

Highlands Newspaper

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Thursday, Jan. 30, 2020

PRIMARY 2020 Q & A PART 2

Republicans up for MC Commission seat

By Brittney Lofthouse

While there are just two individuals vying for the Democratic nomination for the March 3 Macon County Board of Commis-

sioners District II seat, both of whom are women, on the Republican side there are three potential candidates, all men.

Terry Bradley, former Frank-

lin Police Chief of 18 years, Bryan Rauers, owner of Franklin Ford, and Josh Young, owner of Young's Tree Service are each

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Impeach Trump?

Question for US House and Senate candidates

By Kate Martin

Carolina Public Press

In December, members of Congress were asked to vote on whether to impeach President Donald Trump, and members of the U.S. Senate will be asked to vote soon on matters related to his trial.

Carolina Public Press reached out to nearly 80 North Carolina candidates for the U.S. House and Senate to ask them how they would have voted or discuss how they did vote, or in the case of the Senate, how they will vote.

With less than two months until North Carolina's March 3 primary election, most of the state's federal contests have at least one partisan primary.

Candidates for Congress and Senate are running for election, even as the presidency is under the cloud of impeachment, the events

•See IMPEACH page 5



Fletcher Wolfe, center, enjoys spending time with family and longtime friends — many of them Norlinians — during Saturday's historical marker dedication made in his honor. He is pictured with his hands around the shoulders of Irene Weldon, left, and Lou Traylor, right just prior to the unveiling of the historic marker. — Photo by Luci Weldon

Marker dedicated to Wolfe in Norlina, NC

By Luci Weldon
The Warren Record

Highlands own opera and concert singer, and founder/director of the Atlanta Boy Choir Fletcher Wolfe returned to his native Norlina last weekend for the

Saturday dedication of a historic marker designating his boyhood home on Liberty Street.

Current and former town officials joined citizens for a brief ceremony, honoring the man whose love of music allowed him to trav-

el to sites across the world before retiring from the Atlanta Boy Choir three years ago.

However, Wolfe deflected the attention from himself, instead cherishing the opportunity to catch

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Monitor for hospital merger goes public

By Neil Cotiaux
Carolina Public Press

Gibbins Advisors, the independent monitor charged with validating HCA Healthcare's compliance with the promises it made when it acquired Asheville-based Mission Health nearly a year ago, is taking its efforts public in a big way.

From Jan. 28 to Feb. 13, the Nashville, Tenn.-based firm has scheduled seven 90-minute meetings open to the public at locations across Western North Carolina to provide information on its "role and scope" as independent monitor and to get feedback on HCA's performance.

Gibbins is also launching a website that will provide information on the firm's activities and enable the public to submit feed-

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Perspective gained in getting away

Sallie and I visited our 'beltway kids' in Washington this past weekend. It is always good to leave Highlands for a while and see what other folks are doing. Well, I suppose comparisons of Highlands to Washington, DC are a stretch, but let me give it a try.

First on my agenda, after our initial visit with our son and daughter-in-law, was to get a haircut. By a series of unfortunate events, I had missed that opportunity in Highlands for several weeks, so I was overdue.

I got a tip that one of the best barber-shops in DC, Diego's, was near our hotel. We walked to the barbershop and found Diego himself cutting hair and holding court. Diego is one of those people who are blessed in loving what they do. It was full on Saturday morning, but the wait was short. As I got my haircut, I saw on the walls a bipartisan collection of autographed photographs of congressmen, senators and presidents who had visited this barbershop. I realized I was getting a genuine "Washing-



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

ton elite" haircut.

So, if you see me around town in the next few days and notice I look slick and trim, just remember I am sporting a DC haircut. Now will it make me think smarter or dumber as an elected official? The cost was the same as in Highlands so I just don't know.

One evening we had an early five o'clock dinner in downtown Washington. When we finished and walked back on the street it was dark. Oh, it looked like Gatlinburg or Las Vegas! There were white

lights on all the trees on the street. And, those slick Washington elites had crowded the streets with too many trees! Actually, the illuminated trees were well done and added a special feeling to the winter streetscape. If it is good at our nation's capital, maybe it would work in downtown Highlands, too?

I noticed in downtown DC there were numerous electric scooters and electric bicycles available to rent. My son showed me an app on his phone that allowed him to rent a scooter or bike. While I don't see scooters in Highlands, electric bicycles are already here and will probably increase. They could become an alternative for some to riding around town in automobiles, even electric cars.

In my children's neighborhood outside of Washington, I noticed work in progress on something we are doing in Highlands. Like Highlands, fiber optic cables were being installed on all the streets. The building of these fiber networks are taking place across the nation. Our \$4.6 million dollar construction project will serve Highlands well for years to come. The cost will be recuperated over the years of operation.

A related issue that Highlands, as well as almost every community in the country, is grappling with is workforce/affordable housing. Our housing issues can't compare to the problem in the Washington area. The rent and commute distances our children face in DC are staggering by comparison.

Correction from last week: I gave out the Highlands Police Department phone number instead of the Macon County Non Emergency Number. The correct number is 526-4131.

• HIC'S VIEW •



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• WEATHER •

Thu, 30-Jan	Fri, 31-Jan	Sat, 1-Feb	Sun, 2-Feb
43°F 32°F	42°F 32°F	42°F 27°F	50°F 34°F
Mostly cloudy	Cloudy with a few showers	A couple of showers	Brilliant sunshine
RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®
High: 44° Low: 35°	High: 44° Low: 32°	High: 47° Low: 28°	High: 49° Low: 22°

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• OBITUARY •

Brucie Humphrey Johnston

Brucie Humphrey Johnston of Tampa and Highlands, passed away peacefully January 12, 2020. Brucie was preceded in death by her husband, Frederick Swain Johnston, her two brothers, Gene Humphrey and Lee Humphrey, and her granddaughter, Mary Grace Taaffe.



She was born in Tampa, the daughter of Clarence Eugene Humphrey and Bruce Long Humphrey. Brucie attended Gorrie Elementary, Wilson Junior High and H.B. Plant High School as well as Florida State University and the University of Florida where she was a member of the Tri Delta Sorority. Brucie was a member of The Junior League of Tampa, the Humane Society of Tampa Bay, and was a founding member of the H.B. Plant Museum Society. She was also a member of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Brucie loved gardening, was a Bonsai enthusiast for 40 years, and she was beloved by her dogs throughout her life. Brucie was a longtime summer resident of Highlands.

She is survived by her children, Frederick Johnston III "Rick", Jenifer Johnston Elliott, and Mary Bruce Johnston; and her five grandchildren, Brucie de Alejo Pitino, Alberto de Alejo (Bert), Gene Taaffe, Olivia Rose Taaffe, and Gloria Rose Gordon. The service was held Monday, January 20, at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 509 E. Twiggs St., Tampa, FL 33602. Burial followed at Myrtle Hill Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, tributes to her memory may be made to the Humane Society of Tampa Bay, the Children's Home of Tampa or a charity of your choice

...IMPEACH continued from page 1

for which began in August after a whistleblower filed a complaint after hearing concerns from several government officials about a conversation between President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

The content of that conversation is summarized in notes from the call, made public late last year.

After weeks of investigations and interviews in various committees, the U.S. House of Representatives impeached President Donald Trump in December on two charges. The first article of impeachment is for abuse of power with the implied threat of withholding military aid as Trump tried to persuade Zelenskiy to announce a corruption investigation into the son of Trump's political rival, former Vice President and presidential candidate Joe Biden. Trump and his supporters have denied that this conversation was inappropriate.

The second article of impeachment against Trump is for obstruction of Congress because Trump refused to comply with subpoenas from the various House committees, told executive branch officials not to participate in committee interviews and ordered others to withhold documents from the House's investigation. Trump and his supporters have said this was also not inappropriate.

Where do the candidates stand on the impeachment of President Donald Trump?

Senate candidates

Nearly a dozen people aim to unseat incumbent Republican Thom Tillis, who remains deeply critical of the impeachment process. After the U.S. House of Representatives voted in favor of two articles of impeachment against Trump, Tillis pointed the finger at Democrats for running a partisan process.

"Once the Senate trial begins, President Trump will finally be treated fairly and presumed innocent until proven guilty. The Democrats' attempt to use impeachment as a weapon to settle political scores will not be allowed to

•See IMPEACH page 6

• HS SPORTS •

with Kedra McCall

This week middle school basketball played Rabun Gap and their first round of their Tri State tournament. Both the girls and boys beat Rabun Gap and both advanced to the second round of their tournament. The girls beat Summit and the boys beat Nantahala to advance to play Tallulah Falls.



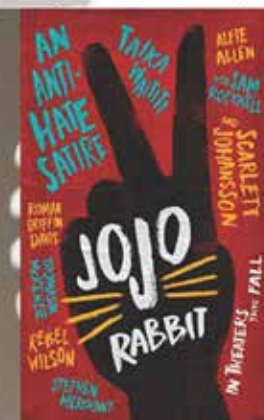
High school basketball played Robbinsville, Hiwassee Dam and Blue Ridge. JV girls beat both Robbinsville and Hiwassee Dam to remain undefeated. JV boys beat Hiwassee Dam and lost to Robbinsville after a very close fight. Varsity girls beat Hiwassee Dam and Blue Ridge to remain undefeated in conference. They could not pull out the win over Robbinsville. Varsity boys beat Blue Ridge and Robbinsville by a buzzer beater by Garrison Chalker. They did not finish on top against Robbinsville.

Both middle school and high school cheerleaders will compete in Raleigh, North Carolina this weekend. Middle school competes at 2:10 pm and high school will compete at 5:20 pm.

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS

Mike & Dooley write children's book for local charities

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

"The Adventures of Mike & Dooley" is a recently released faith-based children's book where a portion of profits go towards supporting local charities.

Authors and stars of "Here We Go with Mike & Dooley," Mike Carrier and Jeremy Dooley, thought it would be a fun way to raise money for local groups in the area.

"We were joking about writing a book and then it was like, well why not," said Dooley. "Let's try it. Our biggest thing is always to have fun and be positive and writing a book sounded like fun and a way to spread our message."

Chapters of the book are based off 2-minute episodes of "Here We Go with Mike and Dooley". "The Adventures of Mike & Dooley" is available online and in stores throughout Highlands; including Creative Concepts, Blue Bike Cafe, Highland Hiker, Highlands Pharmacy, 4th Street Market, and Dutchman's.

"We're also giving the businesses that are selling the book the opportunity to let us know if there are specific charities that they would like to support," said Carrier. "For example, the Blue Bike is selling our book for \$10, we get \$5 back to cover our costs, and the other \$5 is being donated to Macon County to help provide meals to children at Highlands School."



Mike and Dooley on set.

Dooley was in Texas throughout the writing process, and after plenty of phone calls they put the book together in about a month. Both said they couldn't have done so without the help of Dooley's wife Jaime, and Carrier's wife, Eileen.

"The challenge, I'm not a writer," said

Jeremy. "We like talking to each other on the phone so the distance wasn't really an issue. I was worried it would be bad, so I had my wife, she teaches elementary school, read every chapter. When she signed off, I sent it in."

Carrier emphasized this was not a two-

man operation.

"We're not writers and just like our show, and the way we are in general, what comes to our brains normally comes out of our mouths," he said. "Luckily, we had Jaime helping us with the layout and Eileen editing it 100 times so we think that it came out pretty good."

"Here We Go with Mike & Dooley" was picked up by Faith Unveiled Network based in California a few months ago and now is broadcast in over 120 countries, on Amazon and Roku, and on their mobile app. Mike & Dooley's podcasts are also available on their app and available in the United States and Europe on various podcast platforms.

"Just want to thank everybody for their support," said Carrier. "We never thought that when we started the show in Dooley's office on his iPad that we'd have the top-rated show on Faith Unveiled Network and a best-selling book on Lulu in both the Children's category and the Teen's category."

Carrier added that he'd like to thank Backlot Cinema in Franklin for all their help and WATC-TV 57 in Atlanta for being the first network to put the duo on TV.

"The Adventures of Mike and Dooley" is available locally or via Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Lulu.

...IMPEACH continued from page 5

become the new normal," Tillis said in December after the U.S. House of Representatives voted to impeach Trump.

Democrat Cal Cunningham, a former U.S. Army prosecutor, said he was trained to pursue facts, which "included witnesses with direct knowledge of the case and any other relevant evidence."

"If I were in the Senate, I would be focused on making sure these pieces were part of the trial, and it's disappointing that Sen. Tillis won't demand these standards," Cunningham told CPP. "He's shown he's more committed to standing with (U.S. Senate Majority Leader) Mitch McConnell than getting to the truth."

Democrat Trevor Fuller said he thinks impeachment of Trump is "proper and justified." However, as a trial lawyer by pro-

fession, he said he would pledge to reserve judgment for now.

Were he an elected member of the Senate when the trial takes place, he said, "I would have to pledge to do impartial justice in a trial in the Senate. It seems highly likely that I would convict based on what I've seen and heard publicly."

Democrat Atul Goel said he hasn't made up his mind on impeachment, but if he were in the U.S. Senate when the articles of impeachment are considered, he would only consider information presented during the Senate's trial.

"I'm not saying yes or no. I want to listen to the facts as they are allowed to be presented at trial," Goel said.

Goel said he's not paid much attention to the testimony in the House. He's not in

the Senate now, and he's been busy with his campaign.

"Who am I in Raleigh to decide if the process was correct or not correct?"

Republican Sharon Hudson said so far she's not been impressed with the impeachment process. However, she was unwilling to tip her hand.

"If I was a sitting senator, I would listen carefully to all of the evidence presented and then I would decide what the verdict should be. I would do my best to be fair and impartial. For that reason, I cannot tell you how I would vote," Hudson said.

Hudson said she's running against Tillis because of the role he played on a toll lane project in the Charlotte area. Drivers can pay a toll to travel in an express lane on a section of Interstate 77 north of Charlotte.

"The entire express lane scheme was not designed to relieve congestion, but to make money and benefit the politicians who push it through," she wrote.

Other candidates in the race either did not respond or did not have contact information available.

Congressional seat for District 11

In NC congressional District 11, incumbent Republican Mark Meadows has been vocal on his support for President Donald Trump during the impeachment proceedings.

In an opinion piece published on the Fox News website, Meadows lambasted the Democrats for proceeding with impeachment without the basis of fact or merit.

"It has been the Democrats' single-

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minded goal this entire Congress. They are an angry mob seeking validation. An impeachment machine in search of a cause," Meadows wrote in part. "But this effort to undermine the president will fail, just like their other attempts. Americans will see through it."

The day after Trump was impeached by the House, Meadows announced late last month that he was retiring from Congress at the end of his term. The 11th Congressional District was recently redrawn by legislators. Meadows hinted at a role in the Trump administration, saying in his retirement statement, "My work with President Trump and his administration is only beginning."

The vacancy has resulted in a scramble for the territory from a crowded field of 19 candidates.

Democrat Gina Collias said she would have voted for both articles of impeachment, likening the impeachment process to an indictment from a grand jury.

"The direct testimony of the State Department and military officials, combined with the text derived from the president's Ukraine call – and the president's initial comments on the White House lawn – were troubling and require further investigation by the Senate. Certainly, no one is above the law," Collias said.

Collias said she is concerned that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, and other senators are working directly with the White House to defend Trump. "This is supposed to be a fact-finding endeavor with an impartial jury."

Republican Jim Davis, five-term state senator from Western North Carolina, said the entire impeachment process has been a "charade."

Had he been in the House of Representatives when the impeachment vote took place, Davis said, "I would have voted not to impeach because I haven't seen any evidence of an impeachable offense. If anybody's got any, I'd be interested in hearing it."

"It's a political process, and they don't have any evidence of impeachable offenses, and so they are making up charges."

Retired U.S. Air Force Col. and Democrat Moe Davis said he would have voted in favor of impeachment because the evidence is "clear and overwhelming" that Trump pressured Ukraine to interfere in

the upcoming election.

"You can't stand with Donald J. Trump and with America. I've worked alongside true patriots from the FBI and CIA and I've sweated in chem gear training to defend against Russia. Trump and his GOP clan can have Putin. I choose America and all those who defend her," Davis wrote to CPP.

The lone Libertarian in the race, Tracey DeBruhl, answered CPP's questions about impeachment by condemning the process in the House and critiquing the role of Democratic presidential candidate, former Vice President Joe Biden.

"Biden exposed himself by having a son getting paid foreign aid money here on a four-month campaigning tour," DeBruhl wrote. "As a command officer and businessman, my first question would have been, 'What's he getting paid for here, when the job is over there?'"

"When I'm your congressman, my first question, (to which) I'm going to seek an answer from Nancy Pelosi, is why was she so willing to put our country through this embarrassment, yet not even willing to police her own Democrats?"

However, DeBruhl indicated that did not mean that he thinks the president is beyond being held accountable and threatened to violently shake the chief executive if voters send DeBruhl to Washington.

"Marine Corps 101: Integrity comes from holding our own accountable first, which is how we teach quality and get better," DeBruhl said.

"So, in order to help us get there ... we got things I'm trying to fix here first. And if Trump's still there when it's my turn and not acting right? He'll be LSU purple from my shaking the Clemson orange off of him."

Democrat Steve Woodsmall said there is "overwhelming evidence" in favor of impeachment and he would have voted "yes" without hesitation.

"I actually called for impeachment the day after the Mueller report was released and am frankly surprised that those findings were not included in the articles of impeachment," Woodsmall told CPP. "I also believe the process is taking entirely too long, as every day that Trump is in office results in more damage done to this country."

Other candidates in this race did not respond to requests for comment or did not have contact information available.

•INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft.• Ready for the Roaring Twenties?

By all accounts, the real estate market in 2020 is off to a roaring start with dollar volume up 44% already in January and unit sales up 13%. Is there any reason that the momentum in real estate on the Highlands/Cashiers/Lake Toxaway Plateau so far this year will slow down? I don't think so for the following reasons:

1. The explosive population growth in one of our largest feeder markets: Atlanta. When I moved to Atlanta in 1995, the population was 2.5 million. Today, it is 6.5 million with the predictions that it will grow to 8 million in 2030 and to 12 million in 2050!! The more crowded and congested that Atlanta becomes, the more people will be ascending Highway 106 to escape the masses and the heat in the summer;

2. Robust Economy with low mortgage rates. The Federal Reserve is keeping short-term rates near zero percent. This alone is great news for potential investors, let alone the fact that the Federal Reserve is also buying longer-term bonds and mortgage securities in the secondary market. This powerful tonic of reparative measures is keeping rates artificially low across the board;

3. Baby Boomers continue to have a major impact on the housing market as they remain healthy and active in their older years. These Baby Boomers are discovering the benefits of summering or living full-time in this area with the low crime rate, the affordable real estate taxes, the plethora of out-



Jody Lovell
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door activities, the moderate climate and the concentration of interesting people of like-mindedness;

6. Inventory on the Plateau has tightened with more of a Seller's market than we have had since 2007. Good homes priced correctly are going under contract quickly with some receiving multiple offers which was almost unheard of since "the adjustment" in 2008;

7. Americans still love real estate! 27.2 % said real estate was the safest investment over the next ten years, more than any other investment, according to Porch.com. Nowhere do you see the love of real estate more enthusiastically than in this area. The rustic cabin to the sophisticated country club homes on lakes, with mountain views or on wooded lots confirms that nowhere in the world has a better inventory of interesting and idyllic settings to idle away one's hours.

Let's keep the pedal to the metal and continue to have real estate headline news in the winter of 2020!! The team at Highlands Sotheby's International Realty wish you all a warm and wonderful winter!!

• Jody and Wood Lovell own Highlands Sotheby's International Realty celebrating their 20th anniversary in 2020! Their team of thirty brokers who remain the top producing firm in Highlands for the sixth year in a row span the Plateau to help you with all of your real estate needs. Call today for an appointment at 828.526.4104.



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...WOLFE continued from page 1

up with longtime friends. The words, "I remember" were heard often as he greeted people as they arrived.

Dwight Pearce, former Norlina mayor, had to call for everyone's attention to take a few moments for a marker unveiling ceremony. He expressed appreciation to previous town board members and to town Public Works Director Blaine Reese for making the marker possible.

Pearce credited Wolfe's longtime friend and fellow Norlina native Irene Weldon, retired soprano and music professor, for sparking the idea for the historical marker. Pearce said that Weldon, a resident of near Norlina, spoke with him at Roost Crossroads Antiques & Art, which he manages.

"She stopped by the Roost and said, 'We need to do something,'" Pearce said.

He agreed, tasking Reese with researching the criteria for

requesting a state historical marker. However, when Reese learned that a state marker honoree must be dead for many years, the town of Norlina stepped in to design and install a marker of its own.

The marker reads:

"Boyhood home of Maestro Fletcher Wolfe distinguished opera and concert singer; founder and director of Atlanta Boy Choir in 1959. Carnegie Hall debut in 1966; Grammy Award winner in 1989. Honored as Commander of the Italian Republic and Knight of Malta."

Wolfe accepted his honor humbly, giving thanks to God for enabling him to be successful and to be able to travel around the world through his career in music.

"It's quite an honor," he said. "I really don't deserve it. I appreciate it. The reason I was able to do all of these things is that it was the Lord's work."

The theme of worldwide travel is reflected in Wolfe's mem-

oir, "Around the World in 85 Years — A Boy from Norlina" by Candace Keach.

The memoir notes that Wolfe and his family moved to Norlina when he was about 12 years old. His father, Thomas Wolfe, first cousin of the author with the same name, wanted his three sons to become classical musicians. Fletcher took violin lessons, later moving to piano.

After graduating from Norlina High School, he received a bachelor's degree in piano at Mitchell College in Statesville. At Mitchell, Fletcher was the lead in a number of the college's opera performances and was student body president.

He later studied choral technique, earning a graduate degree.

Fletcher's musical career has allowed him to study and work with a number of notable musicians, included bass/baritone Hans Hotter, who guided Fletcher as he prepared for the role of Papageno in the Aspen Festival production of the first English translation of Mozart's "The Magic Flute."

When Fletcher and his wife, the former Roberta (Bobbe) Kahne, spent some time in San Diego, Calif., Fletcher worked with conductor Robert Shaw and his Robert Shaw Chorale. Shaw would later conduct the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. His technique influenced Fletcher's work with the Atlanta Boy Choir.

Fletcher also was influenced by music theorician Nadia Boulanger, studying music theory and composition under her direction in France. Boulanger conducted Fletcher in a number of performances there. Later, she invited the Atlanta Boy Choir to perform at the Great Palace of Fontainebleau.

Fletcher went on to appear in "Prince of Liederkrantz" on Broadway, as the king in Rodgers and Hammerstein's "The King and I" and in an Atlanta Opera Arts production as the title role in Verdi's "Otello."

In 1955, Fletcher was invited to Athens, Ga., to direct music at Athens First Baptist Church. In



Well known soprano and friend, Irene Weldon with Fletcher Wolfe at the unveiling of the plaque in front of his childhood home in Norlina, NC.

Georgia, he organized the Athens Oratorio Society. He later moved to Atlanta, where he organized a group of boys to sing in an opera. It was this group of boys who became the famed Atlanta Boy Choir.

In Atlanta, Fletcher also founded an opera company with wife Bobbe designing and sewing costumes for productions. There, the Wolfes also worked with Metropolitan Opera tenor Ralph Errolle, with Fletcher as conducting assistant and Bobbe focusing on stage design.

In 1989, the Atlanta Boy Choir won a Grammy for its performance and recording of Britten's "War Requiem" with Robert Shaw and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Performances brought Fletcher and the Atlanta Boy Choir to other areas of the United States, Canada, Hungary, Austria, Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Czechoslovakia, Spain, England, France, Germany, Morocco, Mexico, Russia, Italy and Scotland.

These travels have allowed Fletcher and the choir members to meet Coretta Scott King, Pope

John Paul II, royalty and prime ministers from other countries.

However, on Saturday, Fletcher directed his praise to Norlina residents. "I have never met anyone as nice as the people of Norlina," he said.

Fletcher recalled growing up in Norlina, saying that he worked in a number of local businesses, such as the barber shop down the street from his boyhood home, the town's movie theater and others.

He reminisced about his years in Norlina, pointing out people who gathered for the marker dedication among those he fondly remembered: Jimmy Overby, Lou Stultz, Linda Kidd, Esther Delbridge, Lou Traylor and Irene Weldon, among others.

"Money doesn't mean anything," he said. "Love and friendship are what is important."

Before Fletcher resumed reminiscing with the longtime friends around him, he expressed appreciation to the town for choosing to honor him.

"It's been a great honor. I love you all," he said.

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• THE INK PENN •

The Life of a Retiree

Or is it “The Life of Riley?” I have vague memories of that show from my childhood. The one scene that pops to mind is that of the dad lying in a hammock. The difference between Riley and me is that he still worked. Me? I’m happily retired.

“I don’t know how I ever had time to work.” I say that all the time, and I also hear it from my retired friends. And so, I decided to write about my life as a retiree. Fortunately, my brain still works—perhaps not quite as efficiently as it once did—and I thought, “Didn’t I once write a similar column?”

Thanks to my record-keeping, I located “Are you busy or bored?” the 2017 column I wrote. A quick review told me much has remained the same with only one major change. But boy, that change means I’m busier than ever.

I’m still working out two-three times a week, and what I love about working out as a retiree is I no longer have to get up early to do it. These days, you can find me at the gym around lunchtime.

Except for the one morning a week I try to walk with a friend, I hang out in my robe until 9 or so drinking coffee and catching



Kathy Manos Penn

up on the news via the Wall Street Journal online. Only after I’ve done that do I turn my attention to Words with Friends. Picture me relaxing in my red fleece robe, perhaps a throw tucked around my legs, my tablet in my hand, and a cup of coffee nearby. When the weather warms up, that scenario shifts to the screened porch. Can you hear my sigh of contentment?

Beyond my morning routine, my days are filled with lunch or coffee with girlfriends and visits to the library to pick up books. And, did I mention naps? I love naps and try to get one in several days a week.

I cook most nights, and my husband and I eat out once or twice a week. After dinner, we watch a few shows we’ve taped before turning in. It’s then that I read all those books I’ve gotten at

the library. Feeling free to read as late as I want is a real treat.

I continue to write columns for Highlands Newspaper and the Dunwoody Crier as part of my weekly routine, and in 2017 and 2018, I published a collection of my columns and a humorous book written by the dog. Those efforts were both daunting and a ton of fun.

The big change? In the last six months, I’ve written two cozy animal mysteries scheduled to come out this quarter! Never in my wildest dreams did I see myself doing that. Most authors would agree that writing a book takes a commitment to produce at least 1,000 words a day. If you consider that my columns average 550-600 words, you’ll have an idea of what that goal entails.

The good news? I’m enjoying every minute of my life, other than those occasional bouts of writer’s block. I already have ideas for a Christmas mystery, and since my books are set in the Cotswolds, I see another trip in my future. What’s not to like? What’s the answer to the retiree question “Am I busy or bored?” Color me busy!

• *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 ink-penn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPenn/Author/.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



On Tuesday, January 21, the Rotary Club of Highlands sponsored the Highlands community supper. The photo shows Rotary members Rick Willeford and Rotary President Sherry Holt serving two of the guests.

The Metropolitan Opera
HD LIVE

Reforming Arts Center
Live via Satellite
Gershwin's Porgy & Bess
Saturday, February 1
12:55pm RT: 3.40 hours
Pre-Opera Discussion @ 12:30pm

Highlands Performing Arts Center 507 Chestnut Street
Tickets available online: www.highlandspac.org or www.highlandsp Performing Arts Center or at the door
Adults: \$26 PAC or MET Members: \$22

• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Big Brothers Big Sisters host pool party in Highlands

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Western North Carolina – Highlands hosted a community pool party on Friday to splash away those winter-time blues and spread BBBS' mission to ignite potential in all children within the communities here on the Plateau.

"We are incredibly thankful to the Highlands Recreation Center for allowing us to use the wonderful facilities, to The Pizza Place for donating pizzas and to our area media for supporting and helping

cover our event and cause," said BBBS Cashiers & Highlands Program Coordinator Danielle Hernandez.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of WNC is a one-on-one mentoring program geared towards helping children determine and further ignite their potential through experience.

To learn more about becoming part of the program, or supporting Littles and Bigs, please contact Hernandez at cashiers@bbbswnc.org or by phone at 828.399.9133.

Pictured left are Little Sister Claudia and Big Sister Rachel, and a future Little Brother.

Rotary Club of Highlands recognizes Highlands School students



From left: Nicole Lui, Sophia Nguyen, Lilly Deal, Olivia Cole, Rotary President Sherry Holt, and Interact Sponsors Tracy Franklin and Christine Murphy.

The Rotary Club of Highlands welcomed Sophia Nguyen and Lilly Deal, members of the Highlands School's Interact Club, to their meeting on January 21. Interact clubs bring together young people ages 12-18 to develop leadership skills while discovering the power of Service Above Self.



From left Nicole Lui, Olivia Cole, Rotary President Sherry Holt, and Emelina Hernandez

The Rotary Club of Highlands recognized the Highlands School's Students of the Month at their meeting on January 21. Emelina Hernandez (Second Grade) and Olivia Cole (Eighth Grade) were given their awards by Highlands School Counselor, Nicole Lui, who spoke about each student's remarkable contribution to Highlands School.

New faces on the Planning Board prepare for task ahead

Monday, Jan. 27 was the first Planning Board meeting for the three new appointees.

Present were, Assistant Planning Director Michael Mathis and Dennis DeWolf, Rich Trevathan, Brad Armstrong and new appointees, Helene Siegel and Darren Whatley. Absent were Steve Abranyi and Chris Wilkes – who is the third new member.

Members have had (or have) careers in law, commercial construction, residential construction, architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, real estate brokerage or have been or are owners of businesses in town.

After much back and forth, Dennis DeWolf accepted the mantle of chairman but asked that it be reviewed in six months. He said he really has too much on his plate to take on anything else.

However, retired lawyer Rick Trevathan was persistent saying due to DeWolf's previous years on the planning board, his institutional memory and knowledge as an

architect means he is the best qualified for the job.

Newcomer Darren Whatley who wears two hats as an interior designer and landscape architect was named Vice Chairman but asked for the same six-month review.

Mathis said he didn't know if six-month stints were allowed but would find out.

The business at hand was "old business" from the December meeting. Specifically, the final review of verbiage to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) concerning internally illuminated signs, civil penalty responsibility and subdivision street paving. These were all tweaked at the December meeting and were expected to be OK'd and subsequently passed on to the Town Board for final approval.

However, the five members present, decided to disallow any internally illuminated signs in the future, rather than accept the verbiage decided upon at December's meeting which would have allowed "Halo Lit Signs" with stipulations.

The illuminated sign at the 465 Restaurant instigated the proposed amendment to the UDO. Though tastefully done, there was nothing in the UDO specifically allowing or disallowing the particular configuration of the sign. Town Attorney JK Coward said since the permit for the sign was submitted prior to potential changes to the UDO, it could stay as a grandfathered allowance.

Assuming the Town Board will accept the Planning Board's recommendation, internally illuminated signs will not be allowed in the future.

However, the board did keep the verbiage suggested in December to take the job of issuing citations and levying fines out of the hands of the Town Board and putting the job of issuing and collecting penalties solely in the hands of the Planning Director.

Violations can range from junked cars in neighborhoods to buildings in setbacks. If the violation isn't addressed in 10 days, a \$100 per day citation can be issued.

Mathis said he isn't unreasonable; if

• See **PLANNING BOARD** page 17



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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.

• 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 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.

Fri., Jan. 31

Porgy & Bess at PAC live via satellite Saturday, Feb. 1



The Highlands Performing Arts Center will present the MET Opera's production (Live via Satellite) of the Gershwin's Porgy & Bess on Saturday, February 1 at 12:55pm. The Gershwin's modern American masterpiece has its first Met performances in almost three decades, starring bass-baritone Eric Owens and soprano Angel Blue in the title roles. Director James Robinson's stylish production transports audiences to Catfish Row, a setting vibrant with the music, dancing, emotion, and heartbreak of its inhabitants. Tickets available online: www.highlandspac.org or www.highlandspacperformingarts.com or at the door. Highlands PAC, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands NC

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

• The High Mountain Squares will host their "Westward Ho! Dance", Friday night at the Robert C Carpenter Community Building, GA Road (441 South), Franklin, NC from 6:15-8:45 PM. Ricky Simpson from Carnesviller, GA will be back with us calling. Mike and Debbie will be doing Rounds and Lines. We dance Western Style Square Dancing, main/stream and plus levels. Our classes will start February 3rd. Everyone is welcome. For information call: 828-787-2324, 828-332-0001, 727-599-1440, 706-746-5426

Sat., Feb. 1

• Porgy & Bess Live via satellite at PAC at 12:55 p.m. Tickets available online: www.higlandspac.org or www.highlandsp Performingarts.com or at the door. Highlands PAC, 507 Chestnut Street, Highlands NC

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate 4-mile hike to Siler Bald on the Appalachian Trail, elevation change 700 ft., for 360-degree views of Wayah Bald, Wine-springs and a glimpse of Nantahala Lake. Meet at Westgate Plaza at 10 am, drive 24 miles round trip. Call leader Robert Barnable, 369-1565, for reservations. Visitors welcome.

Thurs., Feb. 6

• At Hudson Library the sixth annual Harry Potter Book Night celebrated throughout the world, including Hudson Library. In collaboration with The Bascom, we're getting ready to host an unforgettable Harry Potter Kids Zone event themed around – you guessed it – Harry Potter! The fun kicks off at 3:30 PM. Come in costume or in your Muggle clothes – either way we'll be delighted to see you.

Sat., Feb. 8

• Experience the Full Snow Moon at the Nature Center 6-8 p.m. If cancelled due to weather, Feb. 14.

• The Nantahala Hiking Club will take a moderate-to-strenuous 7-mile hike, elevation change 900 ft., from Long Branch to Rock Gap in the Standing Indian Recreational

Area, starting at the backcountry parking lot, up Long Branch to the Appalachian Trail at Glassmine Gap, then north to Rock Gap, and returning by a Forest Service Road. Meet at Westgate Plaza in Franklin at 11 am, Drive 32 miles round trip. Call leader Katharine Brown, 421-4178, for reservations. Visitors and dogs on leash are welcome.

Mon. 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.

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.

Macon Community Funding Pool application cycle now open

Macon County non-profit organizations have until February 13, 2020, to apply for county funds through the Macon County Community Funding Pool (CFP). Application forms and instructions are available on the Macon County website, www.maconnc.org. Hard copies may be made available at Macon County Public Library on Siler Farm Road in Franklin, the Hudson Library on Main Street in Highlands, and the Nantahala Public Library on Nantahala School Road, please call ahead to make sure a copy will be ready for pickup.

Organizations applying for CFP funds must provide financial statements such as budgets and federal tax-exempt reports, organization goals and objectives, and program/service descriptions. First-time applicants must contact Karen Wal-

lace, 524-3600, or Bobbie Contino, 342-7872, to discuss their proposal. Groups not incorporated as non-profits may enlist an established non-profit to serve as their fiscal agent. Collaborative agency proposals are encouraged to leverage limited funding and to share resources.

The Community Funding Pool was established to help the Macon County Board of Commissioners allocate tax-generated funds to local non-profits in a fair and efficient way. The CFP Task Force is composed of citizens chosen by the Board of Commissioners to consider applications and make recommendations to the Board, who make final funding decisions. The Community Funding Pool is a separate entity from the Macon County Community Foundation.

Experience the full Snow Moon Sat., Feb. 8 at the Nature Center



Explore the winter forest under the light of the Full Snow Moon on Saturday, February 8th from 6 - 8 PM! The 2nd full moon of the year is named after the heavy snowfall common in February, and we are opening the Botanical Garden to allow the public to explore the grounds under its light. Bundle up and bring your flashlight to wander through the garden on this one night only. After your stroll, join us for hot drinks and warm up by our fire in the Meadow by the Valentine House (888 Horse Cove Rd). All are welcome to participate in this free event. In the event of rain or severe weather, the event will be held on Friday, February 14th. The Highlands Botanical Garden is part of the Highlands Biological Station, a multi-campus center of Western Carolina University. For more information, please call (828) 526-2623.

..MONITOR continued from page 1

back through an online portal at IndependentMonitorMHS.com.

"We hope during or after the sessions, community members will highlight concerns they have for us to review further," said Ron Winters, principal and co-founder of Gibbins, in a statement to Carolina Public Press.

"Even if the concerns are outside the scope of our role or HCA's undertakings, we will channel the information back to the appropriate parties at HCA, ANC Healthcare Inc. (the entity winding down the former Mission system), Dogwood Health Trust and the (hospital) advisory boards," Winters' statement added.

Winters and Thomas Urban, the firm's managing director, are the only scheduled speakers at the seven events.

Gibbins was named independent monitor Oct. 31, when Josh Stein, North Carolina's attorney general, announced that he had consented to the choice after a months-long search. The

firm had earlier received signoff from ANC and Dogwood.

Stein played a leading role in negotiating numerous service requirements that HCA ultimately agreed to in its \$1.5 billion deal with Mission.

In announcing his signoff on Gibbins, Stein attached great importance to the firm's willingness to interact with the public.

"To be successful, the monitor must take the time to engage with communities in Western North Carolina," Stein said. "Specifically, I am looking forward to hearing about town hall meetings and other opportunities for the monitor to hear directly from the people who are impacted by HCA's health care decisions.

"That commitment to engaging with local communities, along with the monitor's qualifications, led me to direct my office to consent to the selection of this monitor."

"The N.C. Attorney General's Office encouraged these meetings, and we agreed with their

thinking," Winters told Carolina Public Press. "We had planned to hold them anyway."

Gibbins' higher-profile approach contrasts with the more traditional approach taken by many independent monitors, which focus almost exclusively on inspecting organizations, reviewing their reports, gauging compliance with obligations, conferring with attorneys general and other agencies, and offering suggestions for organizational improvement.

"Traditionally, monitors are low profile because the task is not about the monitor but is about objectives of the parties who established the monitorship," said Jacob Frenkel, a founding director of the International Association of Independent Corporate Monitors and a member of the Washington, D.C., law firm of Dickinson Wright.

But the state-mandated oversight situation with HCA in North Carolina is leading to the novel approach. "Here, 'public' input and 'public' responsibility is central to the state's expectations," Frenkel said.

North Carolina's attorney general is not the only prominent figure who supports interaction between Gibbins and the public.

Would Dogwood watchdog?

Gibbins, which now reports to ANC, will soon report to Dogwood Health Trust, a nonprofit foundation created in the merger of for-profit HCA and nonprofit Mission Health. Gibbins will be compensated by ANC and Dogwood and is not being paid by HCA.

Dogwood's CEO, Antony Chiang, was president of Empire Health Foundation in Spokane, Wash., before moving to Asheville. While in Spokane, he had extensive experience dealing with a large health care system.

In 2017, Chiang's foundation filed a federal lawsuit against Community Health Systems Inc., a for-profit company that owned CHS Deaconess Medical Center and CHS Valley Hospital and Medical Center.

Last Oct. 8, Empire announced a settlement of that suit, which alleged that CHS had "failed to comply with state law and its own purchase agreement in its provision of charity care to patients of Deaconess and Valley," according to an Empire press release.

Empire had the right to enforce CHS' contract to purchase the two hospitals and alleged that CHS had "breached its contractual obligation to make 'reasonable efforts' to provide charity care to the community at levels that met or exceeded the eastern Washington regional average," the release states.

The settlement is expected to extinguish as much as \$50 million in hospital debt for thousands of former patients.

Whether Dogwood under Chiang could potentially play a similar role remains unclear.

Maintaining a charity care policy that assists patients at up to 400 percent of the federal poverty line is one of numerous promises that HCA made as it acquired Mission.

"I have had some conversations with people at Dogwood, and they had indicated that they want the monitor to have contact with the public and to solicit input from the public as far as what level of quality of service is being provided by HCA," said Victoria Hicks, a community activist involved in tracking HCA's performance.

"It is absolutely consistent with everything we have read and heard about him and have heard from him," Hicks said of Chiang.

HCA's obligations

HCA's agreement to maintain a charity care policy is one of

many promises it has made.

Other obligations include a 10-year commitment to provide specified services at local hospitals, an agreement not to close facilities or cease providing services unless the independent monitor and a local advisory board agree, opening a new inpatient behavioral health hospital in Asheville and building a re-

placement facility for Angel Medical Center in Franklin.

As for HCA's closure of two rehabilitation clinics in Buncombe County last year, "This is an ongoing topic of discussion that both the AG's office and the independent monitor will be handling in concert moving forward," said N.C. Department of Justice spokesperson Laura Brewer in response to a question from CPP.

"The monitor's plan for public hearings is a clear proactive measure to create the broadest opportunity for community input," said Frenkel of Dickinson Wright.

"This is a thoughtful method for conveying to the state that communication and transparency, particularly to address and alleviate community concerns, is a central component at the onset of the monitorship."

Winters, Gibbins' principal, expects the use of independent monitors to become even more commonplace as the health care industry consolidates.

"We expect to see growth in the use of independent monitors, and evolution of the role, supporting health care transactions in coming years."

Next HCA/Mission meetings

Informational meetings led by Gibbins Advisors have been scheduled in seven communities in Western North Carolina served by Mission Health.

The Franklin event is Thurs., Jan. 30 from 5:30-7p.m. in the Robert C. Carpenter Room of the MC Community facilities Building on the Georgia Road.

Members of any community are welcome to attend the meeting(s) of their choosing. Meetings will have limited seating and attendees will be welcomed first come, first serve. Doors will open 30 minutes before each event.

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- Manicures
- Pedicures

•WORD MATTER•

Royal Pains

Harry Windsor comes from what some might call an excellent family. Unlike most of us, on the day he was born his entire life was pretty much set in stone. And, if we're being honest, it wouldn't be all that miserable of an existence. But keep in mind – when one, by accident of birth, is born into the British Royal Family, there are a lot of rules. And, rule-breakers. Prince Andrew, anyone?

Harry would always be seen as something less than his older brother, William. That said, the 35-year old second son of Charles and Diana Windsor would, in time, do just fine, as long as he towed the line. Keep a small string attached to that reference to Harry's mum. She learned all about towing the line, didn't she?

Then, along came Meghan Markle.

Harry was doing fine as Britain's second son until SHE arrived onto the scene. "That woman!" That's how Ms. Markle, an intelligent, beautiful, mid-thirties, mixed-race American actress, was referred to in the British tabloid press for saying YES when the world's most eligible bachelor popped the question.

Upon the occasion of their 2018 wedding, upper crust Brits went, well, the appropriate word would be, bonkers.

And, maybe just a tad racist, as well.

Take Rachel Johnson, sister to Boris Johnson, current Prime Minister in the British Parliament. She commented that Ms. Markle had "rich and exotic DNA." Well played, Rachel.

And, then there's the BBC commentator who tweeted an image of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, that's Harry and Meghan, holding hands with a chimpanzee, joking that it was their son. Subtle, dude.

And, what about that Daily Mail headline proclaiming "Harry's girl is (almost) straight outta Compton," while enumerating the crimes that have taken place near where young Meghan grew up, and connecting her to the gangs in southern California, and sniffing about how the two lovebirds "couldn't possibly have come from more different environments." Nice.

Want more? There's plenty.

If you're wondering why Prince Harry, his wife, and their young son, Archie, are "stepping back from their royal duties," and are planning to become both financially and geographically independent of the Royal Family, consider the double standard exhibited when



Bud Katz

Meghan was asked to "guest edit" an edition of British Vogue Magazine. The Executive Editor of The Sun, exploding with Royal righteousness, proclaimed that "Royals don't guest-edit magazines!"

Except, they do.

Harry's dad, Prince Charles, twice "guest edited" Country Life. Kate Middleton, Prince William's wife, "guest edited" the Huffington

Post, and actually posed for the cover of British Vogue, he same magazine Ms. Markle was castigated for "guest editing." I'm sure the Executive Editor of The Sun wasn't blinded by the color of Meghan's mom's skin when he blasted the Duchess. Right?

I've always wondered why many Americans are infatuated, or obsessed, with the British Royal Family. In case you've forgotten, we fought a nasty war to get that monarchy out of our lives. Oh, I guess Her Majesty, the Queen, seems like a nice enough lady. And her long-suffering son, Prince Charles, seems like – sorry, I don't have the words. I don't know these people. Frankly, except for Harry, Meghan, and Harry's late mum, Diana Spencer Windsor, I'm not sorry to say that I have almost no interest in them.

Princess Diana was herself a bit of an anachronism, Royally-speaking. Charles had hoped to marry Camilla Parker-Bowles, but his mum and dad wanted the mother of the future King to be of somewhat better, higher breeding. They chose Diana, daughter of the 8th Earl of Spencer, and in thanks she gave the realm William, and then Harry. The marriage of Charles and Diana ended officially a year before she died in a Paris tunnel, victim of an automobile accident, while in the company of her Egyptian boyfriend. It actually ended years earlier, when Diana chose to pursue a life that didn't involve so many "royal duties."

William, Duke of Cambridge, his father's son, will someday wear the British crown, for whatever it's worth. His wife, the former Kate Middleton, along with their children, will exist within the splendid, isolating bubble endemic to all monarchical spouses.

Harry, for now, at least, still the Duke of Sussex, and definitely his mother's son, will live with his wife, Meghan Markle, along with son, Archie, somewhere between here and there, hopefully unencumbered with too much Royal family nonsense.

In his case, the acorn didn't fall far from the maternal tree. I wish them well.



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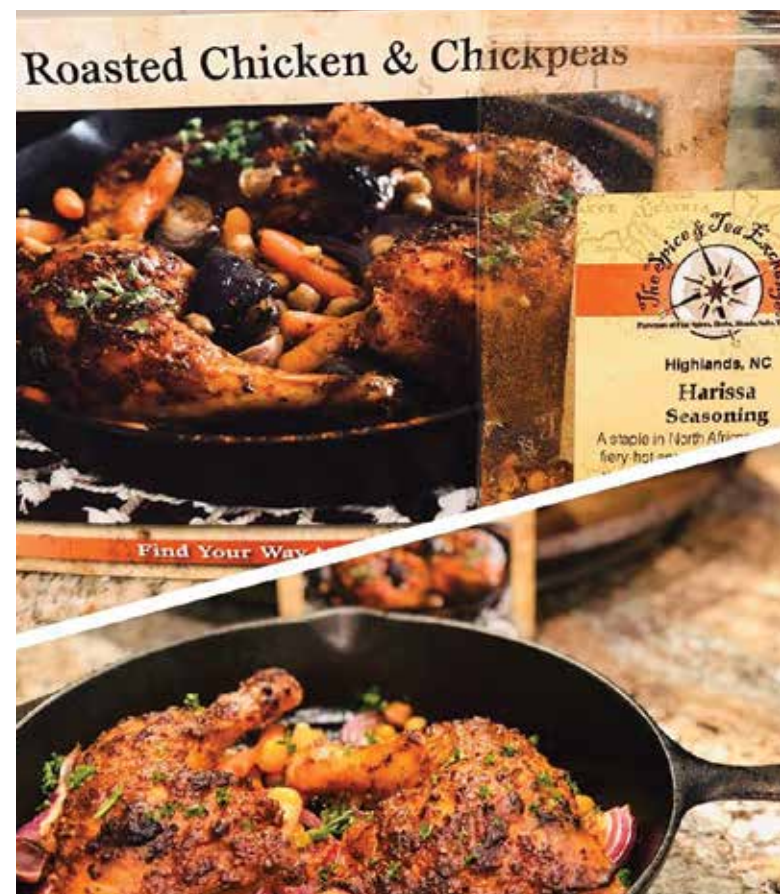


Photo by Kim Lloyd

...PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 1

running as Republicans for the District II seat, meaning they will face off on March 3 during the primary election with the top vote-getter heading to the General Election in November.

Terry Bradley was born and raised in Macon County and currently lives in the Clarks Chapel Community.

Bradley has 38 years of Law Enforcement experience, 18 of which was as Chief of Police of Franklin. He completed the vigorous North Carolina Justice Academy's Management Development Program and he went on to manage not only employees, but also municipal taxpayer funded budgets. Bradley was a volunteer of Cullasaja Gorge Fire and Rescue and served as one of the Board of Directors of the department.

"I would like to continue my legacy of public service as a Macon County Commissioner utilizing my experiences to help guide the decisions that will be made by the Board of Commissioners to benefit the residents and visitors of our community," said Bradley.

Bryan Rauers grew up in Charleston, SC and moved to Atlanta, Ga after graduating from the University of South Carolina to start his career in the automotive industry. Rauers moved to Franklin in 2002 when he purchased the Franklin Ford dealership along with his brother and stepfather. Rauers and his wife of 17 years, Kerry have two children and have lived in Macon County for nearly two decades.

Rauers worked for Booomershine Automotive Group in Atlanta from 1992-1999 becoming a General Manager of one of their dealerships. He then worked for Hennesy Automotive Group in Atlanta from 1999-2002 as the General Manager of Land Rover Buckhead before moving to Franklin.

"Living and having a business in Macon County for the past 17 years and having both of my children in the Macon County public school system makes me vested in this community," said Rauers. "This gives me every reason to see Macon county succeed. For these reasons, I would like to make a difference in Macon County."

Joshua Young is a life-long resident of Macon County and comes from a family with five generations spanning from Macon. Young and his highschool sweetheart

have been married for almost 12 years and together they have five children. Young was taught how to work at a young age on his family's Christmas tree farm and according to him, that work ethic has molded him into

the person he is today.

He started Young Tree Service in May of 2015. Young is very active in the community, serving on many Youth Athletic boards as well as coaching numerous youth football,

baseball, softball and basketball teams. He enjoys the outdoors, spending time with family and cooking.

Young's professional experiences include his eight-year career at Duke Energy in which he was involved in many extracurricular activities which involved working as a team in the Lineman's Rodeo and being a member of the new employee hiring process in Charlotte, NC. Young has specialized in NC real estate for the past 12 years in which he has moved dozens of properties and gained invaluable experience managing a budget. Young is the owner and operator of Young Tree Services, Inc, specializing in removing trees with low or no ground impact and the use of heavy machinery.

"I have no experience in running for public office, but what I do have is a passion to be a part of a solution," said Young. I could sit back and complain about what is or isn't being done or put my name out there like the other candidates have done and show that I am willing to step up. I would be honored to serve my community and I would ensure that the tax dollars are spent wisely. I would fight to keep our taxes low and strive to be transparent in everything I do! I want to be a County Commissioner to represent the people of Macon County. I am not a politician. I am a taxpaying citizen of Macon County. I work with my hands for a living and likely will show up to many meetings with my dirty work boots. This is a very important position in Macon County. I hope to bring an unbiased, independent mindset and a new energy to the Board of Commissioners. I am prepared to make tough business-minded decisions to represent the tax

payers of this county."

What do you see as being the biggest issue facing Macon County and how would you address it if elected?

Bradley: "I think that there is more

than one critical issue facing Macon County, continued economic stability and growth, job options for new graduates, health care availability, accessible reliable broadband accessibility, are some of the major

issues we are faced with. I will approach each issue with an unbiased evaluation based upon what brings the most value to the citizens of Macon County."

Rauers: "Broadband for our county is a very large issue. It is imperative we have good broadband for new business and business growth. I have spoken with current County Commissioners as well as Rep. Kevin Corbin and Senator Jim Davis about this issue. The County Commissioners are working diligently on this topic now but it is very complex. Our demographic area makes it hard and very costly to install the fiber. This leaves the companies installing the fiber with no profit margin. If elected I would work with our State representatives hoping for state and federal assistance."

Young: "As an employer, employees are our greatest assets. I feel one of the largest issues facing Macon County are the county employee wages. I have been in contact with dozens of county employees and realize that we are losing key players in our county government weekly. The private sector pay far exceeds the county pay rate. The answer is not to "Raise Taxes" but instead trim some fat out of other areas of our budget and compensate our greatest assets."

Public Education: Commissioners are faced with more and more request for public education funding. What is your stance on county's role in funding public education? Do you think the current levels are adequate or do you think they should be increased/decreased?

Bradley: "I think it is very important to support public education and there is increased budget pressure placed on Macon County due to increases in school popula-

tion and unfunded mandates from State and Federal programs. One of the main issues currently facing Macon County will be the future replacement or renovation of the Franklin High School facilities.

We also need to continue to evaluate local supplements for teacher pay and support staff in order to retain our investment in these resources."

Rauers: "This is a very complicated question because of the way public education is funded in Macon County. That being said I, am Pro Education. First and foremost education for our children should be our #1 priority. If we want Macon County to be better in

the next 20 years, we better invest in our children. We need to make sure our school facilities are not only up to date but safe. We also have to make sure our teachers' pay stays competitive so that we can continue to keep great teachers in our school system. From what I have been able to find out, our county does stand behind our schools and should continue. I would have to say the schools are in need of more money for many projects. It is very important for Macon County to invest in our children, school facilities, and our teachers. Simply put, better education results in fewer drug-related issues, less crime, and a better economy."

Young: "Our youth is our next generation. It is imperative that our kids get the education they deserve. I feel the problem is at the state level. There is no reason our teachers should be buying materials out of their own pocket. As your commissioner I want to petition the state for more money! I will go to work for this county and petition Raleigh for what we need."

Macon County is in the middle of a large space needs analysis project to address infrastructure needs. What are your thoughts on the current direction the county is taking to address these issues?

Bradley: "The final report is complete and it can be found at www.maconnc.org," said Bradley. "There are concerns being raised about courthouse security, inmate population, and other departments having growth issues. If elected I would work to find workable solutions that are economically viable and financially sustainable."



Terry Bradley



Bryan Rauers



Joshua Young

... PRIMARY 2020 continued from page 16

Rauers: "First, let me say I applaud the County Manager and the County Commissioners for hiring an outside firm to perform a space and needs analysis. The County Manager and Commissioners should review not only the findings of the analysis but also the county's internal findings. I would then prioritize what we feel has to be done immediately and what can be done at a later date. After you prioritize, funding

would have to be figured out. I believe the county is handling this issue the way they should."

Young: "The answer isn't always to build a brand new building! Macon County is overrun with empty space. The old Walmart is a ghost town, K-Mart plaza is bare, several vacancies along 441. Yes, we need more room in our county infrastructure but look at all the available space. I want

... PLANNING BOARD continued from page 11

someone needs to take down part of a building within a setback he would of course give more time as long as the issue is being addressed.

The last amendment to the UDO that was addressed in December and OK'd in January was the need to pave roads within subdivisions with a grade of 5% or more. The Town Board asked the Planning Board to address this issue because there are several unpaved subdivision streets in town whose grade causes their sand and gravel to wash down onto area streets and adjoining property.

Mathis said Commissioner Amy Patterson asked that this be addressed because after roads wash away in subdivisions, residents ask the town to clean up the mess.

He also said that it was imperative for Planning Board members to attend meet-

ings because since the state has changed many land use regulations, numerous changes will have to be made to the town's UDO.

In addition, the board must develop a Comprehensive Plan. "We have a lot on our plate this year," he said.

To be ready for their new responsibilities, members asked that extra time be allotted prior to the next few meetings so they can be "schooled" as to the Planning Board's job as well as taught to navigate the UDO and come to understand the parameters of the several commercial and residential zones in town.

Consequently, the February 24 meeting will unofficially begin at 4:30 p.m. for the purpose of schooling with the regularly scheduled meeting beginning at 5:30 p.m.

— Kim Lewicki

to do all I can to support local infrastructure and create a pro-business atmosphere. I am thankful for the businesses and restaurants but we need more. This is a huge reason I decided to run for office. The commissioners wisely requested the space needs analysis and once the study has concluded, I would be a fiscally responsible representative of our tax dollars."

Any other issues or information that you would like to include for your voters

Bradley: "There may be issues that I am unaware of and I will work diligently to address any of these issues."

Rauers: "I am honored to be running for Macon County Commissioner. My time in Macon County and my business experience will help me make the correct decisions for the people of this county. The questions have included a couple of my platform points but here are some others: Pro Law Enforcement; Pro Emergency Personnel, Pro Business, Continue the fight on our drug epidemic, and make sure Macon County has long-term vision."

Young: "I am excited to have the op-

portunity to serve the taxpayers of Macon County. I love this community and I'm thankful to call it my home."

• *This is the second in a series of candidate profiles ahead of the March 3 Primary Election. Democratic candidates for District II were featured in last week's edition of Highlands Newspaper, which can be viewed online at www.highlandsinfo.com. Click on News.*

Next Week's candidate profile will feature Republicans Dr. Sarah Conway and Representative Kevin Corbin, both of whom are running for Senate District 50.

Note:

There will be a Macon County Board of Commissioner Candidate Forum on February 13 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.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left are the four Highlands women who braved the wet and cold to converge on Sylva, NC for the Women's March: Erin Bronk, Helene Siegel, Karen Hawk and Constance Neely.

Highlanders march for women

The speech was first and presented a line-up of passionate, arousing speakers many of which were young and very well-spoken assuring that there will be followers in the footsteps of those who started the Women's March.



HUGH ACHESON Saturday, February 22

Chef, restaurateur and author, Hugh Acheson of 5&10 restaurant in Athens, GA—as well as *Empire State South* and the new *By George* in Atlanta— will be at The Farm cooking up his favorite dishes. Hugh has developed a style of his own, forging together the beauty of the South with the flavors of Europe. Join us for a delicious evening!

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

The Church is an organic body, a family



Pastor Mark Ford
First Baptist Church
of Highlands

The word organic – beyond its chemical reference to carbon compounds – refers to characteristics of living organisms. It can also speak to entities that exist in similar complexity to that of living things and their growth and development. Because the Bible speaks of the Church – local and global – as the “Body of Christ” (Eph. 4:4-16; 5:23, 30) and “Family” (Eph. 3:14-15) or inferences of family (Father, brothers, sisters), we can easily say that the church is organic in nature. The church is a living organism and operates like a family. It was never to be an organization or self-perpetuating business. As the Body of Christ, it has no ideological or political agendas beyond sharing the truth of the Word of God, the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. As His Body we go forth organically to humanly embrace people with hope and help. As His Family, we operate organically to live for each other sharing the same home, the same table, the same challenges, and the same concerns for each other. We love each other because of the Father’s love for us. The family lives together, works together, and takes care of each other. We do, after all, share the same spiritual DNA, having been born into the family of God, filled with His Spirit, and nurtured on the milk and meat of His Word.

As a family, the church should be laboring to build strong relationships from cradle to end of life, giving focus to our mutual responsibility of care and encouragement within the Body as a whole. Too much of what goes on – and I apologize as a Pastor for too often perpetuating these faults in the past – is to segment our family into generations and minister to groups solely rather than to a Family of God, a Body of Christ. We have done this to improve the “bottom line” like a business. The size of the family

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 22

Looking for a church home?

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

Visit our website www.wayfarersunity.org for more information, or call 706-746-3303

Proverbs 3:5

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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 • 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

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

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

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• 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

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Chaplain Margaret Howell • 2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

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

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Pastor Zane Talley

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

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

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

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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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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

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

Parents want art and music back in all Macon County schools

By Brittney Lofthouse

The Macon County Board of Education meeting room was packed on Monday night, with parents, community members, and educators all gathered to show their support of increasing students' access to the arts.

Macon County Schools parents Maggie Jennings and Sarah O'Neal compiled a presentation for school board members unveiling a three-year vision to reincorporate music and art into Macon County Schools.

"We know that the arts are always the first thing to get cut, but we are here because we want to change that," said Jennings.

Jennings and O'Neal outlined that currently in Macon County Schools, there are no art or music classes for preschool age children.

"There is so much brain development that goes on at that age, that it really is a shame that we are missing the opportunity to install music in our children in preschool," said Jennings.

For the four Franklin area elementary schools, there are two specialists shared between the schools, which are faced with overcrowded classrooms. O'Neal noted that students at the elementary level only get 20-25 mins in either an art or music classroom once a week.

For East Franklin Elementary and Cartoogachaye Elementary, students only get music once a week for half the year, and then switch to art once a week for the second half, and next year, both art and music will lose their classroom and have to move to a cart.

Macon Middle School hasn't had art classes in nearly a decade and for the last three years they have not had a chorus class. The middle school however does offer band.

Union Academy, the district's alternative school, has no options for either art or music for students, something Jennings said should be fixed.

"These students deserve the same opportunities as other children their age," said Jennings.

Highlands Principal Brian Jetter said that Highlands, too, faces struggles with keeping art and music for all students.

Highlands high school students have

both art and music courses available for them, if they choose to enroll as an elective.

Middle school students in Highlands have music every day, but they do not have an option for art courses.

On the elementary level, Highlands students have music twice a week and art once a week. Both the art teacher and the music teacher have their own rooms at Highlands, so neither are having to travel to classrooms, an issue Franklin area schools are facing.

Jennings and O'Neal asked the school board to provide funding this year to hire a part-time arts coordinator with an arts education background to begin to grow the county's arts programs. Because East Franklin and Cartoogachaye will be losing their dedicated room for art and music, the presentation included a request for two double-classroom modular units to be placed at both schools to give a space for the classrooms.

In addition to requesting the school board hire elementary art and music positions as well as a chorus position at Macon Middle school in 2020-'21 school year, included was a commitment to fund well-equipped programs which included equipment and supplies, as well as an after-school chorus program at the elementary level.

In year two, the duo requested additional full-time art and music positions at each elementary school and to increase the part-time arts education position to full-time. The presentation also noted that in year two, the school board should look at securing bids for a new Arts Center at Franklin High School, which was built in 1970.

The largest expense proposed for year three is the construction of the fine arts center.

Both Jennings and O'Neal said they, along with other supporters, were committed to doing whatever it took to secure funding for their 3-year vision, including requesting additional funding from commissioners.

Board of Education Chair Jim Breedlove said the presentation was well researched and had several significant points and because the board is at the beginning stages of the budget planning process, board members will consider the proposal during the planning process.

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Jan. 16. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Jan. 16

• At 1:15 p.m., officers were called about finding a clear baggie containing crystal-like substance in Bryson's Food Store.

Jan. 17

• At 9:35 p.m., officers were called about a patron being drunk and disruptive at Tugs Proper on Main Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Jan. 21

Jan. 21

• At 9:30 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Satolah Fire Dept. for a fire on Luther Owens Road.

Jan. 22

• At 6:39 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

Jan. 23

• At 1:39 p.m., the dept. responded to a structure fire on Lost Horse Trail.

• At 6:32 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a smell of gas on N. 5th Street.

Jan. 24

• At 11:17 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Club Circle.

Jan. 27

• At 8:36 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Lyman Zachary Road.

• At 3:02 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106.

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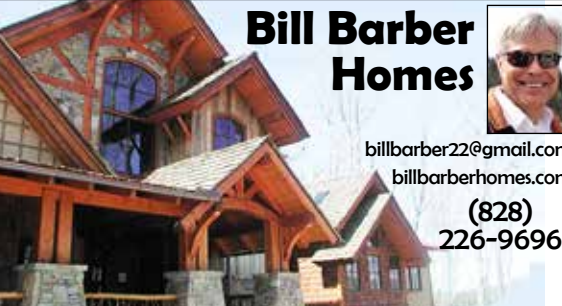
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...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 18

is not as important as being a family. We focus on certain age groups - like children and youth - to attract and appease external agendas, losing sight of the fact that the church is Body, Family. Senior citizens need help to face the end of life and want to remain engaged with the church family. Middle aged adults are facing the steep challenges of raising children, empty nest, the weight of debts, marriage stresses, etc. Single adults or single-

again adults need to know they are part of God's family. The church is not a business or organization that is driven by the bottom line of finances or institutional numbers. The family cares for each other. The body to be healthy must be whole. This is carried out by ministering to one another, learning together, worshipping together, and praying together. Our attraction to a world looking on is not programmatic, budgetary, aesthetical, musical, or denominational. Our attrac-

tion will be to those who want to be a part of something that is real and alive, like the Lord's Body that embraces a lost and needy world. Our attraction will be familial, as people look to find a loving and caring family to be a member of, guided by the Spirit and led by the Father - especially with the growth of the dysfunctional family in our nation. At First Baptist Church we are shifting our emphasis from gender and generational discipleship and ministry. We are going

to move toward how we can be a functional Body of the Lord that will work in unison for the good of all who make up our local body. And as a healthy expression of the Body of Christ, do our part to reach out to a needy and lost world by being His arms and feet. As His Family, we are looking to how we can minister to each other for the welfare of the family of God - to work together, help each other, learn together, and worship together at the Lord's table and in the Lord's house. We want to help parents

learn how to raise their children in the Lord and be encouraged by those who have moved on to being grandparents. We want to see the younger generations minister to the needs of the older by letting them know they are still needed and appreciated. We want the older generation to share their wisdom and encouragement with the younger generations. You get the picture. The church is to be organic - a living entity and not an institutional business. The church is Body, the church is Family.

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