

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 17, Number 2

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Thurs., Jan. 14, 2021

Besides COVID, here's what happened in Highlands in 2020

Though the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic colored all aspects of life in the world, coun-

try, state, county and the town of Highlands, a lot of business got done and many issues regarding life

in Highlands were addressed.

January

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Fate of proposed Cashiers Hillside project still unclear

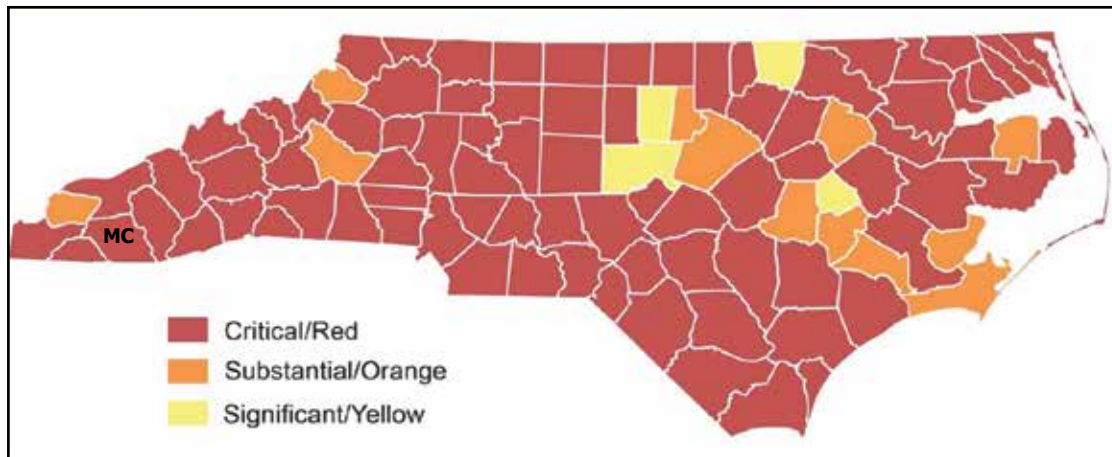
By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Discussions continued on Wednesday, Jan. 6 to determine the fate of Cashiers Hillside, the proposed 57-acre multiuse development planned for the southeastern corner of the Crossroads, the intersection of Hwy 64 and Hwy 107.

The project's future currently rests on the shoulders of the Cashiers Area Community Planning Council who are tasked with deciding whether to approve a Special Use Permit application from the project's developer, Ma-cauley Investments.

However, the Council did not discuss how the development

• See HILLSIDE page 5



Macon County Health Director, Kathy McGaha said of the change, "Macon County is seeing a continued surge of COVID-19 positive individuals as a result of holiday gatherings. This surge is affecting the entire community, including businesses, churches, agencies, etc. We need the community to do everything it can to slow the surge of COVID-19 by wearing masks, avoiding in-person social gatherings, and when it is your turn – get vaccinated."

84 of NC's 100 counties are in the red: 'critical community spread;' Gov. extends executive order

North Carolina's governor and top health official issued their most pointed warnings on Wednesday as COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to surge to levels not seen before during the pandemic.

At a news conference from the Emergency Operations Center, Governor Roy Cooper extended his current modified Stay-at-Home order at least until Friday, Jan. 29

Cooper praised hospitals for

managing the crisis amid growing capacity issues, but warned if and when hospitals get stretched even more, a stricter Stay-At-Home order like earlier lockdowns could be put in place – don't

• See CRITICAL page 5

Phase 1B vaccinations begin

Macon County Public Health is announcing that it will begin to vaccinate those eligible under Phase 1B, Group 1 starting this week.

This group includes those who are 75 years of age or older, regardless of health status.

Those who are eligible under this phase, and want to receive a vaccination, can call 828-349-2517 to schedule an appointment.

For now, vaccine appointments will ONLY be at Macon County Public Health located at 1830 Lakeside Drive in Franklin, and will be conducted through a drive-thru clinic Tues., Wed., and Fri. from 10a to 3p.

Highlands Mayor Pat Taylor, HC Hospital CEO/CNO Tom Neal, and the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation are trying to initiate a plan to have vaccinations given in Highlands, too, but details are still being worked out. MC Public Health asks for patience at this time.

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Clearing COVID-19 vaccination hurdles

I wrote about COVID vaccination issues last week. Let me share what has happened since then. I've been following discussions on social media concerning how a program needs to be setup on the plateau. This week I was in discussions with folks from the Macon County Health Department, the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation and the Highlands Cashiers Hospital.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

I want to salute Tom Neal, the Chief Executive Officer of the Highlands Cashiers Hospital for his leadership in working for a community vaccination program on the plateau. He has used his expertise in getting the ball moving.

Tom hosted a Zoom meeting on Monday afternoon that included folks from the Macon County Health Department, the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation, the Jackson County Health Department, the Highlands Pharmacy and the Highlands Cashiers Hospital. I represented the town of Highlands.

These folks form a core group for developing the program. Creating an off-site vaccination program will not be easy.

There are a lot of moving parts that have to be brought into a systematic program. It can't be done overnight. This past Monday meeting was a start, and more will be scheduled.

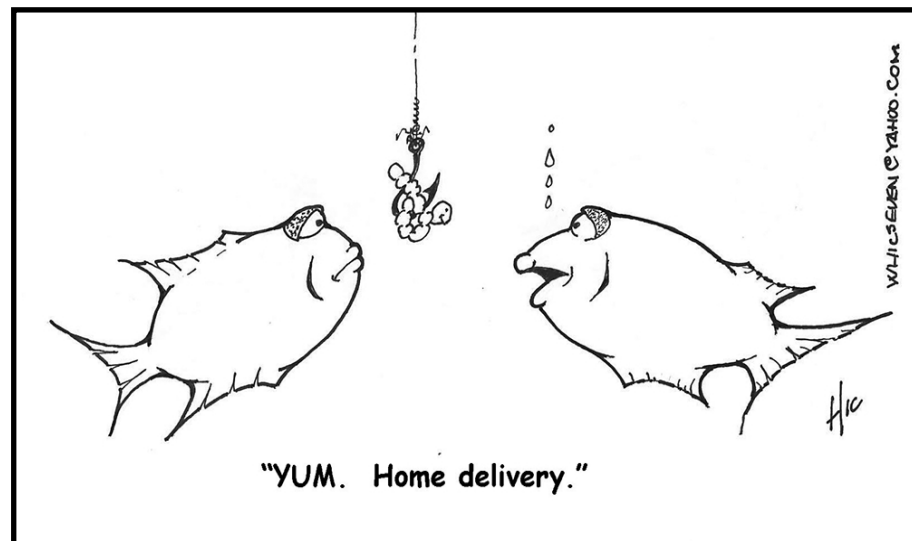
The Macon County Health Department is the lead agency in this initiative. Like all county health departments, they are the entry point for shipments of vaccines to the county. So far, the health department has received limited deliveries from the state. The startup of the county program has been measured in that vaccines supplies for this first shot have to be balanced with doing a course of second doses. County health departments throughout the state have had to stretch their resources by having to quickly develop large vaccination programs and also provide other critical health services.

Yesterday, Phase 1B got underway at the health department with vaccinations for folks 75 and older. Phase 1B at the health department is a drive through process. Eligible people can call (828) 349-2517, the COVID call center, for information on how to register and schedule an appointment. At the present time vaccinations will be given on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10a to 3p.

The primary challenge for setting up a vaccination site here on the plateau will center around procuring additional vaccine. A potential complicating factor is the number of people continuing to stay in the area. A high number of seasonal residents in the county have remained, but presently the state is allocating vaccine based on the number of permanent residents. Kathy McGaha, the director of the health department, is in discussions with state officials to change that allocation formula to meet this unique situation.

A challenge for a community vaccination program here on the plateau will be to form a group of volunteers who can work on the administrative processes. There will also be a need for retired medical personnel who can give the vaccinations. It will take about 15 to 20 people to operate the vaccination site. It will require coordination, but I know this community can meet the challenge.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• LETTER •

A Christmas Success

Dear Editor,





The first Christmas ornament fund raiser sponsored by Dusty's Rhodes Superette is proud to announce that \$3,610 has been raised for the Highlands Food Pantry!!

We want to thank all of our wonderful patrons and supporters for their generosity amid this year of turmoil. Your support will benefit many in our community through the food bank in days to come.

A Special thanks to the Highland Hiker, our local newspapers, and to all of the elves who made this fundraiser so successful. Happy New Year to all!!

— From all of us at Dusty's

• WEATHER •

| Thu, 14-Jan | Fri, 15-Jan | Sat, 16-Jan | Sun, 17-Jan |
|---|--|--|--|
|  56°F 31°F |  48°F 22°F |  32°F 20°F |  42°F 25°F |
| Brilliant sunshine | Some sun | Mainly cloudy and colder | Clouds and sun; not as cold |
| RealFeel® High: 60° Low: 19° | RealFeel® High: 48° Low: 32° | RealFeel® High: 24° Low: 17° | RealFeel® High: 43° Low: 18° |

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... 2020 continued from page 1

- Select Bank is coming to Highlands at Entegra location on Carolina Way.
- Highlands School brings back alumni basketball game tradition
- Migrant workers get mobile health clinic
- Gun Sanctuary debate comes to Macon County
- The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation is born.
- Gibbins Advisors named monitor of Mission Health
- Historic Marker erected for Highlander Fletcher Wolfe in his hometown of Norlina.

February

- HF & R names Davis Picklesimer Firefighter of the Year.
- HS girls varsity Basketball team is Regular Conference Champs
- HCA's billing system raises concerns in district
- Rape victims struggle to get services at HCA
- NC AG Josh Stein wants answers from HCA

- Highlands girls varsity basketball team beats BREC in LSCC championship
 - Highlands PD "remembers" first Canine Officer Ruby March
 - Lack of services at HC Hospital/HCA and transport issues are on the minds of citizens
 - Rep Mark Meadows vacates District 11 seat to become President Trump's Chief of Staff.
 - More SANE nurse access is needed in WNC
 - Town OKs WideOpen contract at annual retreat
 - COVID first comes to Highlands as woman traveling from Asheville self-isolates at HCC.
 - COVID begins to affect all aspects of life in NC, MC and Highlands.
 - Town shutter all lodgings to restrict COVID
 - Second visitor tests positive for COVID; admitted to HC Hospital
- April**
- Food banks are busy due to COVID job loss

• See 2020 page 8

• HIGHLANDS DINING •



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• OBITUARY •

Wayne Coleman

Wayne Jackson Coleman passed away on January 8, 2021.

Wayne was born in Eastman, Georgia on April 13, 1937 to Braudus (BJ) and Verma Coleman, but spent most of his formative years in Reidsville, Georgia.

In eighth grade, Wayne was recruited for the high-school one-act play at Reidsville High. It was there he met a cute, bossy tenth-grader named Annette. They would go on to marry and spend the next 60 years together.

He studied journalism, history and French at Mercer University and the University of Georgia. He began his career on a newspaper in Anderson, SC, but eventually found success in furniture sales at Rich's and Mangurians. In the mid 1970's, Wayne partnered with two friends to form Omni Manufacturing (Basic America Medical today), a firm that designed and manufactured furniture for nursing homes.

Wayne and Annette were deeply involved in Clairmont Baptist Church and Dunwoody Baptist Church (both in Atlanta), and First Presbyterian Church of Highlands (North Carolina). He was a popular Sunday School teacher in each congregation and had a knack for weaving historical context into a compelling story. He was never afraid to challenge traditional thinking. He sang in choirs in each church and was a sought-after soloist.

The theme of performance never left his journey. Over the years he acted in plays at Dunwoody Baptist Church, Stage Door Players, Highlands Playhouse, Aurora Theatre, Actor's Express, Highlands Performing Arts Center, and others. Favorite roles included Big Daddy in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Pseudolus in A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, and Tevye in Fiddler on the Roof (which he played twice).

Wayne and Annette spent most of their adult year in Atlanta, but retired to Highlands, NC in 1997. In retirement, Wayne remained active in the Highlands Men's Chorus, a local writer's group, and the architecture committee at First Presbyterian.

Wayne loved to argue, politics in particular, and was quite adept at taking a contrary position to most anyone in the room.

He always wore red socks.

Wayne is survived by three generations of boisterous and opinionated family members in Atlanta, Georgia; Knoxville, Tennessee; and Denver, Colorado.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Coleman family. Online condolences can be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com



... CRITICAL continued from page 1

leave home for any reason other than work, school, exercise, health care needs or groceries.

"Simply put, don't go places indoors where people aren't wearing masks," Cooper said.

"Every single North Carolinian needs to take immediate action to save lives and protect themselves and each other," said Dr. Mandy Cohen, NC Health Dept. Secretary.

Wednesday, Jan. 6, North Carolina saw another record high number of hospitalizations with 3,893 and the percent of positive tests in the state also hit a record high of 17.8 percent.

"There's so much virus here in North Carolina and I'm very, very worried," said Cohen.

The updated figures come as Gov. Roy Cooper extends his current executive

... HILLSIDE continued from page 1

would impact the community at Wednesday's hearing, that discussion is set to begin on Jan 25.

Wednesday's hearing was spent discussing applications by property owners surrounding the development's proposed location, who have concerns about the development and would like to be deemed as a party "with standing" in the hearings moving forward.

The large-scale project was proposed by Macauley Investments and plans entail developing residential, hospitality, retail, entertainment, and other amenities over 57 acres that extend from the Crossroads to just beyond Frank Allen Road along Hwy 107, and Monte Vista Road along Hwy 64.

A petition opposing the development has circulated throughout the community and as of Dec. 20 had 7,770 signatures from people throughout the area "Highlands, Cashiers and beyond."

This is the second time the Council has discussed the Cashiers Hillside project after a continuance was granted at quasi-judicial hearing on Nov. 16 to give parties who are opposed to the project time to hire experts and gauge the impact a development of this size would have on their property.

Jackson County Planning Director Mike Poston said the Cashiers Planning Council is the only municipal body that will hear the Special Use Permit application for the Cashiers Hillside project.

If the Council approves the special use permit, the applicant will also need to seek a major subdivision approval from the Jackson County Planning Board.

If the Special Use Permit is denied,

order, which requires non-essential businesses to close at 10 p.m. and businesses to stop selling alcohol for on-site consumption at 9 p.m. Cohen issued her own directive, emphasizing the importance of prevention methods like wearing a mask and staying physically distant from others, as

the applicant can appeal the decision all the way to Superior Court.

What does "With standing" mean?

Jackson County Attorney Heather Baker said parties determined to have standing can testify, question experts, and object during hearings as the process moves forward.

Macauley Investments is being represented by Attorney Craig Justice, who pointed out parties determined to have standing can also be named in future lawsuits.

Baker said a party with standing is an aggrieved party, a person with a legal interest in the property (owner, tenant), a person who will suffer special damages as a result of the decision, or an association connected to the decision with at least one member of the association determined to have standing.

Baker said Jackson County is required to notify all adjacent property owners of the proposed development, but that does not mean they have standing, that is only one factor. Other factors are proximity or how the decision influences their property value. If they allege an effect on their property value, they will have to be able to show proof.

Special Damages

Baker said property owners may allege they will suffer from secondary damages, such as noise and light pollution, or traffic issues specific to their property and not the community as a whole, that can be considered special damages.

"One of the best ways to look at a party with standing is to say are this person's potential damages different from someone in the community as a whole," said Baker. "If anyone in the Cashiers area could say, yeah I can say the same thing, it's probably not special damages. Whereas, if this person can say my

What the 'colors' mean

| | Counties must meet: | And meet one of these: | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | Case rate | Percent positive | Hospital Impact within the county* |
| Critical (Red) | >200/100,000 new cases in 14 days with at least 42 cases in 14 days. | >10% | High Impact on county hospital(s) |
| Substantial (Orange) | 101-200/100,000 new cases in 14 days with at least 21 cases in 14 days. | 8-10% | Moderate Impact on county hospital(s) |

well as urging people who spent time with others outside their household to assume they have the virus and get tested.

Meanwhile, the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation is offering free COVID-19 drive through testing Jan. 18 at the Village Green in Cashiers from 11a to 1p and at the Highlands Rec Park from 2:30-

4:30p.

Also, on January 25 at the Highlands Rec Park from 11a. to 1p and at the Village Green from 2:30-4:30p.

Registration is required by the Thursday prior to Monday testing, email info@mtnparkuc.com.

— Kim Lewicki

driveway will intersect and I will not personally be able to get out of my driveway, or I will have light directly on here or noise, those are your secondary damages you can look at when considering this."

The Council, chaired by Michael Cox, discussed each application individually opt-

ing for consistency over expediency, hence the lengthy hearing. Approx. 25 applicants were discussed and many were found to have sufficient reason to have standing.

Those found not to have enough evidence of special damages were determined

• See HILLSIDE page 6



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... HILLSIDE continued from page 5

to be “participating witnesses without standing,” who Baker said are still allowed to testify and question experts in future hearings.

During the hearing, applicant Yvonne Johnson was making her case about the effects the project would have on her property and mentioned the traffic problems it would cause. Justice asked if she had consulted a traffic expert on the matter and she said she hadn't. Justice said traffic impact studies from an expert are required when alleging traffic related damages.

Several property owners who are opposed to the development are represented by Attorney John Noor who told the Council that Wednesday's hearing was about alleging damages, and not showing proof.

“We do have a legal difference of opinion for standing as to whether or not you have to prove in addition to allege,” said Justice. “I will say that a number of the statements that Ms. Johnson made

appear to be without grounding in fact, statements about traffic, as you probably have been coached, requires a traffic expert.”

Noor said there was no obligation of proof at Wednesday's hearing.

“At this stage in the proceedings what an applicant has to do is allege the damages,” said Noor. “They're saying, I've looked at this and these are the problems that are going to affect my property. At the next hearing we will get into the substance of the case, which is now I've got to prove for you what I alleged.”

Baker said she agreed with Justice, that applicants need to show a little more than just alleging damages.

Stephen Macauley, principal of Macauley Investments, said he believes the process to determine parties with standing was transparent and reasonable, and he looks forward to further discussion on Jan. 25.

“From adding to the economic vitality to improving infrastruc-

ture to addressing the need for housing diversity, there are many community benefits to Cashiers Hillside,” said Macauley. “Specifically, our expert team has created strategies in the development plan to responsibly address the Small Area Plan's goals.”

Jackson County has been working with the Village of Cashiers to develop a Small Area Plan for the Cashiers Commercial Development Districts and the surrounding area since 2017.

The Jackson County Land Use Plan 2040 adopted in 2017 recommended that Cashiers prepare a plan that would guide future growth and development. This project presents the first opportunity for residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to have a say in the Village's future since the Southwestern Commission prepared the Mountain Landscapes Initiative in 2007-2008.

This Small Area Plan, with participation by the community, is supposed to reflect the vision and unique identity of the mountain community. The Plan will establish

goals and create strategies relevant to land use, transportation, utilities, natural resources, economic development, and more.

Macauley believes the Cashiers Hillside development satisfies those goals. He says those goals include:

- Cashiers Hillside will be a true village center in Cashiers as envisioned by the description of the Village Core character area, providing a mix of uses ranging from retail businesses, to housing to public plazas.

- Businesses who lease within the project will be curated to complement existing Cashiers businesses, not compete with them.

- The community plan includes multiple public parking structures that will serve not only the project itself, but also the civic spaces and business in the village.

- The project is designed to attract all age groups, including the younger demographic currently under-represented in the present market.

- Cashiers Hillside will add to the economic vitality of the Cashiers-Highlands Plateau and to Jackson County revenues through its significant focus on year-round programming.

- Gardens located throughout the development will be a defining feature of Cashiers Hillside, and the plazas, gardens and open spaces will be accessible to all. Connections to The Ramble will enable all Cashiers residents and visitors to access the amenities within the development.

- The infrastructure that will be created in the development of Cashiers Hillside will serve the greater Cashiers community, including improved automobile and pedestrian connectivity and efficiency, sewage treatment, water and fire protection, and enhanced broadband connectivity.

- The Cashiers Hillside Foundation, generated through real estate transfer fees and Property Owners Association fees, will address community needs including offering housing diversity for teachers, healthcare workers and more as well as ongoing financial support for the arts in the community.

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...2020 continued from page 4

- Triage tents go up in area hospitals in preparation for COVID outbreak
- Macon County reports first death related to COVID
- Playhouse cancels live shows for 2020 season.

- COVID affects town's FY '20-'21 budget
- WideOpen deal with town is dead
- Pisgah Legal Services come to Highlands and Cashiers
- NC Governor Cooper outlines his

3-phase plan

- Governor plan affects school students

May

- Special TB meeting outlines changes to stay-at-home order; Gov. Cooper's Phase 1 plan to go into effect May 8
- Highlands PD Chief Harrell leaves for position of Chief of Franklin PD; last day is June 1.

- Highlands School Class of 2020 announces Vals and Sals: two Vals, Camren Dalton and Sayla Roman and Sal, Morgan Olvera

- Seasoned Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad Eldon Jamison dies attempting rescue at Whitewater Falls.

- Highlands opens back up... softly
- Board of Ed outlines COVID graduation plans

- Fifth MC resident tests positive for COVID

- MC School System includes remote days for students

- David and Dawn Head die in vehicle accident over Memorial Day weekend.

- HCH Foundation to offer COVID testing

- TB hears restaurant requests; say Phase 2 opening at 50% was worth it.

June

- 13 apply for HPD Chief position
- Crowds march for justice in support of BLM.

- 3 Ws signs pop up around town
- NC mayors sign proclamation against Floyd murder and systemic racism; Mayors Highlands Pat Taylor and Franklin Bob Scott speak out

- Hungry bears are back.
- 2018 Scaly Mtn. 'death by vehicle' case decided.

- HCHF funds 200 hand sanitizer stations.

- Churches creatively tend to their flock.

- TB OKs requests for outdoor activities – pool and farmers market open with restrictions.

- Cawthorn to face off with Davis as Republican candidate for District 11 seat - wins Meadows' seat

- Andrea Holland is named Highlands Police Chief

- Census 2020 push begins

July

- MC Schools plan for school in Fall is still unclear

- Governor: Masks mandatory in NC; Phase 2 extended until July 17

- Town Hall employees test negative; one test pending.

- Plans in the works for schools teaching options

- Greenway volunteers finish Oak Street spur

- Gov. Cooper says NC schools are to reopen Aug. 17 under plan B. Extends Phase 2 through Aug. 7

- Town Board mandates wearing masks in commercial areas.

- Highlands plans for all K-12, in-school classes.

- Bear-resistant totter deadline is approaching; enforcement delayed due to backorder

- Board of Ed outlines school start scenarios

- MC Virtual Academy details outlined

- Dave Cashion is named Highlands School Teacher of the Year

- Highlands native Christopher Potts struggles with COVID in Florida

August

- Hill family steps down from Mountain Findings board

- Highlands School sends off Class of 2020 at outdoor graduation due to COVID

- Hilary Wilkes runs for McCall's seat on Board of Ed and is seated.

- JAWbreaker mastermind could stay behind bars until trial

- MC Schools Virtual Academy starts up Aug. 24

- HHS names Shaffner Archivist Emeritus

- Kirkin' o' Tartan takes place on Main

• See 2020 page 9



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... 2020 continued from page 8

Street and in KH Park

- HCHF to fund weekly in-school COVID testing starting in September
- CEO/CNO Tom Neal asks town for water/sewer hookup for proposed workforce housing at HC Hospital.
- Four MC schools suspend in-person learning due to teacher shortages from COVID

September

- Survey points to employee housing need
- JAWbreaker kingpin is arrested for harboring a fugitive
- NC Gov. Cooper declares NC in phase 2.5
- Highlands Rec Adult Softball League Champs is the "Dirtbags"
- JAWbreaker kingpin Wade Ennis dies in transport to hospital
- Rec Park facilities open with restrictions
- Remnants of Hurricane Sally are headed for WNC
- COVID testing at schools in Highlands and Cashiers begin
- Highlands new fire station gets green light.
- Highlands Historical Society's annual Dahlia Festival takes to the streets.

October

- Parkin' at PAC opens – drive-in movies.
- Town says 'yes' to new pickleball

courts

- 4-day school week OK'd for K-5th in Macon County
- Governor eases COVID restrictions for indoor and outdoor events
- Halloween to be a drive-thru event around town
- Town denies HCA water/sewer hookup at hospital
- Town says 'Don't feed the bears: It will cost you \$250'
- Rescue crews do welfare check on Whiteside Mountain
- Town employees to get COLA raise and doubled Christmas bonuses

November

- Town Board begins to review Smart Cities Project Proposals for broadband hwy
- Federal election results unclear for local winners are clear
- Big Brothers Big Sisters merge Highlands' and Cashiers' programs
- MC reports 8th death related to COVID
- The town's Comprehensive Plan is defined
- Color-coded county alert system is unveiled
- Board of Ed member Goldsmith resigns
- Proposed Cashiers Hillside community is unveiled
- Hotwire Communications to run

• See 2020 page 14

Botox vs. Filler



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Supply and Demand

The Law of Supply and Demand explains the interaction between a seller of a resource and a buyer for that resource. We all know that, but we usually fail to follow the chain when making our own purchases. We see it at the grocery store, gas stations, and restaurants. (BTW, have you noticed fast food chains are catching up to restaurant prices?)

For the last three years, the home inventory has been dwindling, thanks to consumer confidence, and low interest rates. It made more sense to buy an existing home rather than build a new home, even homes that a buyer thought needed extensive remodeling.

In 2020, thanks in part to existing low interest rates, but mostly due to the pandemic, the available homes for sale have been like a revolving door, they barely get listed before they swing back around and are out of available homes to buy.

One would think with less residential homes on the market, buyers would buy land and build, and many of them do. What these buyers are finding out is that it is not cheaper to build instead of buying an existing home. With the law of supply and demand, the existing homes are starting to have higher prices, and those listing prices are not far from the sales price. It is still a seller's market, but some purchasers don't want to wait on a new build, so they will gladly buy a home in an area they like



Jeannie Chambers
Chambers Realty
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in order to have almost immediate use of the property.

The thing about having a custom-built home is just that, it is built with what the buyer wants and/or can afford. Remember the early suburbia days in cities when a new development might offer three-to-six home plans to choose from? Our area isn't about cookie-cutter homes, and most developments have done very well at having a variety of homes.

Back to the reality of home buying or building.

It always comes down to the price. 2020 brought us many nightmares, but opportunities as well. Some people say it's "six of one and half a dozen of another." I mean, gas prices came down. OK, well, that's one. I'm thinking, I'm thinking. On the other hand, most prices went higher, and are still headed that way. Everything from eggs to dog food, from the price of a 2 x 4 (and all lumber) to the paint, from antifreeze to winterize our homes to the cost of replacing an appliance. Most everything has gone up in price. I would imagine price escalation is something we are going to continue to see. People that provide services, everything from firewood delivery and household cleaners, to plumbers and general contractors – anyone who provides a service is going to have to charge more for the services they provide to keep up with the costs of providing their service. (Geez, there's another revolving door – money in, money out.)

According to an online Realtor magazine, in second-home counties, single-home residential construction nudged ahead by 13.6% average rate as opposed to a 10.5% rate in other counties. They got those figures from the NAHB -- National Association of Home Builders, who also state that 70% of second-home counties are in rural areas. I expect our area will likely see more home builders come onto the scene, just like more Realtors are coming to the area.

In the boon times, there's certainly room for all of them. Right now, I keep hearing of long waiting lines for builders, and especially for home renovations. A few years ago, when times were very S L O W, contractors who were previously too busy to build a deck, replace a roof,

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

The Church is the mightiest force in the universe

Pastor Dan Robinson
Highlands
Central Baptist Church

In every generation it has pleased the Lord for His followers to figure significantly in the governments of the world. The foundational example of this is Moses and his unstoppable influence on Pharaoh and all of Egypt. Subsequently, Nehemiah stood before Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1), Elijah before Ahab (1 Kings 17:1), Daniel before Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 2) and Esther before Xerxes (Esther 5) to name only a few.

This pattern continues in the New Testament. Peter and John stood boldly before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4. The Apostle Paul declared the Truth of Jesus Christ before Felix, Festus and Agrippa (Acts 24-26). Their influence, frankly, was incalculable.

In recent days, the very bedrock of our democracy has been shaken in ways that none of us have seen in our lifetimes. Nonetheless, the plan of God (explained above) remains the same. It is now the Church which is to figure significantly in the current events. This She does, through and by prayer. The Church (not governments) is the mightiest force in the universe. This is neither exaggeration nor hyperbole.

The Psalmist asked the question many are asking today. Namely, "When the foundations are being destroyed what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3). Then remarkably he answers his own question with a statement about God! "God is in His holy temple. God is on His Throne! Isaiah tells us that this Throne of God is an everlasting one. There will NEVER be an end to His government and Peace! (Isaiah 9:7).

And God acts and works through the Church as she prays!

What if Churches in America really had Prayer Meetings? What if Prayer were the platform for a meeting and not just a tag-on?

How I encourage pastors to lead in this greatest ministry of all! Many in our nation are fearful. The future seems precariously balanced. But our God is on His Throne! He will hear and answer confessing, repenting and believing prayer.

The first prayer in Congress was given by the Reverend Duche on September 7, 1774. This is what he prayed:

Be Thou present O God of wisdom and direct the counsel of this Honorable Assembly; enable them to settle all things on the best and surest foundations; that the scene of blood may be speedily closed; that Order, Harmony and Peace may be effectually restored, and the Truth and Justice, Religion and Piety, prevail and flourish among the people.

Preserve the health of their bodies, and the vigor of their minds, shower down on them, and the millions they here represent, such temporal Blessings as Thou seest expedient for them in this world, and crown them with everlasting glory in the world to come. All this we ask in the Name and through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thy Son and our Savior, Amen.

In response to this prayer Mr. Adams said, "It was

• See SPIRITUALLY page 14

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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

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Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

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Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Wednesdays – Supper at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

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Sundays: 9:30am – Adult Sunday School; 9:45am (masks

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Sunday Youth-4:30pm – 6:30pm Dinner

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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

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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

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

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

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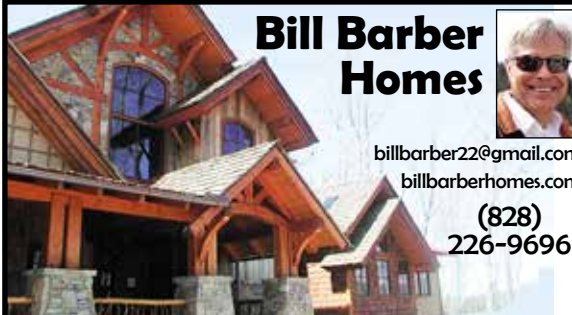
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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Dec. 31. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used. Dec. 31

• At noon, officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Wingina Place.

• At 4:50 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on US 64 east.

Jan. 3

• At 6 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle hit and run accident on Helens Barn Ave.

Jan. 5

• At 1:36 a.m., Brandon David O'Brein, 32 of Scaly Mountain, NC, was arrested for DUI on NC 106. He was issued a \$1,500 unsecured bond. His trial date is Jan. 27, 2021.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Jan. 6 Jan. 6

• At 8:19 a.m., the dept. responded to a vehicle fire on NC 106.

• 9:01 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Hideaway Trail.

• At 11:16 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Zachary Road.

...INVESTING from page 10

remodel a bathroom, etc. were able to answer the call and gladly take on small jobs, now they're accepting jobs, but the start-date may be months away.

Wouldn't it be nice if buying real estate (homes or land) could be as easy as a Rolling Stones lyric? Take it away, Mick: "You can't always get what you want" (Re-

• At 11:28 the dept. was called about smoke on Brushy Face Road.

• At 3:55 p.m., the dept. was called about smoke on Bowery Road.

Jan. 7

• At 9:08 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Raintree Lane.

• At 8:33 p.m. the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Buck Creek Road.

• At 10:44 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

Jan. 8

• At 8:51 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Shelby Drive.

Jan. 10

• At 10:58 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm on Main Street.

Jan. 11

• At 10:45 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.

• At 10:47 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of smoke on the Cashiers Road.

• At 11:46 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to Highlands Plaza.

peat 3x because it just sounds better that way) "But if you try sometimes, well, you just might find, you get what you need."

I hope you get what you need in 2021. Remember supply and demand doesn't mean you demand until it is supplied. Play by the rules, be nice to one another, and let's enjoy this beautiful place we call home.

...2020 continued from page 9

town's broadband highway

- HCA gets MAMA a new chopper
- AHEC rounds out tech needs at Highlands School

December

• The paving of Main, 4th, and beyond is on again; work to begin March 2021

• Carol Arnold is selected to fill Goldsmith seat on Board of Ed.

- COVID cancels 2020 Christmas Parade

- NC Governor tightens restrictions due to COVID

• Town takes hard stance on garbage regulations in town; fees to be levied.

• Town urges citizens to fill our Comprehensive Plan survey

- Mission could get COVID vaccine by end of week.

• COVID closes Rec Pool for afternoon and evening swimming due to COVID

- Annual Wreaths Across America to be virtual

- Highlands School to go virtual week of Jan 4

- 900 trout to be released in area private lakes through winter

• Residents and staff at ELC are first to get COVID vaccine

- How COVID changed the Highlands and Cashiers real estate market

- MC Schools unveils winter weather/COVID plan.

– Kim Lewicki

...SPIRITUALLY from page 11

enough to melt a heart of stone."

May this be our prayer to our Great God who has given and entrusted to us this land of the free and the home of the brave.

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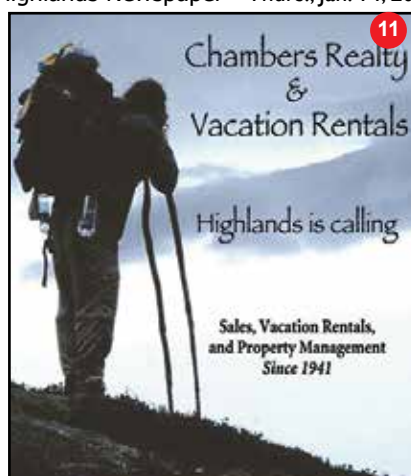
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