

Highlands Newspaper

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STRs were front and center during Town Board 'Plan' presentation

Like the Planning Board on Tuesday, on Thursday night, the Town Board got a look at the Comprehensive Community Plan

– a plan that the state wants all municipalities with zoning to adopt by 2022. It's a policy document, whose

elements can be used to produce regulations to guide the town the next 10-20 years, but Town Man-
•See STRs page 10

Town Board considers a myriad of topics

During the public comment period of the July Town Board meeting, commissioners heard from Bob Irwin concerning Short-term Rentals, (see story above) from Dennis Wilson about renovating the Community Building kitchen and from Dr. Scott Baker about parking.

Speaking for Highlands Rotary, Wilson suggested the kitchen in the Community Building needed a major overhaul – at the estimated cost of \$100,000. He said Rotary had fundraising ideas but also said it would be asking the town to contribute funds.

Dr. Baker said the lack of at the Professional Center at the corner of 5th and Spring streets is making it hard for his staff and his patients to find a spot. There is parking in the building's parking lot but there are rarely open spots.
•See TOPICS page 5

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Mayoral Candidate Incumbent Pat Taylor



Mayoral Candidate Commissioner Marc Hehn



Commission Candidate Pat Allen



Commission Candidate Mary Bynum



Commission Candidate Thomas Craig



Commission Candidate Nick McCall



Commission Candidate Incumbent Amy Patterson



Commission Candidate Eric Pierson

Highlands Town Board candidates line up for November election

By Brittney Lofthouse

Residents in Highlands will be determining new leadership for the town this November as several candidates ended up filing for the upcoming municipal election just before Friday's

deadline.

During odd-numbered years (so as to alternate with statewide general elections) most Municipal Elections are held to elect the governing officials (Mayor, City Council, Town Council, etc.) of cities,

villages and towns across North Carolina.

Although Municipal Elections are conducted by county boards of election, only residents of the municipality are qualified

•See CANDIDATES page 14

Hotwire contract near ready; signups to follow soon

Finally, there is light at the end of the tunnel concerning Hotwire coming online as a system-wide broadband provider for Highlands.

At Thursday night's Town Board meeting, Town Manager Josh Ward asked IT Director Matt Shuler to present the board with the Fiber Construction completion update.

"I will address construction items first. We are getting very close to the end," he said. "One issue is the splicing. There were a total of 7,700 fiber in the trunk fiber in the head-in and then down the road that same fiber had to be spliced to another and another and another before it gets to its final destination. As of the end of Thursday our splicer has 180 left.
•See HOTWIRE page 7

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Town Board recap

Last week's town board meeting was a celebratory event in many ways. The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation introduced the two new doctors that they brought to the plateau in conjunction with their funding and opening of the Highlands/Cashiers Blue Ridge Health Clinic.

Dr. Ann Davis and Dr. Kristy Fincher are the new primary care physicians that will be practicing at the new Blue Ridge Health Clinic. The clinic is a federally approved healthcare provider. It serves all patients both young and old. Dr. Davis told the board that on her first day at the clinic she saw an infant patient and a 95-year-old patient. The clinic is located at the Jane Woodruff Medical Building on the Highlands Cashiers Hospital campus. In addition to family medicine and pediatrics, the clinic offers pregnancy care, nutrition, case management/health education and assistance with affordable health insurance enrollment.

The plateau now has four primary care physicians. In addition to the doctors at the



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

new clinic, Dr. Patti Wheeler continues to serve as a HCA primary care doctor at the hospital. Dr. Scott Baker operates a private practice here in Highlands. Our community's concern about having a "doctors desert" should be diminishing with these new developments.

Tom Neal, our hospital CEO, also updated the board on recent developments at the hospital. Three-dimensional mammography equipment is now available, and plans are underway to restart out-patient surgical procedures. In addition, the CNA training program is now underway.

Dennis Wilson came before the board to get the go-ahead to plan and design needed improvements for the Highlands Conference Center kitchen. The plan will be brought back to the board later this year for approval and funding. Part of the funding will come from private support and part will come from the town. The improvements to the kitchen, improvements to the bathrooms will also be made.

The board also heard an update from Jake Petrosky of Stewart Consultants about the status of the Highlands Comprehensive Community Plan. The plan is in the final stages of review by the planning board. A

• See MAYOR page 6

• CLARIFICATION •

Clarification is needed in the following paragraphs in last week's article "The new HF&R complex is needed and it is a sign of the times."

"Volunteers get \$15 per fire call; nothing for other-type calls, nor is there medical."

"Gearhart says he would like to have eight people full-time on staff which includes the Chief and Asst. Chief. Four would be day-shift workers 8a to 4p and two would be on the night shift which is 4p to 8a. Shift work would be 24 hours on and 48 hours off with shift workers switching shifts. Though the Chief and Asst. Chief would work 8a to 4p, too, they are not shift workers."

We regret the error and are happy to set the record straight.

• HIC'S VIEW •



• WEATHER •

Thu, 22-Jul	Fri, 23-Jul	Sat, 24-Jul	Sun, 25-Jul
79°F 60°F	78°F 62°F	79°F 62°F	81°F 61°F
An afternoon thunderstorm	A thunderstorm or two	Chance for a thunderstorm	A thunderstorm possible
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• OBITUARY •

Tug Helmer

The family of Robert Earnest "Tug" Helmer is heartbroken to announce his passing on Tuesday, July 13 at his home in Highlands, NC. He passed away peacefully in his sleep due to heart failure stemming from a childhood heart condition.

Tug was born in Atlanta, GA, graduated from The Lovett School, attended University of Mississippi and graduated from The American College in London, England with a business degree.

Tug was a true entrepreneur at heart and had an inherent drive for exploring new ideas. His eternal optimism and tenacity to identify new opportunities led him to explore many ventures over the years. While initially driven by the challenge of commerce, it was Tug's love of people and passion of connection that was more fulfilling. When the opportunity to become a restaurateur in the town of Highlands, NC, he opened Tug's Proper. Tug's friendly and outgoing nature served him well where he was constantly attending to patrons and meeting new customers. Tug never

met a stranger.

While many people knew Tug's outward persona as bold and effusive, people will remember him best for his selfless generosity. He was always there with a kind word, an "I'm proud of you," and an infectious smile. Whether it be helping a friend move, cutting a neighbor's grass, escorting a niece to a dance, or countless family gatherings, Tug was always present with his uplifting spirit.

Tug's loving and generous nature extended not only to his family and ever-expanding circle of friends but to his dog, William. His big heart and compassion to adopt this 3-legged rescue became a significant part of his life. Both Tug and William were ever friendly and enthusiastic people lovers with William developing his own circle of friends and admirers that even surprised Tug at times.

A cornerstone of Tug's life was his faith in Christ. His optimism was driven by knowing his Lord and Savior was with him every day. The loss of Tug's vibrant and loving spirit, his self-effacing sense of humor and his heartfelt



generosity leaves an immeasurable void in so many lives. His circle of friends is vast and we know they all share our sorrow.

Tug is survived by his mother, Deborah Freisem Mast, father Robert E. Helmer Sr. (Beth, Ashley, Lauren) and sister, Sunny Thompson (Randal, Chase, Catherine "Minnie"), uncle George Freisem (Debbie), cousin Allen Freisem (Kim, Henry, Charlie, Sam), uncle Percy Helmer (Janice), cousin Trey Helmer (Joyce, Madeline) and cousin Tatum Helmer (Mark, Charlie, Ryan).

A Celebration of Life is scheduled on Sunday, July 25 from 1- 3 p.m. at Tug's Proper in Highlands, NC.

A Memorial Service will take place on Thursday, July 29 from 4 – 5 p.m. at The Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, GA. Reception will follow in Child Hall.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to The American Heart Association, Heart.org or Atlanta-LabRescue.com; ALR.

...TOPICS continued from page 1

He said he has had to park streets away but for his ill and elderly patients, that isn't a convenient possibility. He asked if the town could designate some spots on Spring Street for the Professional Center use.

Typically, though the board hears the requests made during public comment, action isn't taken until the requests are researched by town staff.

After the public comment period, Robin Tindal with Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation introduced the two doctors manning Blue Ridge Health located in the Jane Woodruff building on the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital campus.

Both family practitioners Ann Davis, MD and Kristy Fincher, DO are seeing patients in their offices in the Jane Woodruff Clinic and welcome everyone – infants and the

elderly.

MD means "doctor of medicine" and DO stands for "doctor of osteopathic medicine."

Osteopathic physicians base diagnosis and treatment on the idea that the body's systems are interconnected. Instead of treating specific symptoms or illnesses, DOs regard and treat the body as an integrated whole. which refers to a specific approach to medical education that began in the mid-19th century.

Davis said her first day she saw an infant and a 95-year-old and equated that wide spectrum to true family practice.

Tom Neal with Highlands Cashiers Hospital said the CNA education program has graduated its first group and within a month will start the second six-week program with 10 students.

• See TOPICS page 16

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• MEMORIAL •

John Deering Roberts

John Deering Roberts, 78 of Highlands, passed away January 21, 2021.

A celebration of life will be held at 11 am on Saturday July 24, 2021 at The Episcopal Church of The Incarnation In Highlands NC.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

WCU to award students \$500 emergency grants through HEERF III funds

CULLOWHEE — Western Carolina University will provide \$500 emergency grants to enrolled students who qualify for assistance in payment of fall 2021 semester billing charges.

The emergency grants are part of the third round of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, which come from the American Rescue Plan. The grants are available to undergraduate and graduate students.

To qualify for the \$500 grant, students must do the following:

- Be enrolled in WCU classes for the fall 2021 semester
- Complete the 2021-2022 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Have an expected family contribution

of \$18,829 or less on the 2021-22 FAFSA

- Sign and submit the HEERF Student Consent Form

To sign and submit the HEERF Student Consent Form, students must log into their myWCU account and open the form under My Financial Aid Status.

In June, WCU awarded approximately \$3.8 million in HEERF III funds to students attending any summer session term, waiving tuition for all undergraduate students. Also included in the allocation was nearly \$407,000 to support the summer 2021 Academic Success Program and Catamount Gap programs. Program costs that were included were tuition, fees, residential living (housing) and meal plan costs.

...MAYOR continued from page 2

final draft should be available to the town board at their August meeting. I anticipate the town board calling for a public hearing concerning the plan at that meeting. The hearing would occur at the September meeting.

As an elected official, I believe the Town Board should avoid making major

changes to the final draft of the community plan. I have read the current draft. It captures the ideas of the over 1,000 citizens and businesses that took the survey and the numerous committees and groups that provided input.

The plan is intended to be a conceptual guide for how Highlanders want this community to address current and future challenges. It is not a regulatory document, but rather a roadmap with multiple possible routes to achieve certain basic goals.

I suspect the current board, as well as futures boards, in partnerships with other stakeholders like the planning board, will need to prioritize goals and objectives. Considerations such as costs versus benefits on certain initiatives will need to be carefully evaluated. The good news to me is that elected officials will have a better understanding of what the public wants for their community because we will have all participated in this planning process.

I will hold the first post COVID community coffee this Friday at the Hudson Library. It will begin at 11am with a discussion of the community plan. Town staff members will join us to answer questions about the plan. I look forward to seeing you there.



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...HOTWIRE continued from page 1

The majority of all the construction splicing has been completed. There are a few of the MST ports that were brought down by some tree limbs, so those two are repairs, that have to be re-spliced. The plan is to be finished by Friday of next week. Additional 'construction' items are the 35 anchors that are left to be installed. They are also hanging the splice cases now — you may have noticed them on the ground around town — so they are being hung back. Projected date for everything to be complete is the end of July."

Mayor Pat Taylor asked if a third-party was verifying the construction and the final splicing and that every fiber was lit.

Shuler said yes there is a third-party verifying and town crews are also checking.

On the financial side, Shuler said there are no overages projected to the town whatsoever and issues that needed attending to were done so by the town engineer so there was no cost to the town.

The final contract with Hotwire, which will be a provider and which will also lease fiber to other providers, is in the final stages.

Shuler said the lawyers are close to finalizing the final draft of the contract and it should be ready for presentation at the August Town Board meeting.

"Josh and I and our lawyers have been working back and forth with Hotwire and we have a meeting this week to do a final discussion. That form of the contract will be brought to you at the August meeting," he said.

A representative from Hotwire will also be at the August Town Board meeting to answer any questions. At that point, commissioners can either approve or indicate edits they would like to see made to the contract.

Shuler said once the contract is signed, it will be around three months before the system goes live but in his opinion Hotwire will most likely use all their staff forces to get that head-in in as soon as possible and during that time, folks will be able to sign up for service.

"Hotwire has to stand up a head-in. We have the fiber, but they will have to bring in and set up electronic equipment before they are ready to go," he said.

Commissioner Hehn, who has been against the project from the start, had several requests of staff Thursday night.

"I want to know when the contract completion date is, what are the rain dates, what are the liquidated damages, were there any additional costs? It's about a 1 1/2 years late, so you have to look at the completion

date, add the rain dates, COVID had to be considered, of course, but what is the loss of income to the town since it's late, what are the additional expenses in regards to that? That's what I am looking for," he said. "I just want to read the contract to know if we are getting everything we are supposed to be getting."

According to Mayor Taylor, none of the commissioners have seen or read the Hotwire contract because it's not ready.

"They are hashing out several issues between the two parties. When it is finished, all commissioners will be given a copy to review in advance and before a vote is taken. I have not seen a draft yet either," he said.

Regarding the timeline, Shuler said Town Attorney JK Coward is sending a letter to Hotwire establishing that if Hotwire isn't ready with the contract by the end of July, then the town will put the financial burden on them.

Shuler said the town hasn't paid Hotwire in full — it has held back \$1 million — because the engineer hasn't declared the project substantially completed yet.

"It will be paid when it is completed," he said.

Shuler also said the town gets updates each week from Palmetto, the objective third-party crew — that is making sure everything is completed.

"The supervisor of the Palmetto crew walks the entire system, makes notes as to what needs to be done, and those items are done immediately. He doesn't wait until a report is generated. He just goes ahead and has his crew do it," said Shuler.

Commissioner Hehn suggested our electric crew inspect the system.

"Don't you think that would be a good idea? Seems to me we would want our own people giving you feedback as to what they see or anything they are worried about," he said.

Shuler said that's not necessary because the crews on the job are communication engineers.

Concerning the overall Fiber Construction Project, Thursday night, Hehn presented the board with a letter addressed to Town Manager Josh Ward requesting all copies of the construction file for the project including all partial payments for the project, all third-party construction observation reports and third-party construction observation invoices.

"The law requires that you respond to and fulfill this request as promptly as possible. If you expect a significant delay in responding to and fulfilling this request, please let me

know when I might expect copies or when I have the ability to inspect the requested records," reads the letter.

"If you deny any or all of this request, please cite each specific exemption you feel justifies the refusal to release the information and notify me of the appeal procedures available to me under the law."

In response to the request, Mayor

Taylor said the myriad of documents Commissioner Hehn is requesting will take time for staff to produce.

"He wants to see all the punch lists and testing data that the engineers are producing and signing off on this week. When we get the reports, he can see them, too," he said.

— Kim Lewicki



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ALL ABOUT BOOKS

• INK PENN •

Historical fiction with a splash of mystery

Goodness, how I love my library! When I read a book review in the Wall Street Journal, the Atlanta paper, or somewhere online, I find appealing books and jot the titles down. That means there are lists of books on the screened porch, by my chair in the living room, and on my desk. Eventually, those titles make it to one of two online shelves at my library, either Hold or Save for later.

The order in which I consume books is dictated by the library and when the books become available.

Over the last few weeks, the selection has all been in the historical fiction genre with a splash of mystery, and what a marvelous few weeks it's been.

Travel with me to the WWII era through three engaging books.

The Mystery of Mrs. Christie by Marie Benedict

What a riveting read! I was aware of Agatha Christie's mysterious real-life disappearance, but I'm not sure I realized she never explained it. Even in her autobiography, she didn't reveal any details. That secrecy allows author Marie Benedict to fill the void with an imaginative and plausible tale. Weaving in fascinating facts like Arthur Conan Doyle consulting a medium as part of the search for Christie makes the story all the more intriguing. Even a small detail about the origin of Peter Pan collars is skillfully inserted.

If you're an Agatha Christie fan, this is a must-read. If not, read it because it is a well-written novel with all the elements of an unforgettable story--romance, mystery, and history. The adjective unputdownable is overused these days, but this book truly is.

The Rose Code by Kate Quinn

This may well be the best book I've read this year. Kate Quinn does a masterful job of weaving fictional characters into the lives of historical figures and revealing the amazing story of the work that went on at Bletchley Park during WWII.

You're sure to be intrigued by Osla, the



Kathy Manos Penn

real-life Canadian deb who was a codebreaker at Bletchley Park and was Prince Phillip's wartime girlfriend. Your heart will break at the grueling work done by the women who worked at Bletchley, work they couldn't speak of, lest they run afoul of the Official Secrets Act.

To the outside world, they were clerical workers, when in fact, they were so much more. Even the Author's Notes and the Acknowledgements at the end are thrilling reads. If you read one book this year, let it be this one!

The Consequences of Fear by Jacqueline Winspear

Book 17 in the Maisie Dobbs series does not disappoint! It's difficult to say which of Winspear's books is my favorite, as I started with "Maisie Dobbs" in 2003, but this one may be it. Yes, at its heart, this is a mystery series, but it's also historical fiction at its best. Perhaps it's the way Maisie's life has evolved since the WWI era when we first met her. In this latest addition to the series, it's WWII and London is enduring the blitz.

You feel as though you are there as you experience Maisie solving a complex case and the emotional upheavals she endures as she, her friends, and family live through yet another war. What I love about Maisie is that she is a complex, mature, capable woman who never stops growing. Through the years, I've teared up at her sorrows and smiled at her joys. Heck, I like her so much, I even reference her in my Dickens & Christie cozy mystery series! I HIGHLY recommend this book.

Now, time's a wastin', and I have yet another stack of books to get to. Hope you do too.

• Award-winning author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her cozy mysteries locally at Books Unlimited in Franklin and on Amazon. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/Kathy-ManosPennAuthor/.

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The largest mover in price range for Q2 this year has been the \$300K-\$399K range, a 1696.67% increase in dollars.

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...STRs continued from page 1

ager Josh Ward reminded the board that everything in the plan doesn't have to be implemented.

Presenter Jake Petrosky, who has been hands-on since the start of the project a year ago, started explaining the vision of Highlands, which is the jumping off place for everything in the plan.

"Highlands is a vibrant and scenic mountain community founded on the beauty of the plateau's natural environment, the uniqueness of its village character, and the richness of the area's culture and history," he read.

Future needs and recommendations were categorized and include Land Use for residential housing, businesses and open spaces; Recreation and Natural Resources; Downtown and Tourism, in regards to parking, sidewalks, and street improvements; with the last category Infrastructure & Public Services.

Recommendations in each category were then tiered based on importance – short-term, medium-term and long-term – meaning when the town might consider implementing suggestions as policies or regulations.

For instance in the Downtown and Tourism category #1 was to Maintain and enhance Highlands' small-town feel/village character; #2 was to Improve pedestrian facilities, lighting and wayfinding; and #3 was to manage public parking and study opportunities for increased on-street and off-street public parking.

As during the Planning Board session, one issue that was discussed at length was Short-term Rentals (STRs).

Petrosky said that 62% of Community Plan survey respondents said they had concerns about STRs and 61% of business respondents said more hotels or rentals downtown would help their businesses.

During the public comment period of the Town Board meeting, Bob Irwin, a member of the Dog Mountain subdivision and a neighbor of Tom Coley who spoke about STRs at the Planning Board meeting, read a statement urging

the Town Board to do something about the freewheeling STR industry in Highlands.

"On Dog Mountain, with under 30 homes total, we currently have three houses now advertised for short-term rental. The ad for one of those says it is an 1,100 sq. ft. home that sleeps six. Another says it sleeps 10 in three bedrooms. Yet another says it has four bedrooms and three baths, 10 beds, and sleeps 12. We expect three more houses on our road to be added to the short-term rental list very shortly.

"We've already had problems with noise, traffic and garbage due to these rentals and unfortunately we expect more.

"Several of these short-term rental homes on Dog Mountain and elsewhere in Highlands are owned by people with no personal connection to Highlands, who never visit them, let alone live in them – people who hold them simply as investments, managed for them as a business by other people," said Irwin.

He later questioned why such ventures, which he said are clearly businesses, are allowed in the R1 district.

"The tide of short-term rentals, if it is not reined in, will lead to neighborhoods being hollowed out, without a critical mass of owner-occupants to sustain them.

"I ask you to think carefully about the kind of Highlands you want to have in five years; one that is just a staging area for an endless stream of one-night stands or a community that is sustained by residents year-round and seasonally who have a real personal commitment to it. Don't wait to see how other cities' litigation turns out. Don't wait to see what the state legislature might do. Please take action yourselves to protect Highlands and take it now," he said.

Town Manager Josh Ward said as a municipality, Highlands has been watching month-to-month what the legislature is doing because it must follow state statutes.

Petrosky noted, as per the North Carolina Vacation Rental

Act (2020), requiring rentals to register is unlawful; that local governments cannot levy a tax or fee on residential rental property that is not levied against other commercial and residential properties; and the State has also ruled that limiting measures, such as lotteries for STR permits, are not valid.

However, he said immediate available options include an optional STR registry and a no-fee permit; the continued enforcement of noise and trash ordinances; education and an outreach effort to rental owners that emphasize rules and requirements, and to encourage HOAs to regulate STRs in their neighborhoods.

In the future he suggested using zoning ordinances to regulate STRs in regards to location, length of stay (i.e. 2, 3, 5 or 7 nights) and to differentiate whether the home is a full-time STR or also lived in by the owner.

Since changing zoning ordinances is a lengthy process, those future recommendations can't be enforced immediately as an "immediate available option."

Petrosky did say if STRs are something that need to be put on the short-term list of things to do, it could be done before the final plan comes back for adoption.

Therefore, considering what the Planning Board heard from Tom Coley, who also lives on Dog Mountain and who echoed Irwin, the Town Board decided to move the STR problem to the forefront of Community Plan Recommendation list.

"I think the feedback concerning Short-term Rentals indicates this is an immediate problem we need to address," said Mayor Pat Taylor.

With that, Petrosky moved STRs up to the top.

Later, Mayor Taylor said Bob Irwin had made some very good points and though HOAs are a community's first line of defense, many R1 areas in town aren't separate neighborhoods where HOAs would work so the town needs to address the problem.

– Kim Lewicki

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• FINANCIAL MATTERS •

Taxes on the Seed or the Crop? What we can learn from Peter Thiel's Roth IRA

A story recently hit the news that surprised even me. It was reported by ProPublica, that an investor has amassed over \$5 billion in type of retirement account called a Roth IRA. If you haven't heard of him, the person was Peter Thiel, an early investor in companies like PayPal, e-Bay and Facebook and reportedly turned an initial \$2,000 investment into \$5 billion.

This was a large part of my surprise because Roth IRA's have relatively low contribution limits, and high-income earners are generally excluded from this type of account. Also, the contribution limits from its creation in 1998 until 2008, was less than \$5,000 per year (it was \$2,000 when he contributed) making it nearly impossible to build an account this large in such a short time.

As incredible as all that is, here's the real kicker - under current tax law, every bit of the \$5 billion will be available to him TAX FREE at age 59½!

As you might imagine, much is being made of the "fairness" of this as many people feel this is just another multi-billionaire who is not going to pay his fair share. I won't wade into that here, but the truth is, most people in the U.S. can also take advantage of both the tax-deferred growth potential and qualified tax-free withdrawals when you invest in a Roth IRA.

Roth IRA basics

The Roth IRA was created in 1997 and was named after Sen. William Roth. It provided an alternative to the Traditional IRA in that with a Roth IRA, the contributions are not tax-deductible. But any growth and the eventual distributions are tax free if certain rules are followed.

This includes not withdrawing any of the growth in the first 5 years from the time the account is established and funded - and you've reached age 59½. However, the amount contributed can be withdrawn at any time tax free as the contributions have already been taxed. So, in Mr. Thiel's case, he can remove the original \$2,000 contribution, but can't withdraw the growth without taxes and penalties until he's 59½ (he's currently 53).

Contribution limits

The 2021 contribution limits are \$6,000 per year if you're under age 50, \$7,000 if you're 50 and over.

Also keep in mind there are income eligibility restrictions that must be met for you to contribute for that tax year. For single tax filers, your Modified Adjusted Gross Income (or MAGI) for 2021 must



Michael P Henderson,
CFP® CKA®
Founder/Wealth Advisor

be under \$140,000 and for married filers it's \$208,000.

Who can benefit

If you have access to a 401(k) or certain other retirement plans with your employer (even if you're not contributing), if you're income is too high you may lose the deductibility of a Traditional IRA.

For those who do fall into this situation but have additional dollars to invest over and above the 401(k) limits, a Roth rather than a Traditional IRA may still provide significant benefits.

As long as your income is under the thresholds, even if you have access to and are maxing out your 401(k) contributions, you can still fully contribute to a Roth IRA, giving you another way to potentially grow your investments tax-free over time.

For those who qualify for both a Traditional and a Roth IRA, often the question is which one should they choose. Generally, it comes down to this - would you rather pay taxes on the "seed" or the "crop." In other words, do you want your tax break now or later, and which would be the most advantageous for you? Again, generally the younger you are and

the lower your income, the more advantageous a Roth IRA would be. Presumably, you would have more time for your contributions to compound, and the lower your income, the less likely you need the tax deduction up front. But even though you lose the tax break up

front, as Mr. Thiel now knows, you would receive your tax break later and it could be quite significant.

So, back to the concept of the seed or the crop. Peter Thiel forfeited the tax deduction on the seed, and now, what a tax-free crop!

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

Sun. thru Sept. 5

• The Church in the Wild-wood, Horsecove Road, is open for Sunday night hymn singing from 7-8 pm each Sunday through Sept 5. Anyone entering the church should have had the Covid. 19 vaccine, have a natural immunity or wear a mask. Non-vaccinated guests may sit on the porch. Call Mary Bean if questions at 1-828-506-0125.

Thurs.-Sat.

• The Bookworm at 555 Main Street is now open Thursday-Saturday 11a to 3p. For more information, call 828-526-3031.

• Mountain Findings Thrift Store at 432 Spruce Street is open Thursday & Friday 10a to 1p. Saturday 10a to 4p. The store will only be open during business hours.

Fri.-Sun.

• Movies at Highlands Playhouse Friday-Sunday. Fri. & Sat., 4 & 7 p.m., Sun. 1 & 4 p.m. Tickets are \$12.

Second Mondays

• The local chapter of PEO, an off-campus sorority founded in the 1800s that provides grants and loans to women who want to return to school or further their education and have a financial need, meets at 10 a.m. If interested, please call president Paula McDonald at 706-372-3004 for meeting places.

Mon., Wed., Fri.

• Highlands/Cashiers Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. Open meetings are

held in Highlands at the 1st Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., on Monday at 5:30 p.m. and on Wednesday & Fridays at noon. And held six times a week in Cashiers at Church of the Good Shepherd, Rte 107. For exact meeting times visit our website www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of A.A. call (828) 349-4357.

Thursdays thru Sept. 9

• Zahner Thursday Night Lectures: These free lectures serve to educate and inspire the public through a series of talks from well-known regional scientists, conservationists, artists, and writers. This summer, the Highlands Biological Foundation will host nine lectures focusing on a wide array of topics. The lectures will be held on Thursday evenings at 6pm between and they will be hosted through a mix of in-person and virtual formats. For a full schedule of lectures and how to participate in each (registration required for virtual lectures), please visit www.highlandsbiological.org or call the Highlands Biological Foundation at (828) 526-2221.

Thursday Evenings

• Free ESL classes at the Presbyterian Church 5:30-6:30 p.m. There is no registration required; students can just show up and participate. Set at a time that is convenient for students to attend after work, TL&LC also provides snacks for this kid-friendly event. The classes are for all ages, and anyone who wishes to learn English is encouraged to participate. For any questions, visit www.maconncliteracy.org, call (828) 526-0863 or email info@maconncliteracy.org

Every Saturday

• Highlands Marketplace in K-H Park on Pine Street. 8a to 12:30p.

Third Saturday

• American Legion 370 meets every 3rd Saturday at 10a at the Highlands United Methodist Church in the Fellowship Hall. All veterans are welcome.

Through July 24

• Gem Show at Jannie Bean Fine Custom Jewelry at 152 S. 2nd Street, Highlands. Wednesday Kick Off 5-8p with food and beverages. Thurs.-Sat. 9a-4p. For more information, call 828-526-5858

Fri.-Sun., July 23-25

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Monica Rich Kosann Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Monica Rich Kosann's collection of 18k gold and sterling silver fine jewelry is rooted in the idea that every woman has a story to tell. Call (828) 787-1877.

Fri., July 23

• At Hudson Library, Community Coffee with Mayor Pat Taylor at 11a in the Hudson Library Meeting Room for a talk about Major Issues in the Highlands Community Plan. Refreshments are provided by the Highlands Biological Foundation. Masks are recommended while in the library, but not required.

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Sycamore Flats

Sat., July 24

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. Silly Ridge Roundup

• At Dusty's Superette, a fundraiser for The Literacy Council. Handmade bead necklaces for sale \$20-\$25. The sale will continue through August.

Tues., July 27

• At Shakespeare & Company in Village Square at Oak & 5th streets, "Tales on Tuesday" Storytelling with Isabell Hall Chambers, Lee Lyons and others at 5p. Free and refreshments will be served.

Thurs., July 29

• At OEI's The Farm, Laurent-Perrier Champagne Dinner at The Farm at Old Edwards, 6:30p cocktails, 7p dinner. Old Edwards Inn and Spa welcomes Champagne Laurent-Perrier's Executive Vice President of Sales Camille Cox back to the mountains for a summertime soiree and Champagne dinner at The Farm on Thursday evening. The Midsummer Night's Dream pink and white themed evening will include an array of fine Champagne poured from special large format bottles alongside a menu featuring the height of season produce from the Garden at Old Edwards and the ever delightful talents of Chef Chris Huerta and his team. \$185 per person including Champagne throughout the evening. Plus tax and gratuity. Limited seating. Book online today. <https://www.oldedwardshospitality.com/calendar-of-events/food-dining/champagnedinner>. Event is for guests 21 and older.

Fri., July 30

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Byrds & Crow

Sat., July 31

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Phillip Curcuro Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Philip Curcuro, artist and owner of Upland Nature Lab, focuses on celebrating natural specimens by dramatizing objects through isolation, light, and backdrop. All specimens are found in the southern Appalachian Mountains, and photographed at a home studio in Highlands, NC. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

• The Glenville Area Historical Society (GAHS) annual Ice Cream Social planning is well underway for Saturday, July 31st at the historic Glen-



Dusty's

Join us
Saturday July 24th
for the kickoff of the
fundraiser for
**The Literacy Council of
Highlands.** Handmade
ceramic necklaces will be
for sale. All proceeds will
be donated.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

ville Wesleyan Church. Each year this event kicks off the year for the Society where attendees enjoy, usually, a beautiful sunny "Carolina blue" day, tasty toppings on delicious ice cream at a historical site. Attendees, a combination of GAHS members, prospective members and guests enjoy the treat and will hear Pastor Ralph Campbell tell about the 100-year history of the Glenville Wesleyan Church. For more information about the Society and the Museum call the Glenville Area Historical Society at 828 850.7022 or email historicalsocietyglenvillearea@yahoo.com.

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. The Wobblers

Sat., Aug. 1

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Carolyn Goldsmith Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Carolyn Goldsmith is a renowned Birmingham AL artist known for her figurative and abstract paintings. Her vibrant and dynamic work is primarily in mixed media on canvas. The freedom and balance are greatly influenced by the artists of the Abstract Expressionist movement. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

Fri., Aug. 6

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Foxfire Boys

Sat., Aug. 7

• At Acorn's on S. 4th Street, Carolyn Goldsmith Art Trunk Show. 10a to 5p.

• **Highlands Fire & Rescue Open House. Free Hot Dogs and Fire Truck Rides. 11a to 3p at the station at 322 Oak Street. Celebrating 68 years of service.**

• At Shakespeare & Company in Village Square at Oak & 5th streets, Discussion and book signing with Dr. Jean

Benedict Raffa, author of "The Soul's Twins: Emancipate Your Feminine and Masculine Archetypes" at 3 p.m. Free and refreshments will be served.

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. High Five

Sun.-Tues., Aug 8-10

• At OEI's Half Mile Farm, 214 Half Mile Dr, Highlands, Southern Writers Series. With its storied history and constantly evolving present, the South continuously produces award-winning writers. We are pleased to present four Southern stars for our first-ever Southern Writers Series at Half-Mile Farm. Contemporary authors Wiley Cash, Cassandra King and Ron Rash, along with Cele and Lynn Seldon, will be in residence at Half-Mile Farm for a few fun days. Book Your Stay at <https://www.olderdwardshospitality.com/calendar-of-events/southernwriters>.

Fri.-Sun., Aug. 13-15

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Elizabeth Locke Jewelry Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Elizabeth Locke travels the world in pursuit of the uncommon elements to make up her designs. All pieces are individually designed by her and completely handmade in 19K gold. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

Fri., Aug. 13

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Ben and Marce

Sat., Aug. 14

• Scaly Mountain Community Assn. Pancake Breakfast at the Scaly Mountain Volunteer fire and Rescue Community Room. 169 Hale Ridge Road, Scaly Mountain. 8-10:30 a. \$6 per person, \$20 for families of 4 or more.

• Twilight K Run at 6 p.m.

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. TBA

Sun., Aug. 15

• Dinner with Steven Satterfield & Joseph Lenn at The Farm at Old Edwards at 6:30 p.m. Please join us in celebrating the height of the summer season in the mountains with James Beard Foundation award-winning chefs Steven Satterfield of Miller Union in Atlanta, and Joseph Lenn of JC Holdway in Knoxville, TN. This dynamic duo, who also happen to be great friends, will present a multi-course menu full of summer's most delicious flavors alongside pairings from the Old Edwards sommeliers in the beautiful setting of The Farm. \$185 per person, plus tax and gratuity. Book online today: <https://www.simpletix.com/e/dinner-with-steven-satterfield-joseph-lenn-tickets-67065> or call 828-787-2525 to book.

Aug. 20-22

• At Acorn's on S. 4th Street, Michael Hoffman Pottery Trunk Show. 10a to 5p.

Fri., Aug. 20

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Sycamore Flats

Sat., Aug. 21

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. ZuZu Welch

Fri.-Sun., Aug. 27-29

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Simon Pearce Trees Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Handcrafted in Vermont, Simon Pearce believes in simplicity, quality and artisanship are tenets of a better way of life. Each piece of Simon Pearce's lead-free glassware carries a story that lends meaning, authenticity and grace to every use. From sapling-sized to stunningly stately; brilliantly clear or dusted with snow; wrapped, dappled or silvered: Simon Pearce signature glass trees come in many forms, and are a joy to collect, give and display – all year round. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

Glenville Area Historical Society events are on! Annual Ice Cream Social is at Glenville Wesleyan Church

The Glenville Area Historical Society (GAHS) annual Ice Cream Social planning is well underway for Saturday, July 31st at the historic Glenville Wesleyan Church. Each year this event kicks off the year for the Society where attendees enjoy, usually, a beautiful sunny "Carolina blue" day, tasty toppings on delicious ice cream at a historical site. Attendees, a combination of GAHS members, prospective members and guests enjoy the treat and will hear Pastor Ralph Campbell tell about the 100 year history of the Glenville Wesleyan Church.

The Glenville Wesleyan Church is one of the premier historic sites in Glenville. The church, founded in Old Glen-

ville, was moved along with other buildings when dam was built. The story of the rebuilding in New Glenville involves the historic Wiggins family and various stories of progress to present day.

The history of Old Glenville, resident life at that time, the building of the dam and the evolving of present day Glenville are all featured at the Glenville History Museum located next to Signal Ridge Marina in the heart of Glenville on Highway 107. The Museum is one way the GAHS preserves the rich history of the Glenville area. Much of the materials, information, artifacts and collections on view at the Museum are a result of members interviews with elderly residents, map research, document collection and historical research.

One section of the Museum features the geology of a different historic family each year. The Museum is open weekly Wednesday through Saturday each week from 11AM to 3PM until October.

For more information about the Society and the Museum call the Glenville Area Historical Society at 828 850.7022 or email historicalsocietyglenvillearea@yahoo.com.



The present day Glenville Wesleyan Church located on a hill overlooking Highway 107. The stained glass windows are a leading feature of the building.

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...CANDIDATES continued from page 1

to vote in the election. These voters must have resided in the municipality for at least 30 days prior to the date of the election.

The seats up for election in Highlands this November are the Mayor seat – currently held by Pat Taylor and two Commissioner seats currently held by Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway.

Commissioner Donnie Calloway will not be seeking re-election.

Incumbent Mayor Patrick Taylor will see a challenger in Marc Hehn who completed filing paperwork for the Mayor seat just before deadline. Hehn currently serves on the Town Board and if elected as Mayor, his seat would then be filled by appointment by the Town Board.

Mayor Taylor has served in his official capacity in Highlands since first being elected in 2013. If re-elected this year, Taylor will begin his 4th term as the Mayor (and Commission seats) are a four-year term.

Incumbent Commissioner Amy Patterson filed for re-election and will face challengers – which is vastly different than the 2017 election when both Patterson and Calloway ran unopposed.

Challengers this election include Eric Pierson, who has previously served on the Town Board, Thomas Craig, Pat Allen, Nicolaus McCall, and Mary Alice Bynum. With two open seats on the Highlands board up for election, the top two vote-getters will be elected.

Since the Mayor as well as the Town Board seats were unopposed during the last election, voter turnout was miniscule. There were only 79 votes cast in the Mayor race – 75 for Taylor and 4 write-ins, and 78 for commissioner – which included all votes for the incumbents with the exception of six write-ins.

In 2013 when both the Mayor seat and the Town Board saw multiple candidates, the election was decided by less than 500 people. Mayor Taylor was elected with 60% of the vote in 2013 – which only amounted to 264 votes.

Election Day is scheduled for Nov. 2 and only voters who live

within the town city limits will be allowed to vote. Voters will be able to vote at the Highlands Civic Center from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Voters wanting to cast their ballots early will be able to do so beginning October 14 when one stop early voting begins. Early voting will also be held at the Highlands Civic Center and will run from October 14 through October 30 at 3 p.m.

A Candidate Q&A will be featured closer to the election but to kick-off the campaigns, each candidate was asked a simple question: Why do you want to run?

Mayoral Candidate Mayor Pat Taylor

I believe I have provided steady and responsible leadership for this community in the last eight years. I would be honored to serve the citizens of Highlands as their mayor for the next four years. Our community, as the community plan has revealed, will face major challenges in the coming years. I want to continue to stay on duty and lead the town in meeting these challenges. My guiding principle has been to balance progress with preservation.

Mayoral Candidate Marc Hehn

The duty of the Mayor is to work with the community to support its needs. We have three huge needs.

Healthcare: I believe the Town Board should be a true partner in the effort to support healthcare on the Plateau. The Eckerd Living Center provided excellent healthcare for my mother. That experience afforded me the opportunity to observe first-hand the outstanding services available on the Highlands Cashiers Hospital campus. I want to do all possible to keep it that way. In 2019, we had two Family Practice Physicians now we have four. More physicians are coming to the area in January, but we still need support staff. My wife and I funded a study by the Clemson University College of Architecture, Graduate Program in Health

Facilities Design. The students determined we need 16 housing units of varying size to meet the needs of our Healthcare workers. When presented with the proposal and asked to honor a 1987 commitment by the town to provide 50,000 gallons per day of sewer service and a 2001 Agreement to provide 70,000 gallons per day of water service from lines that are in the ground our Town Board voted 4-1 to deny the request. I could not believe that vote as the total water used on the hospital campus today is using less than 20% of what was committed to. Affordable worker housing is also a huge problem to maintain the services we have become accustomed to from the business community.

Broadband: We all have heard of the Wide Open Networks plan to provide fiber to our homes. I had to retain a lawyer after asking for eight months to read our Broadband file. After reading the file, I learned that Wide Open Networks was never told by the Town there are other providers that are upgrading their systems to provide Gig service. In March 2020, Wide Open declined to sign a contract to operate the system they planned. And, Wide Open even declined to respond to a new Request for Proposals to operate the system. Since this project is at least 18 months past the contract completion date, I have been asking for three months to see the construction file which has not been honored. My minister says problems have solutions and dilemmas have thorns. So here we find ourselves in the position that the town chose to build a much more costly fiber plant of \$4.6 million which is more than the Wide Open recommended \$3 million project. Further complicating this thorny issue is the system that has been built will only serve the areas that have overhead electrical service. I have not yet been allowed to read the contract the town is negotiating with Hotwire. This is a huge

• See CANDIDATES page 15

...CANDIDATES continued from page 14

dilemma and I am afraid we aren't going to get out of this without getting stuck.

Short Term Rentals: At the July Town Board meeting, there was a lengthy discussion of the 2021 Update to the Highlands Comprehensive plan. Recommendation Land Use 5.5 on page 67 of the draft plan reads "consider updating land use regulations to define short term rentals as a use and establish geographic restrictions, approval requirements and/or performance-based standards for the use." Action Item 7 of the draft plan reads "Monitor and mitigate the impact of short-term rentals on the Highlands Community." I suggested that we make this a high priority rather than the suggested mid-level priority. The board unanimously agreed that this should be a priority.

Commissioner Candidate Pat Allen

I am running because I've always listened to my inner voice and I feel it's what I'm supposed to do. I have seen big changes in the dynamics of our special town over the last two years. These changes have encouraged positive opportunities for growth but also have introduced the risks of losing what has made our little town so unique. In my 27 years as a full-time resident, I have seen many changes, but never to this extent. I want to use my knowledge and experience to make sure we maintain the character of our small town that led so many of us to want to live here.

Commissioner Candidate Mary Alice Bynum

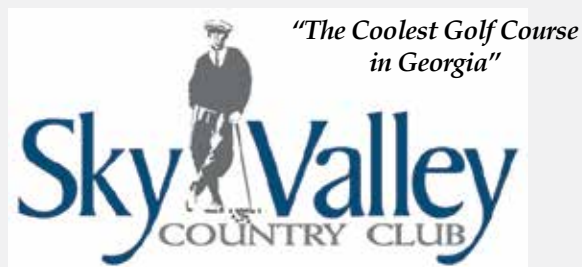
I am running for the Town Board. My platform is **CHANGES TO OUR TOWN! WHAT DO RESIDENTS WANT?** I have been a business owner in our quaint village since 1982 and I have certainly seen a lot of changes in Highlands. Change is good, but on the other hand is it always necessary and how do these changes impact our quality of life?

We must ask ourselves if we are ready to turn Highlands into Gatlinburg, TN or Helen, GA. I plan to tackle issues that most affect our residents rather than focusing on expanding tourism.

I realize that weddings are now a major part of the landscape in Highlands, but we want to be more than a wedding destination. I would like to address parking, short-term rentals, access to local venues, healthcare and stress the importance of supporting our police and the fire and rescue departments. I would like to talk to our residents and hear what changes they would like to see made and those they don't want to be made.

I want to hear your voices and keep the wonderful charm the town of Highlands exudes. I have lived in the mountainous regions of North Georgia and Western North Carolina my entire life. Community means everything to me, and I want to rep-

• See CANDIDATES page 17



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注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-828-586-7000。

...TOPICS continued from page 5

He said they are considered full-time while in the school and are paid and receive benefits and get a sign-on bonus when they complete the program.

About seven years into the 10-year contract with Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) which owns the hospital, Neal said he is "blown away" by the financial

commitment of \$7 million HCA as made to update the hospital's infrastructure.

He said it is the hospital's goal to be the provider of choice for healthcare in Highlands and Cashiers.

During the Mayor Reports, Mayor Pat Taylor presented several issues he wants the Land Use Committee to review.

First, he said that there have been a lot of complaints about construction noise during off hours.

Commercial construction is only allowed weekdays from 7:30a to 6p. Workers painting quietly inside a structure are not considered "heavy construction" which is what the town's ordinance addresses.

Commercial Landscape companies are lumped in with construction, so they aren't supposed to be working on weekends either.

"Some of their equipment can make as much noise as that used by construction crews," said the mayor.

Homeowners are allowed to do landscaping on the weekends and after hours on weekdays however he said there is some ambiguity in the ordinance which he wants the Land Use Committee to address.

Second, he said there have been complaints about loud music generated by bands. According to the ordinance, band music is supposed to stop by 11p, but he said it may need to be adjusted and suggested the Land Use Committee also review that.

The last issue was about alcoholic beverages being allowed in K-H Founders Park on July 4.

This year music in the park was on Saturday, July 3, and it was about as crowded as it was on Sunday, July 4. People didn't understand why they could drink alcohol in the park on Saturday but not on Sunday.

Initially, Police Chief Andrea Holland said she was worried about the mixture of alcohol and the increased number of vehicles on the road generated by July 4th activities in the park with people leaving when it's dark compared to their leaving when it's light after a typical Saturday night of music.

On May 13, a Petition for Rezoning was submitted to the Planning Department by Bennett Williams for his property at 1459 South 4th Street. The lot is .28 acres and zoned B-3 Commercial, but the building operates as a single-family dwelling. Williams requested the property be rezoned to R-1 to fit the residential nature of the building. The Planning Board reviewed the item on May 24 and recommended approval but at the July Town Board meeting commissioners denied the request 3-1. Commissioner Marc Hehn voted "no" to denying the request. Commissioners Amy Patterson and John Dotson had the most to say about the issue.

"It's zoned B-3 but it is multi-use which means residential is allowed, but if we make it R1, the only thing it can be is a single-family residence," said Patterson. "Later, it might be best as a home with a home occupation and if it's rezoned R1 they can't do it."

Both commissioners said Highlands needs places other than the downtown business area for businesses.

"Highlands makes money because people come here to spend it and we need places for businesses to fuel our economy," said Patterson. "If we rezone everything in our corridors to something other than business, we are limiting our future."


Commissioner Dotson said simply that there are businesses needed in Highlands that have no business being on Main Street and there needs to be places zoned for them.

"Main Street rent is astronomical so to take a potential business property and convert it to R1 is restricting the future potential of that property," he said. "Besides, residential is allowed in the B3 district."

— Kim Lewicki

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Making moon rocks at TL&LC Summer Camp

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Attendees of The Literacy & Learning Center's Summer Camp recently took a trip to Mill Creek in Highlands to collect mica to make moon rocks for their camp project. Kids brought back the haul of mica from the creek to create their own moon rocks back at home base (TL&LC).

Campers also read the Dr. Seuss book *There's No Place Like Space* and were visited by John Hendricks from The Bascom who helped kids paint space-themed art projects.

TL&LC Senior Program Manager Anne Norton, said adventures like the hike to the creek are activities that often revolve around STEAM, learning focused on science, technology, engineer-

ing, arts, and mathematics.

"This was a chance tie in the experience of nature with our moon rocks project," said Norton. "Some of them have never been there before so it was a great chance to explore the area."

Visitors from The Bascom, The Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, and Ben the Reading Dog stop by throughout the summer presenting art and nature themed projects to campers, or just hang out and read books.

"They can learn facts around a theme, and then explore those facts with hands-on activities at camp," said Norton.

In addition to collecting a solid haul of mica, camper Catherine Graham, 6, found an inch worm.

"We found a lot of mica and



The Literacy & Learning Center Summer Campers looking for micah down at Mill Creek to make moon rocks. From left are Vickie Betts, Kenley, Mary, Catherine, Avery, Kiyah, Marina and Anna Norton.

got to find all kinds of creatures like butterflies, minnows, and I had an inch worm on my finger," said Graham. "It tickled when it moved and it was fuzzy, kind of."

Marina Martinez, 7, said the coolest part about making moon rocks was looking for the mica.

"You need to find shiny rocks to make the moon rocks," said Martinez. "I made two. I found some mica on the beach, some in the water, and some on land away from the beach. That's why summer camp is fun, because we do fun stuff."

Mary Betances, 7, said she

had tons of fun at Mill Creek.

"We had to find mica to make moon rocks, and then we got to spread our creativity by finding big ones and small ones," said Betances. "I liked that they glittered."

Highlands Food Pantry hires new director

Bonnie Dayton was recently hired as the Highlands Food Pantry's new Director.

"The mission of the Food Pantry is to make sure no one in the community goes hungry or suffers food insecurity," said Dayton. "The pantry partners with other agencies to acquire and distribute food to those in need."

New hours at Highlands Food Pantry, located at the back of the Methodist Church, begin August 2.

Monday-Tuesday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Call 828-526-0890 for more info.



Bonnie Dayton

...CANDIDATES continued from page 15

resent the people of this community. Share with me your ideas and concerns so I can invest in you and Highlands. **WILL WORK FOR YOU!**

Commissioner Candidate

Thomas Craig

Over the past 33 years I have been fortunate to start a marriage, raise a family, make friends, and watch Highlands prosper. I could not be more thankful and I want to be a part of the future of Highlands.

Commissioner Candidate

Nick McCall

I am running for the Highlands Town Board, because I gen-

uinely love this town and the people in it. I have no hidden agenda, nor allegiances to special interests or entities within the town. Coming out of the pandemic, Highlands is now at a critical juncture. Balancing economic growth and environmental preservation. In addition to a plethora of issues from healthcare, broadband, workforce housing to short-term rentals. Preserving the identity, local culture and character of our town, while managing growth is more important than ever. And if elected I would serve to give the community a voice in the decision-making process.

Commissioner Candidate

Commissioner Amy Patterson

Highlands is my home. I want to help our community shape its future while meeting our citizen's current needs.

Commissioner Candidate

Eric Pierson

Simply; for my kids. Being seventh generation Highlanders, I want to do everything I can to see that Highlands maintains controlled responsible positive growth, so that they, along with others, will continue to have such a wonderful community to live and prosper in for generations to come.

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CRT or CRT?

Dr. Mark Ford
First Baptist Church Highlands

I would like to talk to you about CRT...I figure I got your attention, now. But I somewhat deceive. It is not quite "Critical Race Theory" I am going to talk about as much as Christian Redemption Teachings. My definition is, "Christian teachings about the, or relating to, the social construct and Scriptural realities regarding race and racism."

The contemporary understanding of the acronym "CRT" is - "Critical Race Theory, which is a sociological and theoretical movement based on the premise that race is not only a natural, biologically grounded feature of just physically distinct subgroups of human beings, but a socially constructed (culturally invented) category that is used to oppress and exploit people of color.

Critical race theorists hold that the law and social institutions in the United States are inherently (read systemic) racist insofar as they function to create and maintain social, economic, and political inequalities between whites and nonwhites." They, therefore, would promote what many see as radical efforts to rectify these institutional, social, and cultural racial biases by such steps as reeducating the status quo (translated white Americans), adjusting economics to compensate for past inequities, and both finding fault with and rewriting of our history (see Britannica, "CRT").

But I will offer what may appear to be a naïve and simplistic counter – my Christian Redemption Teachings.

First, the Bible is clear that we are all created in the image of God. As Galatians 3 teaches us, "We are all children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. And in Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, but you are all one in Christ." These physical and national differences will persist even into eternity (Rev. 21:22-27).

My point – race and nationalities are a reality and part of God's plan. But God has no favorites.

Second, because I believe in the Biblical reality of sin in all its expressions of pride, hate, and bigotry, I believe we are all sinners and all of us imperfect. Call it "systemic sin" if you like. We all – regardless of color, creed, or culture – carry our baggage of ethnocentric and cultural biases. As Christians, we are to repent of these sinful proclivities. The histories of empires, nations, and communities are bespotted with failures and unrighteous acts toward others – whether the "other" be race, tribe, nationalities, or religions. The Bible is in part a historical drama of humanities sins toward God and injustices toward one another. The Bible is clear. Humans are capable of ugly, individual and tribalistic mistreatment of our fellow people. But this brings me to my third point.

The Bible and its message of redemption teaches me that no amount of historical rewrite or social engineering can repair the past or fix the present. There has always been

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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Rev. Aryan Williams-Reubel, Pastor 828-743-5298

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

Wednesdays – Supper at 6 p.m.

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10:45am Children's Program, Youth- 12:15 – 2:30pm Tues:

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Thurs: Men's Bible Study 7:30-8:30 a.m.

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Sunday Services in the Chapel:

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

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

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

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

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Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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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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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from July 6. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

July 6

• Officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident at 200 Main.

July 13

• At 12:37 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on N. 4th Street at Maple Street.

July 14

• At 4 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident at the Rec Center.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from July 13.

July 13

• At 7:57 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Skylake Drive.

• At 9:22 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brock Court.

• At 9:25 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brookside Lane.

• At 10:33 a.m., responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 12:32 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor

vehicle accident on N. 4th Street.

• At 2:42 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance on NC 106.

• At 11:10 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

July 14

• At 1:50 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a location on Main Street.

• At 5:57 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

July 15

• At 2:55 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 east.

• At 1:04 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 28 south.

• At 7:55 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Shortoff Road.

July 16

• At 12:47 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on N. 4th Street.

July 18

• At 2:29 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 east.

• At 10:35 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106.

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING continued from page 18

and always will be one cure for our problems about hate and bigotry – and there is enough to go around on all sides of the issue and among all peoples. The cure is faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for our sins, and the cleansing, forgiveness, and new hearts which it secures.

Man-made cures and attempts at justice as they apply to racialistic and racial rectification – and history bears this out – only create more animosity and hate down the road. The only source of love, forgiveness, and cooperation among people is to be found in Christ. And there before Him one day, we will all bow the knee, and none will claim superiority or call for justice (Philippians 2:9-11).

We cannot atone for the sins of our forefathers and mothers of the past. Only Christ can do that. We cannot realistically rectify injustices of the past – for all of us in some way could cry out for some retribution or rectification for past mistreatments of us or our forebearers.

Our only solace, comfort and hope in the moment is to experience the love of God through each other in mutual forgiveness, grace, kindness, respect, and acknowledgment of the plague of sin in all its dark hues past, present and future. As Christians we are to set forth the reality of Christ in us and Christ for others – “letting each esteem others better than themselves...and to look out for the in-

terests of others” (Phil. 2:3,4).

I believe the contemporary CRT of today will only create greater divisiveness in assigning guilt to one group and not all people – “for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3). It is rooted in a theory of socialism (Harvard, 1980s) and not science.

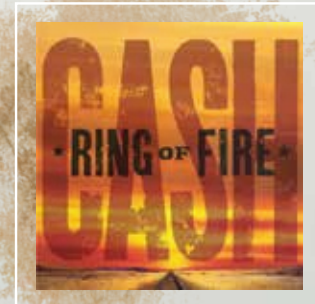
Second, it presumes confidence in humanities ability to fix problems of injustice. Not even a statism that forces rectitude or the appearance of equality will change the hearts and minds of men and women. All the wars, genocides and conflicts of the past and present prove that to be idealistic at best. The only place to find unadulterated equality (equal treatment and respect) will likely be the new heaven and new earth, where Christ will be Lord of lords and King of kings. The only place to expect complete equity (equal, fair outcomes) will also be in heaven.

The answer for today is that with love, respect, and kindness for one another as commanded by Christ our Lord, we can work for equality – equal treatment, opportunity, and respect. The Lord in His providence is in charge of the equity. I’m placing my hope on Christian Redemption Teachings, not the CRT of today. I guess I am biased against man’s theories. My faith is in God’s teachings.

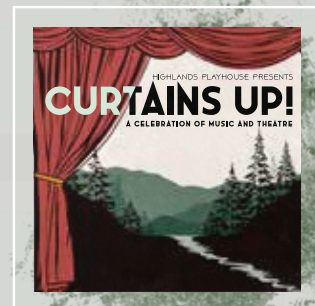


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Office: 828-526-8784

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TANT POSITION with J Scott Baker, MD and Rebecca Baker, NPC . Medical knowledge and computer skills necessary. Monday through Friday 8:30 TO 5:00. Please call 828-526-1700 to ask for Sheri or send a resume to sobrien.baker@gmail.com. (st. 7/15)

LIBERTY LOVING EMPLOYEES WANTED! If you love freedom, customer service, having fun and are a positive, happy individual, we want to interview you!. Looking for 1 - 2 retail customer service team members in Highlands. Positions include traditional retail duties and being awesome with the public - young to old..

Also looking for one full-time bartender in Highlands, so experience is preferred. Willing to train the right person to be the personality of the establishment. Characters welcome, charisma required, boring is unacceptable. All positions require honesty, dependability and a service oriented personality. Must be presentable and drug-free, with a clean criminal record. Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference. ~ Winston Churchill Email us at libertynlibations@gmail.com.

40-HOURS GUARANTEED PER WEEK. Potential for year-round position. Grounds maintenance at Highlands Falls Country Club. Please call 828-526-2203. (st. 7/8)

GRILL & SAUTE COOK/EXPERIENCED positions open at Caffe Rel. 4 days a week to include lunch and dinner shift. Great pay per experience. Call Kevin at 841-763-5539. Need ASAP. (st. 6/24)

HOSPITALITY MINDSET: Highlands Country Club is looking for a few individuals for food service, bartending and housekeeping, who have a heart for service, want to be respected as professionals and know how to earn to your ability. Competitive pay, tips for F & B staff, uniform provided, and meals per shift provided to all. Golfing privileges are available. Wonderful, busy working atmosphere. Appreciative management to work with each person. Go to www.highlandscountryclub.com, select the Career tab at the top of the tool bar to fill out an application. Or, call 828-787-2782 and leave a message for Greg. See the Club's reviews on Indeed. (st. 6/24)

PART TIME BOOKKEEPER NEEDED for local business. Most work can be done from home. Call or text Tim Sharp 256-683-5885. (st. 6/24)

THE HIGHLANDS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & VISIT HIGHLANDS, NC is seeking a part-time employee to work in the Welcome Center on Saturday and Sunday. The ideal candidate should have excellent knowledge of

the Highlands and Plateau areas and enjoy greeting visitors to our town. Hours are Saturday 10a.m. – 4p.m. and Sunday 11a.m. – 3 p.m. For consideration, please send resume to visitor@highlandschamber.org or call 828-526-2112. (st. 5/27)

POSH PAWS PET SPA IN HIGHLANDS, NC is now hiring full time, part time, and seasonal dog bathers. Our business hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 9-5, and we will be doing open interviews Tuesday - Friday from 10-3. We are not open in the evenings or on holidays, so you can expect to be able to enjoy those times with loved ones.

Have you ever been interested in working with animals or trying something new but weren't sure how to get into the animal care industry? Working as a dog bather may be the job for you! This is an entry level position that requires no prior experience. Fast advancement opportunities are available through our self-paced, paid, one-on-one apprenticeship. This is a great opportunity to learn a trade skill without accumulating educational debt! All of our employees (including the owners of the business) have started their dog grooming careers as a bather.

Dog bathers must be willing to learn and take constructive criticism. We currently employ a wonderful group of people that works well as a team, so being a team player is a must. Drama will not be tolerated. A love for dogs and a high level of patience is also required. Attention to detail is a necessity as we never want to send home a dog that isn't 100% clean.

This job does require standing for long periods of time and heavy lifting with help. The bather must be able to wash, rinse, and dry up to 8 large dogs per day plus small dogs. Daily duties will include bathing and blow drying the dogs, assisting the groomers when needed, and completing daily as well as weekly cleaning routines to keep our salon looking and smelling nice.

Still not sure if this would be the right job for you? Please give us a call at 828-526-9581 with any additional questions about the position or come by to take a quick no obligation tour before applying. We look forward to hearing from you!

THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT AND LEARNING CENTER - Are you looking for a summer job? We are still looking to fill the following positions: Kitchen Staff, Cabin Counselor, Health Center Coordinator (must be 21+, EMT certified or higher), CIT Mentor (21+), ASCENDER Mentor (21+) You can find more details about these positions and apply on our website: TheMountainRLC.org. Please reach out with any questions or concerns at youthcamp@themountainrlc.org. I look forward to seeing your application! (st. 4/1)

CHESTNUT HILL OF HIGHLANDS is an Upscale, Small Assisted Living Facility looking for Med Aides, CNA's and Dietary Staff. You may apply in person at 24 Clubhouse Trail, by Phone at 828-526-5251 or by email to ce.chestnuthill@yahoo.com or lindabtiff@aol.com.

JOIN OUR TEAM! Whole Life Market is now hiring for full/part time positions. Are you a fun, healthy minded individual looking for a positive work environment? We are an organic health food store/ juice bar. Experience is not necessary but any grocery store, barista skills are a plus. Competitive pay! Apply at Whole Life Market, 680 N. 4th. St, Highlands.

FULL AND PART TIME RETAIL SALES ASSOCIATES WANTED. Contact Potpourri at 828-200-0044 to schedule an interview. Eyewear experience is a plus. (st. 5/13)

DO YOU LIKE TO CLEAN AND ORGANIZE? Private club seeking a few energetic individuals with a happy state of mind to join our staff in the housekeeping department. Early hours, routine schedule, competitive pay, benefits, one daily meal provided, and uniforms provided. If you are interested, please contact us at Highlands Country Club at 828-526-2181. (st. 5/13)

CALLING ALL MERMAIDS! Spartina 449 now hiring part time key and sales position. Apply in person. 394 Main St, Highlands. 828-787-1178 (st. 4/29)

OLD EDWARDS INN & SPA, HIGHLANDS NC – Graphic Design & Layout Professional, P/T Marketing Asst/ Print Production, Catering Manager, Sales Manager, Assistant F&B Manager, Banquet Captain, Banquet Supervisor, Host, Server, Breakfast Server, Server Assistant, Bartender, AM Sous Chef, Breakfast Cook, Cook, Assistant Pastry Chef, Dishwasher, Reservations Specialist, Front Desk Supervisor, Front Desk Agent, Bellman, Room Attendant, Houseman, 2nd Shift Laundry, Retail Associate, Fitness Manager, Spa Concierge, Spa Attendant, Massage Therapist, Spin Instructor. SPECIAL RETENTION BONUS, \$1000 Full Time / \$500 Part time, FOR THESE LICENSED POSITIONS: COSMETOLOGIST • HAIR STYLIST • MAKEUP ARTIST • NAIL TECH. Benefits and PTO for FULL TIME. Apply online: www.oldedwardsinn.com/careers

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THE SUMMER HOUSE BY REEVES FURNITURE STORE IN HIGHLANDS is looking for full and part time positions in sales and warehouse & delivery personnel. Must be professional appearing, friendly, self-motivated, and enthusiastic. Previous sales and/or customer service experience preferred. Competitive starting pay. Generous benefits for full-time positions. Apply in person at The Summer House, 2089 Dillard Road in Highlands. (st. 5/20)

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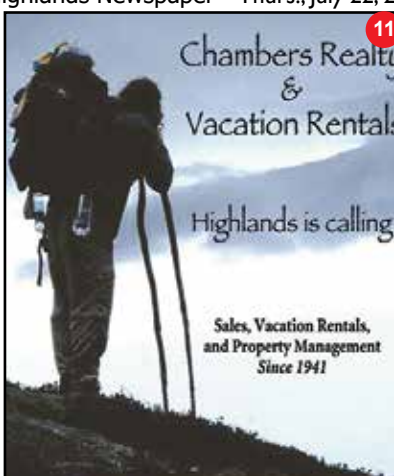
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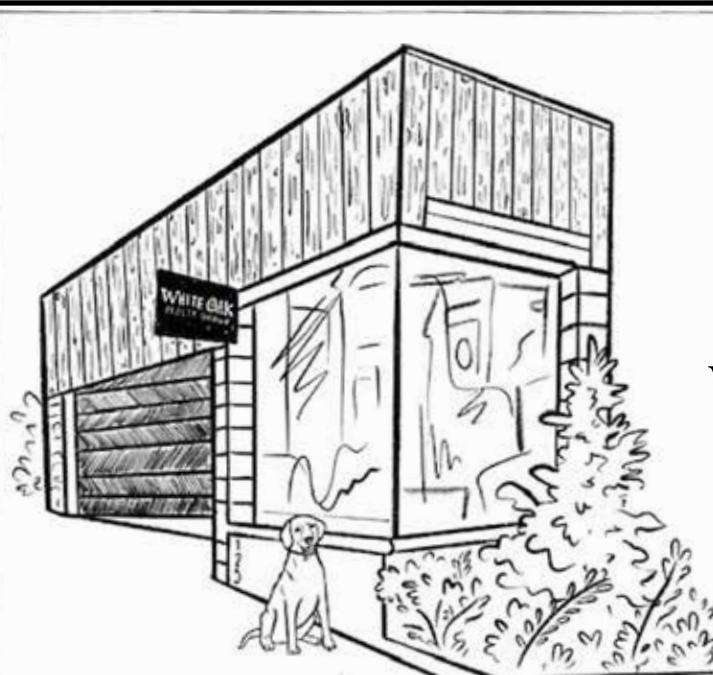
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