over two dozen children from Highlands participate in SWAC, which is supported through financial support and in-kind donations from the Rotary Club of Highlands, the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation and numerous other businesses, organizations and individuals.

Contributions for SWAC are gratefully received all year long and can be dropped off at the Highlands Police Station.

**...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 18**

these great words: No free government can stand without virtue in the people and a lofty spirit of patriotism. Andrew Jackson was correct and even more correct today. Thank God for liberty and for the privilege of preserving it at any price.

Let us now hear, reflect, and act once

more on Daniel Webster's address on the flag and the eagle. NEVER pull down the flag and cover the eagle.

Even now let us reflect on this year which celebrates the liberation of Auschwitz. How would the survivors comment on our title? Is it really worth it?

**• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •**

**Highlands Police entries from Jan. 25. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.**

**Jan. 25**

• At noon, officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in the parking lot of the Blue Bike Cafe.

**Feb. 3**

• At 10:16 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in the Highlands Rec Park parking lot.

• At 11 p.m., officers were called about destruction of property and a burglary/breaking & Entering at a residence on N. 5th Street where someone broke windows to a van, entered the van, took out tools and broke into the apartment.

**The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Feb. 5**

**Feb. 5**

• At 11:36 p.m., the dept. was called to a structure fire on NC 106.

**Feb. 6**

• At 8:12 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

**Feb. 7**

• At 11:59 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falls Village Court.

**Feb. 8**

• At 8:45 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Bobby Jones road.

• At 10:51 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance on Horse Cove Road.

• At 10:47 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC. 28 south.

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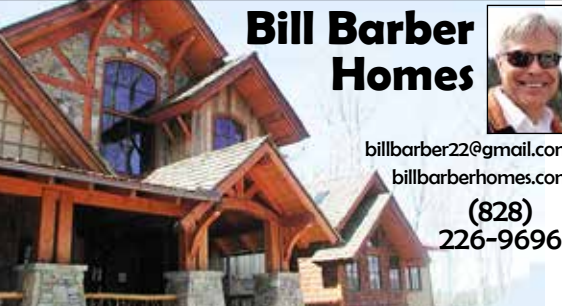
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## AVAILABLE POSITIONS

**IMMEDIATE FULL-TIME ON-SITE GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT PROFESSIONAL NEEDED TO JOIN MARKETING DEPARTMENT OF OLD EDWARDS HOSPITALITY GROUP IN HIGHLANDS, NORTH CAROLINA.** At least two years of print layout and design required. Keen eye for design, detail-oriented and proficiency in formatting for scannable content a must. Experience in CRM, email marketing, website updating and/or social media is a plus. Must have high integrity, sense of humor, consistently positive nature, interpersonal skills and work well as part of a close team. Full benefits. Possible subsidized housing. Position is 100% onsite in Highlands, NC, no exceptions.

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

**ALSO:**

**OLD EDWARDS HOSPITALITY** has the following positions open:

### RESTAURANT FOUR65:

Part-time servers, full-time Hostess, AM/PM Sous Chef, Cook and Utility/Dishwasher needed.

### HALF MILE FARM:

Assistant Inn Manager, Jr. Sous Chef, Full-time

### OLD EDWARDS:

Banquet Bar Supervisor, Maintenance Engineer, Front Desk, Bellmen, Banquet Captain, Front Desk Supervisors, Spa attendants & concierge, Housekeepers, Laundry, Experienced servers & server assistants, Reservationist, Sales Manager (2 years experience), Graphic Artists (Full-time and Full-time Temporary, Dishwashers (Full-time year round, and seasonal)

Send resume to: pturnbull@oldedwardsinn.com  
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or apply online at oldedwardsinn.com/careers

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## FOR SALE

### E-Z UP 10X10 VENDOR

TENT with sidewalls & weights. Excellent condition. \$170. 828-526-1031 (st. 1/30)

### FIREWOOD FOR SALE

Call or text Matt at 706-239-0880. (st. 9/26)

## WANTED

### COMIC BOOKS - Buy /

Sell. Call Bob @ 302-530-1109 (3/26)

### TO RENT: MATURE

**PROFESSIONAL WITH INDOOR CAT SEEKS REASONABLE 2BR HOME TO RENT.** Solid references. Call or text 828-200-1611 (st. 1/30)

### WANTED TO BUY: US

& Foreign COINS, free appraisals, call Dan at 828-421-1616. (3/26)

### HARLEY DAVIDSON

**MOTORCYCLE MEMORABILIA.** Call Sandra La Jeunesse at 828-371-2214.

## HELP WANTED

### COURTESY OFFICER

**NEEDED AT CHESTNUT HILL ASSISTED LIVING.** 6 pm to Midnight, 5 nights a week. Also, Part-Time Housekeeper needed. Call 828-526-8400. (st. 2/13)

### FIRST BAPTIST

**CHURCH HIGHLANDS** needs nursery help on Wednesday nights; 1-2 hours; \$15 per hour; background check and interview required; must be at least 16 years old. (st. 2/13)

### YEAR-ROUND FULL

**TIME OR PART TIME RETAIL POSITION IS AVAILABLE AT T.J.BAILEY'S**

**STORE IN CASHIERS AND HIGHLANDS.** Call 8285262262 or email resume to store@tjbai-leys.com (2/27)

### NOW HIRING PART AND FULL TIME ASSOCIATES FOR RETAIL STORE.

Must be willing to work week-ends and holidays. Call Shannon 526-8864 or email shannon@dutchmansdesigns.com (st. 1/23)

### WOLFGANG'S RES-

**TAURANT** is seeking a hostess. Salary is based on experience. Come be a part of our team. Email wom2@me.com or call Jacque at 828.526.3807. (st. 11/21)

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE AT HIGHLANDS SMOKEHOUSE.

Hiring all positions. Commitment to excellence in food quality and guest service. We are proud of the products and service we provide, we create experiences not just sell food. Offering defined, sane schedules and healthy work environment allowing for a balanced life. Very cooperative pay. Food service experience preferred. Tobacco free workplace. Contact us at Smokehouse recruiting@gmail.com (st. 5/2)

### SALES ASSOCIATE HIGH END RETAIL CLOTHING STORE IN HIGHLANDS AND CASHIERS, NC.

Full time, part time and seasonal. Inquire to 828-200-0928. (st. 3/38)

## SERVICES

**HOME MAID CLEANING SERVICE LLC:** Too much to do for the holidays? Give us

a ring! Specializing in residential homes & vacation rentals. Servicing Highlands & Cashiers. For a free estimate call, (828) 371-1702. Check out our website at, www.homemaiddcleaningservicenc.com

### WOOD PALLET PICKUP AND REMOVAL SERVICE.

Commercial/residential. We will pick up and haul away your pallets weekly or as requested. We will clean up behind your store or restaurant. Raking, clean up, bag and remove garbage on the ground. Let's spruce up our alleyways and respect our beautiful town. Call 828-200-3217 now. (2/6)

### GUTTER CLEANING, METAL ROOF & FABRICATION

roof repairs, chimney flashing, debris removal, pressure washing. Call 371-1103. (st. 6/27)

### HIGHLANDS-CASHIERS HANDYMAN:

Repairs, remodeling, painting, pressure washing, minor plumbing and electric, decks and additions. Free Estimates. Insured. Call 828-200-4071. (12/31)

### HIGH COUNTRY PHOTO/KEVIN VINSON:

scanning photos, slides & negatives to CD or DVD for easier viewing. Video transfer to DVD. Everything done in house. Leave message at 828-526-5208. (st. 4/25)

### MURPHY'S PAINTING CO.

Interior & Exterior Painting, Sheetrock Repair, Wallpaper Removal, Log Homes, Decks. Insured. Free Estimates. 828-524-1391 or 828-332-0525.

### REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

### 38.92 ACRES IN GATED COMMUNITY IN HIGHLANDS.

Small private development with paved streets, community water, community lake and pavilion, underground power and street lights. Gentle building sites with mountain views and streams at over 4,100' in elevation. Borders USFS. Offered for \$599,000 and MLS #88028. Call Cathy Garren at Highlands Sotheby's International Realty at 828-226-5870. (1/2/2020)

### ATTENTION BUSINESS OWNERS:

Looking for employee housing? We've got several options! Close to town and affordable! Call Christal at White Oak Realty Group. 828-200-9699. (st. 9/19)

### SIX ACRES ON BUCK CREEK ROAD

behind Highlands-Cashiers Hospital. Sign on property. 843-460-8015. (st. 5/30)

### 2/2 CLAYTON HOME IN LOWER CLEAR CREEK.

1+acre, Private. View. 118,000. 706.782.9728 (st. 9/5)

### 1.21 ACRES FOR SALE BY OWNER - OTTO, NC

- \$28,000. Lot 12 Quail Haven Road. Otto, NC. Price not firm ... open for negotiation. Please email if interested to ddmarsh15@aol.com or call/text to 239-980-0531. Please leave a message. (st. 7/20)

### COMMERCIAL SPACE RENTALS

**COMMERCIAL SPACE** at 640 Carolina Way, Highlands. +/- 1340 sq.ft. \$1,650/mo. 404-210-7979. (st. 12/12)

### RESIDENTIAL RENT-

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### SPACIOUS POST AND BEAM HOME WITH

4-bedroom, 3-1/2 bath home. Soaring 30' ceiling in open floor-plan of the kitchen/living/dining room. All other rooms offer 10' ceilings. Spacious master suite. Mountain views with creeks and large deck. Less than 15-minutes from Main Street. This is a non-smoking property. Call 828.421.1823 to view the property. Yearly lease @ \$3200 per month. (st. 1/30)

### HOUSE FOR LEASE IN MIRROR LAKE AREA.

2 BR/2 BA furnished. Full laundry, screened porch. No smoking, sorry no pets.. Long-term lease available \$1,900 per month. 404-630-8398. (2/6)

### FOR RENT IN SHELBY PLACE,

2 bed/2 bath. Close to town. Newly renovated, Fireplace with gas logs. 6 or 12 month lease. Call 828-226-9696. (st. Dec 12).

### 4BD 3.5 BA, 1 CAR GARAGE W/STORAGE,

large yard with backyard fenced, dogs negotiable. On the Atlanta side of Highlands, 5 minutes from the Post Office. \$2500 month. Offered unfurnished, one year minimum lease, references, credit check and deposit required. Call House in Order 828-484-1571. (st. 1/14)

### LUXURY APARTMENT INTOWN.

Walk to Main Street. 1BR 1BA. \$3,500 per month. 3 month minimum. Sorry, no pets, no smoking. Adults only. 828-421-1709. (st. 5/10)

## ...HCA continued from page 5

lists known as chagemasters, which list the costs of various goods and services.

While the Florida suit was dismissed, accusations of fraudulent billing practices against HCA are plentiful with cases in California claiming patients were charged inpatient fees while only being seen in the emergency room. HCA was actually ordered

to pay a \$2 million settlement in 2015 after an investigation found a Georgia hospital was billing and performing costly and unnecessary cardiovascular procedures.

*The "Since the HCA/Mission Merger" series will continue next week with a look at transportation issues for rural patients being sent to Mission Health in Asheville instead of local providers.*

## ...CHEERLEADERS continued from page 11

games and home junior varsity games throughout the basketball season, and HHS cheers for home varsity games. Both teams compete between the months of October and February.

HHS Jeslyn Head said it's a lot of work training for the routines and wished she did better at the NCCCA.

"All the motions of each rou-

tine go through my head and it's a little overwhelming and outside my comfort zone," said Head. "We did ok, definitely not our best. We'll get another chance and hopefully redeem ourselves."

Huneycutt said the season has gone well so far.

"It's going great," she said. "We have a lot of young blood this year and it been a learning

process for most of us. The girls and boys have worked very hard all season. We as coaches would like to thank the Highlands community, school, and parents for the support. Go Highlands!"

HHS and HMS next compete on Feb. 22 at the Deep South Peach Classic in Duluth, GA.



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*Paoletti*

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