

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 17, Number 37

Real-Time News, Weather & WebCams: HighlandsInfo.com

Thursday, Sept. 10 2020

Inaccurate census stands to hurt towns, counties and states

By Brittney Lofthouse

With just four weeks to go, North Carolina is lagging behind other states in the push to com-

plete the census. According to the United States Census Bureau, about a quarter of households across the state remain uncoun-

ed. The bureau will stop collecting data on Sept. 30 - a month

• See CENSUS page 18

Families to benefit from state's COVID19 budget

Includes funds for broadband

By Brittney Lofthouse

A onetime payment of \$335 will be sent to families across the state who have at least one child according to a \$1.1 billion relief budget signed by NC Governor Roy Cooper.

Governor Cooper said he doesn't agree with every provision in the bill but funding for pandemic support in this budget is critical and must move forward.

"This budget followed my recommendations on school enrollment funding and invested in important areas like high speed internet access and disaster relief, but legislators should have done

• See BUDGET page 14



Candidate Madison Cawthorn.



Candidate Moe Davis.

District 11 candidates spar during contentious weekend debate

By Brittney Lofthouse

Over the weekend candidates for the United States House of Representatives NC Congressional District 11 met for the first round of debates this election season.

Democrat Colonel Moe Davis and Republican Madison Cawthorn who are vying for Mark Meadows' former seat, participated in a two-night event hosted by Blue Ridge Public Radio, Mountain Xpress, and Smoky Mountain News in partnership with Western

Carolina University.

The weekend debates were contentious to say the least, following months of back and forth between the two candidates on social media.

Friday's round of questions included questions from Lenoir-Rhyne University Equity and Diversity Institute developer Aisha Adams, former Asheville Citizen Times political reporter and current Mountain Xpress contributor Mark Barrett and Pete Kaliner,

• See DEBATE page 10

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Dirtbags are champs

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

The Highlands Recreation Adult Softball League Championship game boiled down to the Dirtbags versus The Pizza Place, but the Dirtbags won the coveted-championship title with a 16-12 final.

The Dirtbags maintained the lead for most of the game, and at one point it was tied 6-6, but The Pizza Place could not catch up in time.

"That's the best anybody's played against the Dirtbags all year," said Highlands Recreation Dept. Director Lester Norris. "A lot of them play tournaments every weekend, they live for softball."

The Pizza Place came in 5th overall for the season but fought their way to the Championship game.

They lost to 4th place Mountaintop in the first round. In round two, they beat 3rd place Essential Power. In round three, they got

• See CHAMPS page 19

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Growing pains

I got up late on Labor Day, had my cup of coffee, and perused the morning news.

I noticed Southern California continues to battle wildfires and has set a record of 120-degree temperature. I thought, how can anyone live there? I also read about the ravages of COVID-19 and the impending budget shortfalls facing cities.

I also caught up on my email and saw the Highlands Chamber announcement that Highlands had made the Southern Living list of the most desirable small towns for retirement.

I was again realized with a jolt that more people will be coming to Highlands. Realtors already see the trend. Affluent professionals want to escape crowded, hot, and perilous metropolitan areas. Broadband and Zooming have created lifestyle options. Our cool climate and small-town appearance make us a desirable community.

In this year of community, comprehensive planning, critical decisions lie ahead. The Town Board and community stakeholders will have to make critical decisions



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

about growth and development.

Our water and sewer policy will be key. Certain types of development depend on access to these utilities. Highlands built a water and sewer system 90 years ago. Over the decades policies governing these resources have evolved.

Six decades ago, when there were subdivisions being built outside the town limits, the Highlands Town Board decided to allow these projects to connect to town water. The ratio-

nale was that more customers would be beneficial to the town. In some cases, the town actually took possession of the waterlines leading to and into the subdivisions. Other subdivisions, like Queen Mountain, were allowed to connect to the town water system, but the residents own the line along NC 28 and in the development.

Fifty years later, those decisions still impact the town. For Queen Mountain, their homeowners have had to fund the replacement of the waterline from the town limits to the subdivision. Other subdivisions, like Satulah Falls, have fared differently since the town long ago agreed to own their subdivision waterlines. Two years ago, the aging galvanized lines in Satulah Falls were replaced by the town for around \$200,000. The town had previously upgraded the water system for Buena Vista. This year, the replacement of aging lines for subdivisions outside town limits, like those on Valentine, will again be done at town expense. These projects benefit a small number of residences but they have high price tags.

I cited these projects because the Town Board some three decades ago changed the policy to prohibit new water and sewer service beyond the town limits. Given this policy, OEI recently voluntarily annexed the Farm on Arnold Road. The OEI Farm now pays town taxes, follows town ordinances, and can now attach to town sewer.

There is a growing feeling among some that Highlands should once again allow water and sewer beyond the town limits. Proponents might argue it would generate additional water and sewer revenue, but it is not that simple.

•See MAYOR page 18

• HIC'S VIEW •



whicseven@yahoo.com

"Well 2020 certainly has been a strange year. Luckily we have experience working at home. Now if we could only train our staff."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 10-Sep	Fri, 11-Sep	Sat, 12-Sep	Sun, 13-Sep
75°F 63°F	77°F 64°F	73°F 64°F	74°F 62°F
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Highlands Newspaper

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Copy Editor: Glenda Bell

Digital Media - Jim Lewicki

Locally owned and operated by

Kim & Jim Lewicki

Adobe PDF version at

www.HighlandsInfo.com

265 Oak St.; P.O. Box 2703,

Highlands, N.C., 28741

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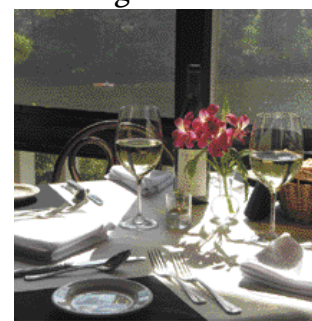
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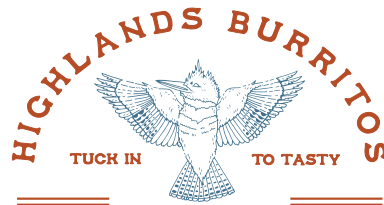
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A grant from the Mountain-top Rotary Club of Highlands and matching grant funds from Rotary district 7670 will enable the new RotarACT Club of Highlands to launch its first project.

The project has the goal to remove non-native invasive plant species in and around the town of Highlands, community roadways, and local non-profit owned properties. In addition to the benefits to our shared landscape, the primary motivation of this plan is to provide financial relief to working people of the community who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by employing them as workers in the project.

RotarACT President, Rachel Kinback said, "We are excited to launch our first project at a time when there is a great need. Many working people in Highlands and

surrounding towns have lost jobs or had their hours cut, and many did not receive a stimulus check. This means substantial financial burden and stress for many of our neighbors. Our club is passionate about providing financial assistance to those in need. This project will also provide a platform for something that we can do together to beautify and take pride in our town and help each other make it through a very difficult time" RotarACT's first Project Work Day will take place Saturday, September 12th. Workers will be asked for a time commitment of 9am-3pm. The club agreed that everyone working will be paid for a full 6 hours at \$15/hour in the form of a \$90 Ingles gift card. Lunch will be provided by Mountaintop Rotary. With the current amount of funding the project will be able to hire a maximum of 40 workers.

In coordination with Kyle Pursel of the Highlands Cashiers Land Trust the club has mapped the incidence of dangerous invasive species in the area to create the project plan. After first getting permission from the relevant land owners, the club will coordinate with other area non-profits to assemble invasive species removal squads that will remove the targeted species during the project work day.

INSERT THE INVASIVE SPECIES MAP.

If you are interested in working for the project, please send an email to the RotarACTclub at RotarACT828@gmail.com OR call/text 828.372.2640

If you would like to join RotarACT, volunteer to work on the project, or are willing to loan tools for the workday, please also reach out to us with an email.

Rotary and RotarACT members work side by side to take action through service. The Highlands RotarACT Community Club, sponsored by Mountaintop Rotary, was formed in 2020.

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• LETTERS •

Johnny Mercer from my hometown

Dear Editor,

Johnny Mercer was born in Savannah, Georgia November 18, 1909. He became very famous. There is a statue of Johnny Mercer located at Ellis Square in downtown Savannah. Johnny Mercer's niece and I worked at Belk-Lindsay in 1957. I sold boys clothes and she worked in the record department. We both attended Savannah High School. She was a senior and I was a sophomore. She was very pretty. However, I don't think she ever really knew my name.

Johnny Mercer wrote over 1500 songs. One of his many big hits was "Moon River." My cousin lived on Moon River. Moon River is in Savannah. The song was featured in "Breakfast at Tiffany's." His music is also in the movie "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" which was filmed in Savannah and he wrote the song "Days of Wine and Roses" for the movie "Days of Wine and Roses," (it won him 4 Oscars).

Just to list some of his songs you may recognize - You Must Have Been A Beautiful Baby, That Old Black Magic, Come Rain or Come Shine, Blues in the Night, Rock-A-Bye Your Baby, I'm In The Mood For Love, Summer Wind, Heartaches, Autumn Leaves, Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive, The Very Thought Of You, In The Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening, Jeepers Creepers, Fools Rush In (Where Angels Fear To Tread), P.S. I Love You, Lazybones. He wrote the lyrics for the Broadway Play, "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" (won a Tony Award). He also wrote "Set Em' Joe - One for My Baby and One for The Road" (penned on a napkin while sitting at a bar lamenting over a previous girlfriend), and of course many, many others.

Johnny Mercer and Bing Crosby were very close friends. Johnny was Bing's favorite song writer. Bing recorded over 100 of Johnny's songs.

Barry Manilow's first hit "Mandy" written by Johnny and named after Johnny's daughter. Johnny also wrote the song "Charade" for the movie "Charade" starring Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant.

1942 he founded Capital Records for \$25,000.00. He sold it 13 years later for \$20 million. One of the first singers he signed for Capital Records was Nat King Cole.

Those were some of "The Good Ole Days."

Kenny Youmans
Highlands

• See LETTERS page 8

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...LETTERS continued from page 7 Floating Columnists

Dear Editor,

The August 27th weekly column Spiritually Speaking, struck me as unusual. I have long had the opinion that this author's contributions routinely don't match the theme and spirit of the column headline "Spiritually Speaking." It seems to me that this person's opinions would better belong in the general Letters to the Editor section.

**B. Renfro
Highlands**

What happened to the separation of church and state?

Dear Editor,

In your August 27th edition I read the Spiritually Speaking column with some measure of surprise. It began with a subtle critique against the separation of church and state and went on to discuss some questions a politician once asked, to decry them, and seemed perhaps even to equate a vote for that politician's party with the country choosing to divorce itself from God. "Christian faith and love have been eroding away in America for decades," it lamented, "will we officially finalize a divorce from God?"

I finished the column in confusion. Some years ago, one of the Great Courses books on American history brought to my attention the fact that "separation of church and state" was first created by the Puritans "in hopes of maintaining the purity of the Puritan church against a corrupt state, not vice versa!" The Puritans worried that the baseness of politics would divide the church community, damage the bonds of kinship it seeks to build, and leave outsiders feeling unwelcome at the table of God. My childhood church in Highlands, and a number of the other churches in the area with which I had contact in my youth, seemed to operate on this principle as well. Even church politics were largely set aside; vacation bible school was run by another denomination but was no less welcoming for it. The article thus left me uncertain; am I reading correctly that this spiritual advice column is advocating a particular political position?

I recently moved home after a number of years living in Germany. The current incarnation of German churches are still closely affiliated with the state. Citizens register their faith with the government and their church contribution, rather than being put into the collection plate on Sunday, is taken out in their taxes. This leads to a sometimes incestuous dynamic of church leaders being involved in government and government leaders having greater impact on the church.

In learning of it, I discovered a part of my Americanness in my instinctive horror at the prospect of declaring one's faith to the government for tax purposes. It was thus with some measure of satisfaction that I could speak about the American practice of separating church and state and the wisdom I saw in it. In our system churches don't play politics, and as a result they are free from the risk of politics deciding to play with the church.

It is thus very concerning to me to return home and find that even our very spiritual leaders question the idea of keeping church and state separate. It is an idea whose origins are often forgotten however, and as such I would suggest that before we consider mixing politics into our spiritual speakings, it might be worth pausing to consider the places this can lead and the wisdom of our nation's founders in choosing to avoid it. I think we would be wise to remember that it is the Church, not the government, that we are intending most vigorously to defend. After all, if faith and love have been eroding in America, might our judgment of others for their political beliefs not be a part of the cause?

I'm left believing that the sanctity of our sanctuaries is in part dependent on our ability to make our neighbors feel truly welcome in them. To do this, and to better love our God and our neighbors as Christians are called to do, we must remember that these calls to love are more important than all else. Perhaps even more important than politics.

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• WORD MATTER •

Two Priorities for America

I wrote recently about wants, needs and expectations for both individuals and society. This prompted me to consider two issues, to which our society needs to pay more attention.

I love America. I served my country as a young man and still, over fifty-five years later, consider the four years I spent in the United States Air Force to have been important in developing my values and priorities in life.

I consider myself a capitalist, but one with a heart. I believe entrepreneurial risk should be rewarded and I believe in the opportunities inherent in the system. It also needs to work for all Americans

I've made it to old age. I've been blessed with wonderful children, a loving family, a modestly successful career and the best possible partner with whom I get to share my life.

All that said, I'm a passionate supporter of public education and believe a well-funded, fully accessible system should one of our top priorities.

I also believe cradle-to-grave healthcare to be a right for all Americans.

These two ideas – quality education for our young and quality healthcare, especially for our elderly – should be front and center in American life. Let me say it another way; we, all of us, should ensure an excellent experience for the first twenty years of life and the last twenty years of life for all Americans.

There are two reasons I've arrived at this conclusion. The first is that in too many instances, underpaid teachers have to either purchase school supplies for their students out of their own pockets or have to beg others to help them do this. I'm sorry, but this is unconscionable. It's like EMTs in America having to bring their own medical supplies to their jobs.

We live in the wealthiest nation in the world, but for some reason we don't want to fund a public education system that prepares children, mostly from middle- and lower-income families, to get into college in order to meet the employment requirements of a competitive global economy.

The second has to do with the impossible costs associated with assisted living and skilled-nursing care, again, mostly for our nation's lower- to middle-income and infirm elderly, and that includes our veterans.



Bud Katz

It may not have registered, but these people are our parents and grandparents. Who am I kidding? In many cases they're us.

I've seen this personally. Most of those caring for people in private or family-funded assisted living communities individually earn at or below the federal poverty level. Poor people, many of whom need second jobs just to get by, are caring for our sick and old people.

Sure, some of these people can access Medicare and Medicaid, but both of these well-intentioned programs are woefully under-funded and demographic trends are unfavorable for these populations being able to consider a safe and dignified existence later in life.

I know. Socialism. Those of us who are 'haves' can't see ourselves supporting 'others' who are 'have nots.' We seem comfortable looking away from the needs – not the wants, mind you, but the needs – of those who aren't as fortunate as we are. We say things like "Let their families take care of them." Or, "I worked hard for what I have. Why should I give it away to others?" We dismiss matters such as poverty and inequality as if it isn't really our concern.

Have we always been so selfish, so greedy, and so obviously unconcerned with the needs of others?

Too many of us believe it is up to someone else – who, I don't have a clue – to fund quality public education for the children, and a dignified old age for the grandparents of the poor.

We don't believe WE should be taxed at a higher level so those on the lower rungs can enjoy a "free ride" or an "easy trip" through life.

What "FREE ride," or "EASY trip?" How about a child's chance at a future, and a safe, dignified existence in later life?

To be sure, these are complicated issues. They require empathy and consideration for the plight of others. They require an understanding of how our economic system, which works wonders for those of us at the top, needs to be retooled just a bit so the rest of us have a shot.

How about an America where ALL children can experience a world-class education, and ALL elderly can enjoy a soft landing in old age?

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ALL ABOUT BOOKS

• INK PENN •

A Short History of Sleuthing Novels

Who wrote the first murder mystery? An article in the Wall Street Journal gives the credit to Sophocles. Amanda Foreman, author of the article “Sleuthing through the ages,” says Oedipus Rex, dating back to 429 BC, is in essence a tale of sleuthing. Oedipus resolves to discover who murdered Laius. That makes Oedipus the sleuth. The twist is that it turns out to be Oedipus who unwittingly killed Laius—his father—and also unwittingly married his mother. A tangled web indeed.

Next, murder mysteries appeared in China, where magistrate literature was developed during the Song dynasty circa 960 – 1279. In these tales, it was judges who told stories of their cases. From there, we move to German author E.T.A. Hoffmann, whom the author credits with turning amateurs into sleuths. The heroine in

one of his novellas is an elderly writer who helps with a murder case involving stolen jewelry. Perhaps she was the prototype for Miss Marple.

It’s not long, though, before Ms. Foreman gets to Edgar Allan Poe “who is generally regarded as the godfather of detective fiction.” It’s hard to believe Poe wrote “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” in 1841, and people are still reading it today. He too featured an amateur sleuth, August Dupin.

And then, of course, Arthur Conan Doyle appears on the scene with Sherlock Holmes. He is quite possibly the longest enduring character in the mystery genre. The last Holmes story was published in 1927, and by then “the Golden Age” of British crime fiction was in full swing.”



Kathy Manos Penn

Sherlock Holmes may pre-date Miss Marple and Hercule Poirot, but they too are enduring characters both in print and on film. Both have their peculiarities, though neither is addicted to cocaine as is Sherlock. Dame Agatha’s mysteries are genteel.

Not so, the novels by Americans authors Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. Their writing is described as “hard-boiled social realism . . . [where- in] dead bodies in libraries are replaced by bloody corpses in cars.”

The article goes on to mention spy novels and psychological thrillers of today as merely two of the many subgenres that have sprung from the original murder mystery. When I think of spy novels, I think of authors John Le Carre, Eric Lustbader, and

Robert Ludlum to name only a few.

I had to turn to the internet for a list of 25 thriller titles and was surprised to see how few I’ve read. Several seem promising and are going on my library list: “The Guest List,” “Stillhouse Lake,” and “In a Dark, Dark Wood.” I did read “The Silence of the Lambs.” Didn’t everyone? And I read “The Girl on the Train” and “Gone Girl,” but didn’t care for the latter. I want at least one likable character in my books.

So, I’m back to my favorite refrain, “So many books, so little time,” written by, of all people, Frank Zappa. Not a bad problem to have.

• Author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her Dickens & Christie cozy mystery series on Amazon. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com.

...DEBATE continued from page 1

longtime N.C. political reporter, radio host and podcaster. The questions focused on international, national, state and urban issues.

Aisha Adams poised the first question to Madison Cawthorn.

“You’ve been accused of sexual assault. What do you say to women, Black and brown people, LGBTQIA people,” she asked.

“I won’t lie to you: in high school and after, I did try to kiss a girl – I kissed many girls – and some of my attempts failed. But I believe there is a large difference between a failed attempt versus sexual assault.” Cawthorn went on to “categorically deny being a white nationalist.”

And while he said over and over he wanted to bring people together regardless of their political party, at one point even saying, “I want to get rid of the two-party structure that’s tearing us apart,” Cawthorn said in response to Adams’ first question, “What is it about the Democratic party that makes them want to engage in character assassination?”

Pete Kaliner followed Adams’ question by listing many insults Davis has hurled at Cawthorn, Trump and GOP on social media asking about the divisions they cause. “Those examples are in contrast to

your promise to represent all residents of the 11th district,” he said.

Davis responded by explaining his comments about Cawthorn were to show voters who he is away from politics.

Recently messages from Cawthorn to a friend have been made public in which Cawthorn refers to his friend by using the N-word. Western Carolina University made national headlines after students’ social media posts went viral in which they used the word in the same fashion as Cawthorn. The students in the videos were expelled permanently from WCU.

When asked about his use of the language, Cawthorn responded that he had used a “Variation of the n-word that ends with -a,” offering a modicum of regret before returning fire on Davis that these personal attacks were a deflection from Davis not wanting to talk about his policy positions.

In attempt to return the debate back to policy Mark Barrett asked each candidate, “To what extent do you believe human activity is causing climate change?”

Cawthorn responded by explaining that Climate Change is something he believes in. “This is one area where I differ from many conservatives,” he said. “However, the Green New Deal is a joke,” he said.

Cawthorn criticized the Green New Deal because he believes it would create an unacceptable level of debt, that it is unsustainable, and because it would not do anything to boost the economy.

“I see myself as a green conservative,” said Cawthorn. “I want clean air, livable temperatures and I want ‘all of the above’ strategy for green power. I think we need to reform rules and policies that delay rollout of new technologies. But we have to be able to afford it without taking on more debt.”

Davis however, lists on his website that he supports the Green New Deal. “I do believe in climate change. I do believe in science,” said Davis. “Fourteen of our 17 counties in this area are above the national average in poverty. Green economy is the best path forward out of that. Green energy also good for national security.”

Barrett also asked candidates their stance on what role Congress should take regarding police violence toward Black Americans?

Addressing claims that he supports defunding the police, accusations Cawthorn has made against him, Davis explained that is far from the truth.

“I have a background in law enforcement and I support it,” said Davis. “Whoever came up with the label ‘Defund the

Police” did a huge disservice to the intent. It does a huge disservice and is a lay-up for the other side. I have attended peaceful Black Live Matters marches and I have attended Back the Blue Rallies, because when elected, I will represent everyone. I do think we need to look at what we want law enforcement to be doing and give them the training and tools to do those things. Serving in law enforcement has a lot in common with serving in military. I’d like to see us have something akin to the GI Bill for first-responders and law enforcement. You don’t do it to get rich. In the military you have to get rid of folks who don’t live up to standards. You have to do the same with law enforcement.”

He also said issues like substance abuse should be a mental health issue, not a criminal justice issue.

Cawthorn denounced President Trump’s response to Black Live Matters protests across the country and explained that he does not support the President in that regard.

“We have to treat every person in the country with respect,” said Cawthorn. “Of course, Black Lives Matter. I was disappointed in the President’s response to George Floyd’s death. I represent myself

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It's the Only Thing

"What the world needs now, is love sweet love. It's the only thing that there's just too little of."

If I was a judge on one of those singing shows, I would have to hit that obnoxious buzzer. Don't get me wrong, I loved Jackie deShannon's version of that song in the 60s, but there's an error in the lyrics. Yes, we need more love, now more than ever, but it's not the **ONLY** thing of which there's too little.

Highlands town limits is comprised of only 6.2 square miles. According to the 1880 census, there were 82 people living IN the town limits. The Town of Highlands was formed in 1875, but between 1880 and 1900, the town population grew to 233, an average of 7.5 people per year. The largest jump (so far) was between 1980(653 pop) to 1990 (948 pop). We dropped to 909 in 2000, and up slightly in 2010 to 924. What will the 2020 census show? I'm guessing a big jump, and this only shows the people IN the town limits.

Macon County is 520 square miles, and in 2010 had 33,922 population. The biggest jump (again, so far) was between 1970-1980 with an average of 439 NEW residents per year.

The United States has 92.9 people per square mile, Macon County has 58, and the town limits of Highlands has 149 people per square mile. YIKES! Holy Pop the weasel, Batman!

Back to the "What the world needs now" song. We DO need love, sweet love, and now, more than ever, but what Macon County and our little hamlet of Highlands needs is more land. Everyone knows the top three things you look for when buying a property is location, location, location, but we also know the **ONE** thing we won't see is more land. What we have is **ALL** we have.

A portion of the land in Macon County will never be developed. (Dare I say NEVER?). A big part of this is because of the lands owned by the United States Forest Service, another part is due to legacy planning. Thanks to the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, over 3,200



Jeannie Chambers
Chambers Realty &
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acres will never be developed.

According to the Macon County website (maconnc.org) since 2010, planning and studies were done to try to address the problem of the potential of building on steep slopes. Landslides could become a big problem if building is done without regulations. Nobody likes regulations, and I'm sure some properties would be considered worthless if too regulated. The plan was that slopes of 40% or more would have to have engineered plans

by a licensed professional. In other words, building on a steep slope can be very costly from the planning to the proper foundation to the finished product. Unfortunately, costs don't deter some from building on steep slopes.

There are two takeaways from this article. 1) If you want to see more land protected in perpetuity, BUY MORE LAND, and donate it to the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust. 2) If you want property to "build on someday" or to buffer property you already own, BUY LAND TODAY.

Why? Because if there's one thing we know for sure, it's that ... (cue in Jackie deShannon singing) "It's the only thing that there's just too little of."

Highlands (inside the town limits AND the whole of the Highlands Township) is seeing some of the largest number of "land grabs" we've seen in many years. By land grab, I'm talking about the number of properties being sold, not just large parcels. There are still large parcels available in this area, with the majority of them prime for development. What do YOU want to see for the Highlands landscape in the next 50 years? It's time to buy land to protect the future.

Jeannie and Tucker Chambers are owner/brokers of Chambers Realty & Vacation Rentals. They love to share Highlands history with others while renting or selling the homes they represent. Find them at 401 N. Fifth Street, or visit their website: highlandsiscalling.com

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Fall Home Improvement - 2020

What to Grow in the Southern Fall Garden

By Kathleen Roberts
Master Gardener

Do you ever wonder what to grow in the southern fall garden? Some people think that fall is the time to clean up the garden before winter begins. However, there are many things that will grow well in the fall. If you live in the south, you have even

more options for a fall garden.

Fall Gardening

Many people find gardening in the fall to be very satisfying. With cooler temperatures and fewer insects, the home gardener can spend more time enjoying the garden and less time maintaining it.

In the south, garden-

ing can be similar to spring gardening. Plants that thrive in cooler temperatures are the best choice for the fall garden. Your fall garden planting schedule can include vegetables as well as flowers. Trees bursting with fall colors are enhanced by beautiful blooms and unique foliage of fall shrubs and perennials. Your dinner

table can also be bursting with the fresh harvest of fall vegetables. What could be more satisfying?

Know what to Grow in the Southern Fall Garden

As with any other type of gardening, it is important to know what to grow in the southern fall garden. Growing the right plants will assure your success and

make you more likely to continue fall gardening year after year.

Shrubs

Often shrubs that bloom abundantly in the spring or summer will also re-bloom in the fall. Even those that don't bloom a second time often provide a stunning display of fall colored foliage to brighten

your landscape. Some examples of shrubs that provide color in the fall include:

Azalea - This shrub prefers cool, partially shaded spots in your yard. Some varieties will bloom in the spring and then re-bloom in the fall.

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Fall Home Improvement - 2020

to draw attention from passers-by when you have fall blooming hydrangeas in shades of white, pink and blue.

Caryopteris - This beautiful shrub is great as a hedge or for cut flowers from mid-summer through fall, and also a great selection for your fall butterfly garden.

Virginia Sweetspire - An incredible show al-

most year-round, you will love springs white blooms as well as the burgundy blaze of its fall foliage.

Perennials

There are countless perennials that bloom in the southern fall garden. Here are just a few for you to consider:

Asters - Plant this flower in full sun and enjoy a variety of colors from late summer well into fall.

Clematis - Another flower that offers a wide range of color from late summer into mid-fall. You'll have a hard time choosing just one with colors ranging from white to blue to red.

Echinacea - Known for its medicinal qualities, Echinacea also provides beautiful color in the southern fall garden. You aren't just limited to the

well known purple variety; shades of white, pink and orange will light up your landscape as well as gracing your home with lovely fresh cut flowers.

Vegetables

If you'd like to continue harvesting fresh vegetables from your garden, you will find that fall is a great time for growing vegetables in the south. Many vegetable varieties prefer

the cooler temperatures of fall while thriving in the still warm soil. As an added bonus, you are less likely to find bugs eating more of your crop than you are. Here are some great fall selections;

Tomatoes - You don't have to go back to the cardboard, grocery store tomatoes just yet. Plant young tomato plants now and you can continue enjoying them

in your salads until the first frost.

Herbs - Fall is a wonderful time to plant an herb garden. Plant it close to your kitchen and enjoy the fresh flavor that they provide for months to come. Best choices include basil, parsley and cilantro.

Salad greens - Leaf lettuce, spinach and chard

• See GARDEN page 18

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...BUDGET continued from page 1

more to expand Medicaid, support small businesses, pay our educators, assist with rent and utilities relief and further help unemployed North Carolinians," he said.

The Department of Revenue will issue the checks to every family in the state no later than Dec. 15. In order to get a check, individuals need to file a 2019 state income tax return by Oct. 15. To be eligible, families also need to be a resident for the entire 2019 calendar year and report at least one child who is 17 and under on their state tax form.

"Families in North Carolina were catapulted into an unprecedented situation in March when COVID19 changed the day-to-day for all of us," said Representative Kevin Corbin. "We know this money will not begin to cover everything associated with unexpected childcare costs, but it's one of many ways the most recent budget passed in the legislation will help the hardworking families in our state."

There's no rule mandating how the funds have to be spent. The amount is a flat rate -- households that make between \$50,000 and \$500,000 will receive the same amount. If you get your state income tax return by direct deposit, you will get your \$335 in that man-

ner. Otherwise, it will be mailed to the address associated with your state income tax return.

Rep. Corbin also touted the budget's additional funding for broadband under the GREAT Grant program, which will provide funding for internet in rural areas such as Macon County. The program provides matching grants for companies to expand broadband.

"I asked for an additional \$100 million for the GREAT program, because I believe that is what our state needs to address connectivity problems right now," said Rep. Corbin. "While this \$30 million isn't as much as I would have hoped, it does mean that 25,000 – 30,000 North Carolinians in the rural corners of North Carolina will now have the opportunity to receive broadband. This is essential for our working families and for students across the state who began this school year with remote learning."

The Coronavirus Relief Act 3.0 includes:

- \$200/month increase in unemployment benefits
- \$35 million for child care centers
- \$8 million to help working parents offset child care costs
- \$20 million for community-based organizations to provide vir-

tual learning

- \$75 million for Personal Proactive Equipment (PPE)
- \$34 million for testing and tracing
- \$10 million for internet connectivity for students
- \$30 million for the GREAT program to improve rural broadband
- A hold harmless provision for school districts that see declining enrollment
- \$20 million for COVID-19 treatment for the uninsured
- \$45 million for a small business grant program
- \$44.5 million for hurricane recovery from four major storms
- \$5 million to promote safe access to in-person voting
- \$115 million total increase for education
- \$17 million in grants for exceptional children's services
- \$50 million for Lost Wages Assistance Program
- \$38 million for behavioral health
- Expands eligibility for Opportunity Scholarships
- Bipartisan priorities like the PPE+NC program
- Elimination of education wait lists for kids with disabilities
- Higher enrollment in virtual education options for families

...DEBATE continued from page 10

as an outsider, as someone who's going to come in and disrupt the system."

Though Cawthorn said he doesn't like the way the president treated George Floyd's death, he insisted that his opponent secretly believes in a literal interpretation of "defunding the police" and questioned the efficacy of a social worker responding in a situation where one needs law enforcement.

Addressing healthcare, Adams asked Cawthorn "You say you want to be the face of health care, what do you think needs to be done so that people get the health care they need?"

"Our system has to be reformed," Cawthorn said. "I don't think anyone even knows what the Republican strategy is for health care. I do know that free market has never been able to work in health care. Right now, Blue Cross Blue Shield has virtual monopoly in North Carolina and they don't have to compete with anyone. I believe that we need to fix that. I want you to have more choices. My opponent wants to introduce a public option and I believe that would make the consumer market so small it wouldn't be viable. Then we would end up having a system

like Canada."

Davis explained that he believes the public option is the best strategy for America.

"I am for a public option in regards to health insurance," said Davis. "Six out of 10 personal bankruptcies in this country are caused by medical debt. We spend the most in the world on health care and a huge number of people don't have coverage. I also believe that we must decouple health care from employment."

Interviews with candidates will be published in the coming weeks.

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

A new day will dawn

By Pastor Curtis Fussell
First Presbyterian Church

Since March, the life of the church has been abridged. Due to the pandemic, no in-person worship services. No funerals in the sanctuary, only graveside services. Weddings cancelled or drastically scaled down.

Such actions show wisdom in being cautious before the danger we face. The Session will not put the Lord to the test. Your pastors will not announce, "Jesus will protect us."

Rather, the pastors might say, "Take up your cross and follow Jesus." Perhaps, that sounds too dramatic. But such a remark sets out an invitation to compel us forward. The cross of Jesus proclaims our hope and assurance for new life over against the powers of death.

Yes, a new day will dawn and new life will spring up among us once more. As people of Jesus' resurrection, we live with hope for new life over against the present threat.

A Lutheran pastor, Martin Rinkart, began to serve a church in Eilenburg, Germany, in 1617, at the beginning of the Thirty Year's War in 1618. For the next thirty years, Rinkart lived in that besieged city where famine and disease repeatedly plagued the people.


At one point, Rinkart was the only pastor left in the city. Sometimes, he was burying as many as 40 people a day! His city was sacked three times by invaders. A plague struck his town in 1637, killing 8,000 people, including Rinkart's wife. Yet, during this time, Rinkart composed 66 hymns.

One of these hymns we know quite well, "Now Thank We All Our God." It was originally written, not as a hymn, but as a prayer for his family at the evening meal.

The first lines of this prayer, words of thanksgiving, simply astound us, when we think of their context in the midst of such hardships: "Now thank we all our God... who... hath blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today."

Then, this prayer draws us to trust in God over against the

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 18



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Wed: Choir: 6p

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

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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• BUSINESS/ORG NEWS •

CHHS feeds 112 animals needing food assistance



The Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society fed 112 animals in our community this past weekend with a free pet food drive-thru at the Cashiers-Glenville Recreation Center. More than 1,700 pounds of dog food, cat food, and treats were distributed to animal-loving families in need. Based on zip codes provided by donation recipients, pet owners from Cashiers, Cullowhee, Glenville, Highlands, Sapphire, Sylva, Tuckasegee and Webster all traveled to the event for much-needed food assistance.

...GARDEN continued from page 13

love cooler temperatures. You likely enjoyed fresh from the garden salads this past spring. Now that fall is near you can enjoy them again!

Cold weather crops - Vegetables like broccoli and kale

also thrive in cooler temperatures. Bugs are less likely to invade at this time of year, leaving more for you to enjoy.

Squash - Summer squash can still be harvested in the fall as well as varieties that can be stored

through the winter such as acorn squash. Depending on where in the south you live, you won't need much to get you through until the time comes to begin again in the spring.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 16

hardships: "O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us; and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills in this world and the next."

Walter Brueggemann has noted that the context of these words, "...not unlike our own, was a scene of relentless death. Yet Rinkart wrote and sang of thanks! ...of "this bounteous God." We can picture pastor Rinkart with his children counting out, one by one,

"countless gifts of love." The hymn invites us to cling to God's grace that "frees us of all ills" in all imaginable futures. The words are as sure, bold, and as awe-filled" as the best Palms of praise to God. Brueggemann goes on to say that Rinkart's prayer reminds us to engage in relentless and uncompromising hope in God. Such hope is more than, "We will get through this." Rather, behind the devastation, we have faith that God will bring God's creation to wellbeing.

This faith, which compels us

forward, enables us to serve as witnesses of God's steadfast love. Such a witness is performed by words and actions involving neighborly hospitality, calm minds, and wise actions.

We affirm that faith is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Such faith will not yield to death's power. In faith we affirm God's power at work against the powers of death. Still, it humbles us to know that God entrusts such faith to feeble people like us.

growth coming. Our utility decisions have to be carefully reviewed in the coming months. They will impact potential growth and development. How and to what extent should Highlands grow? Or should we grow at all? Those are some of the questions facing Highlands.

and upgrades like those previously cited. The town is also facing major waterline replacements projects within the town. In addition, town sewer has not been built out to all its all its citizens. Town taxpayers would likely see their needs as priorities.

I don't have all the answers, but I do see the pressures of

...CENSUS continued from page 1

sooner than previously announced.

Governor Roy Cooper joined a bipartisan coalition of governors from Colorado, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Oregon, Vermont and Washington to urge the US Census Bureau to extend the Census through Oct. 31 to help ensure a complete count.

In a signed letter to U.S. Dept. of Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross and U.S. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham, Governor Cooper and the other governors outlined concerns about the decision to end 2020 Census Count operations a month early, which could jeopardize efforts to get a complete and accurate population count as required by the U.S. Constitution every 10 years.

"Your recent announcement calls into question how millions of Americans who have yet to fill out their 2020 Census will be counted. It is surprising to hear how optimistic the Census Bureau is about being able to reach 100% in less than 60 days, given the current daily self-response rate and the fact that, as of the writing of this letter, only 63% of the country has responded to the 2020 Census," Gov. Cooper and the other governors wrote in the letter. "By your own calculations made when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the October 31 date is crucial for the Census Bureau to meet its constitutional obligation and do it in a way that does not jeopardize the public health."

This year's count will impact how congressional districts are split up and how \$1.5 trillion in federal spending is distributed annually.

North Carolina stands to potentially pick up an additional congressional seat during the next round of reapportionment, if a proper population is completed.

As of July 31, 41 percent of North Carolina households — an estimated 4 million residents — had not yet completed the 2020 Census. A potential undercount could put North Carolina at risk of losing \$7.4 billion per year for health care, education, highways,

community services, economic development, disaster recovery and more over the next decade.

North Carolinians most at risk of being undercounted live in rural counties, which make up approximately 80 percent of the state. This includes military families, eastern counties impacted by recent natural disasters and communities with already limited access to health care.

A complete and accurate Census count could bring \$1,823 per person per year in federal and state funds back to North Carolina communities, funding Macon County Manager Derek Roland said is crucial in helping the state's most vulnerable populations.

"It's important for everyone to complete the 2020 Census," said Roland. "The few minutes it takes to complete will have a lasting impact on Macon County and funding opportunities we have moving forward."

Roland explained that state and federal funding grants and opportunities are based on population and demographics, so having an accurate count for Macon County is important.

"If a grant requires that we meet a certain population or demographic such as percentage of elderly, to qualify for funding — it doesn't matter if we know we have that many people if it isn't reflected on the Census," said Roland. "We won't get another chance for another decade, which makes it so important for everyone to fill it out this year."

At 77.1 percent, North Carolina ranks among the bottom 10 states in terms of survey completion rate, outpacing only Louisiana, South Carolina, Mississippi, Montana, Arizona, Alabama, Georgia, and New Mexico.

Households across North Carolina are also self-responding at a lower rate than the nation as a whole, according to the census bureau. While 61 percent of North Carolina households have already completed the survey by phone, online, or mail, nationally that figure stands at 65.1 percent.

For more info, visit 2020census.gov or call 844-330-2020.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

New sewer and water connections outside the town limits could trigger widespread growth which the town has no control over since the county doesn't have equivalent zoning. Additional expansion would generate more costs for expanding our water and sewer facilities, not to mention future maintenance

...CHAMPS continued from page 1

Dirtbags, sponsored by Stephen L. Lucas CPA and Carolyn Raby, win Highlands Rec Adult Softball Champions.

— Photo by Brian O'Shea



some payback and beat Mountaintop. In round four, they defeated 2nd place First Baptist Church and then moved on to the Championship, said Norris.

Norris said the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the start of the league this season but did not cause any serious disruptions.

"We didn't play as many games because we got started late," said Norris. "We had to wait until the Governor went to Phase

2. Only thing that really affected us was the rain."

The league had seven teams this season with games on Mondays and Thursdays. With so many events cancelled because of COVID, Norris said the league was a great way to get outside.

"I think it was a big hit," he said. "A lot of people are picking it up because there's nothing else to do."

The Highlands Rec Adult Softball League runs from June through mid-August. Anyone can join and teams need a minimum of 15 people. For more information, email Norris at lester.norris@highlandsc.org.

The Dirtbags are sponsored by Stephen L. Lucas CPA and Carolyn Raby. The Pizza Place is sponsored by, you guessed it, The Pizza Place.

• POLICE & FIRE •

Highlands Police entries from July 26. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

July 26

• At 4:29 p.m., officers cited a driver for failing to pay a civil citation of parking in a "No Parking" space.

Aug. 26

• At 5:13 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident in Highlands Plaza.

Aug. 27

• At 11:30 p.m., officers responded to a 1-vehicle accident on Main Street.

Aug. 30

• At 2:25 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on US 64 east and Carolina Way.

Aug. 31

• At 10:30 a.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on US 64 east and Laurel Street.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Sept. 1.

Sept. 1

• At 8:14 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Big View Drive.

Sept. 2

• At 9:49 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a power line down on NC 106.

• At 10:38 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Big View Drive.

Sept. 5

• At 8:13 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Main Street.

• At 10:15 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Arnold Road.

• At 4:57 p.m., the dept. helped Glenville Rescue carry a person off the Whiteside Mountain Trail.

• At 7:10 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Buckberry Road

Sept. 6

• At 11:03 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Spring Street.

• At 5:52 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mirror Lake Road.

• At 5:59 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clearview Lane.

• At 7:03 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Bonnie Drive.

I wear a mask to keep working.



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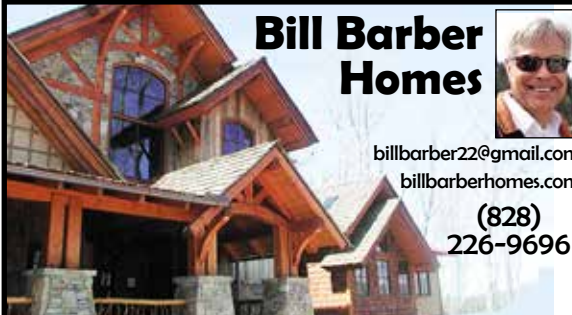
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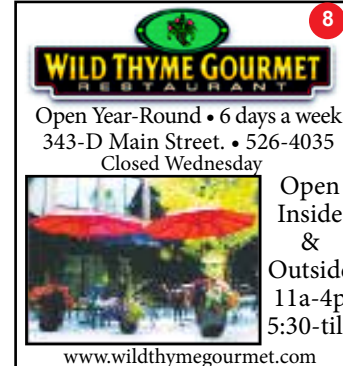


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