

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., June 24, 2021

Town Board passes FY '21-'22 budget 4-1; waives online utility payment fee

Very little has changed since the FY '21-'22 budget was finalized in early May and again in late May when commissioners voted

to hold the required public hearing prior to passage at the June Town Board meeting.

It's basically \$28.3 million after

\$137,500 was added for LED ball-field lights, which will be matched by the county, and a reduction in

• See TOWN BOARD page 6

NC 106 to close night of June 27; will reopen AM of June 28

Submitted

A section of Dillard Road (N.C. 106) will be closed on Sunday, June 27 beginning at 9 p.m.

N.C. Department of Transportation maintenance crews will replace a deteriorated culvert near Woodcrest Way. The work is expected to be completed by 6 a.m. on Monday, June 28.

Drivers will be diverted on to U.S. 64. Digital message boards have been posted to increase awareness and alert drivers of the upcoming closure and detour route.

Drivers should be mindful of crews working in the area and factor the detour into their commutes.

For real-time travel information, visit DriveNC.gov or follow NCDOT on social media.



Photo by Brian O'Shea

Highlands Hurricanes win again; add two more to the National Team

By Steve Hott
Head Coach

On Thursday, June 17, the Highlands Hurricanes swim team traveled to Sylva, NC to compete with the Jackson County Swim Team at their home pool.

Led by meet high-scorers Blake Kenter, Jr. Olympian Jelehna

McKim, and Jr. Olympic qualifier Justin Powell, who each scored 25 points, the Hurricanes won handily 536-156.

Kenter and Powell also had four Allstar qualifying swims. McKim had one and a Jr. Olympic qualifying swim.

• See HURRICANES page 11

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Sheriff Holland to retire; not running in 2022

By Brittney Lofthouse

After serving five terms as Sheriff and three decades in law enforcement, Macon County Sheriff Robert Holland has announced that he will NOT be seeking re-election in 2022.

"Throughout my 30-year career with the Macon County Sheriff's Office, I have been dedicated to this community while serving in a wide variety of positions," Sheriff Holland said in his announcement on Friday morning. "For the past

19 years, I have had the distinct privilege of serving as your Sheriff. While carrying out my duties, I have always tried to give my very best. I knew that, along with being elected Sheriff, came the awesome responsibility of ensuring the safety and security of our community. I am proud to have always been associated with such a dedicated and professional group of officers and employees who continue to serve honorably at YOUR Sheriff's Office. I

• See HOLLAND page 17

Vehicle break-in is on Highlands Police radar

Submitted

Investigators with the Highlands Police Department are investigating a vehicle break-in which occurred last Saturday afternoon at the Lake Sequoyah Dam.

According to a statement from the Highlands Police De-

partment, an unknown suspect broke into a light blue Toyota Avalon which was parked and left unattended near the dam. The suspect smashed in the passenger-side front window and stole a black purse containing a wallet,

• See BREAK-IN page 17

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

Budget details disclosed

The town budget was passed at last Thursday's Highlands Town Board meeting. There are several capital items that folks will notice in the coming months.

Sometime this fall new street paving projects will get underway. Spring Street and Sherwood Forest Road will be paved. Upper Lake and Lower Lake Roads are currently unpaved. They will be paved also. There will be no right-of-way issues since the paving will only cover the existing roadbed. No widening will be done.

The budget includes two sidewalk projects. A new sidewalk will be installed between the Wells Hotel and the new subdivision development across from the ball field. The developer was required to install a sidewalk in front of the subdivision as a part of the town sidewalk plan. This new sidewalk connects the existing sidewalk to the newly built subdivision sidewalk. There will also be improvements made to the sidewalk in front of the Highlands Presbyterian Church. The understructure of that section



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

of sidewalk has been degrading for a number of years.

A major budget item will be the improvement of a waterline on Morewood Road. A dead-end section of a two-inch galvanized line will be replaced with a 6-inch ductile iron line that will be connected to an existing major line in order to form a continuous flow in that area. The new waterline will cost \$670,000 and will improve fire protection. The project will probably get

underway in the fall. It will cause disruption of vegetation on the roadside since substantial excavation will be required.

A generator will be installed at the Little Bear Pen pump station for \$75,000. This new generator will ensure continuous operation of the station should a major power failure hit the town.

At the water treatment plant, a new high service replacement pump with variable flow devices will be installed. This pump will ensure continuous service to the town should there be a major waterline break. The town is spending a total of \$885,000 for improvements to the water treatment plant this coming year. We will be making ongoing upgrades and improvements at the water plant for years to come.

At the wastewater treatment plant, a number of maintenance and upgrades will be made. A UV light system is a critical component of treating wastewater without the use of chemicals. The repair of the unit and replacement of lights will cost \$12,000. The tank cleaning costs for this year is \$61,000.

In the electric department a new bucket truck will cost \$251,000. Also, we will be upgrading streetlights with new LED lights that can be adjusted for intensity levels. The new LED ball field light system will cost the town \$137,500. The county is partnering with us by also contributing \$137,500 which is half of the total cost. I appreciate the county supporting this project that will improve lighting for the field and at the same time reduce light spillover into the surrounding neighborhoods.

The new budget year begins July 1.

• LETTERS •

The Delta Variant- Danger for the USA Highlands-Cashiers Covid Call Center is still open for business

Dear Editor,

The Delta Covid variant could be dominant in the US in two to three weeks. It is spreading rapidly, tripling in the last few weeks.

Public Health officials say the Delta Variant is particularly risky to people who are unvaccinated. Delta is about 50% more contagious than the current dominant US strain of Covid, called Alpha, they say, which itself is 50% more transmissible than they most commonly circulating strain last year.

The Delta Variant is also associated with more severe disease. "Like Covid on Steroids" the Delta strain has now been found in 47 states and the severe disease and death rate is higher than Alpha Covid.

Full vaccination appears to provide significant protection from the variants currently circulating.

Delta is coming. I don't mean to be alarmist, but public health officials are sounding the alarm and this is another good reason to get your vaccine.





The Highlands-Cashiers Covid Call Center is still open, helping businesses, residents, second home residents, students and even visitors get their vaccines.

We are open on Monday-Friday mornings and helping people to find their preferred vaccine and making appointments for Highlands Pharmacy and Cashiers Valley Pharmacy. We are also assisting businesses who have staff members who want the vaccine and the disabled to arrange for home or curbside vaccinations. Please call 526-1310 and we will help in any way we can.

Robin King Austin
H-C Call Center Director

• See LETTERS page 5

• WEATHER •

Thu, 24-Jun	Fri, 25-Jun	Sat, 26-Jun	Sun, 27-Jun
			
69°F 52°F	73°F 55°F	73°F 59°F	73°F 60°F
Sunshine and patchy clouds	Mostly cloudy	A couple of showers	A p.m. t-storm possible
RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®	RealFeel®
High: 77° Low: 62°	High: 80° Low: 60°	High: 80° Low: 64°	High: 81° Low: 66°

For Real-time Weather and the Extended Forecast,
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...LETTERS continued from 2

Fundraiser for the K-H park was a success!

Dear Editor,

On behalf of Friends of Founders Park Board of Directors, we wish to thank all involved in our Low Country Shrimp Boil held at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park. Last Saturday evening was our fifth annual Low Country Shrimp Boil to raise funds for the park. Through generous contributions from our sponsors and 215 patrons, we had another great fundraising event to benefit the park. Organizers were Bill Edwards and Jim Oesterle, and the food was masterfully prepared by Chef Marty Rosenfield; all was served up take-out style by our Board members and volunteers. Enjoyed by all, your generosity and turnout made our sold-out event a huge success.

Our sponsors for 2021 are: Paula & Barry Jones, Shirley & Jim Johnson, Diane & Ray McPhail, Diane & Michael Levine, Anonymous, Highlands Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club of Highlands, Ross Landscape Architecture PLLC, Highlands Newspaper, Laurel Magazine, WHLC Radio, Dry Sink, Town of Highlands, Marleen & Alfred Salo, Mayor Pat Taylor, Friends of Founders Park Board of Directors & Volunteers.

Friends of Founders Park is a 501 (c) 3 charitable organization and 100% of all donations are used for the park improvements. We provide community representation and provide support for many aspects of park upkeep including annual and perennial flower color, tree and shrub planting, structures and drainage, and design guidance. The items we provide are in partnership with the Town of Highlands' general maintenance for Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park.

It is hard to imagine Highlands without our beautiful downtown park, and the success of this event was made possible by you, our sponsors, our board members and volunteers. Thank you.

Hank Ross
President, Friends of Founders Park

Macon County Schools is looking for more public comment to spend millions of COVID19 relief funding

By Brittney Lofthouse

Around \$15 million has been allocated to the Macon County School System in funding referred to as ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund) funding. In 2020 and 2021, Congress passed three stimulus bills that provided nearly \$190.5 billion to the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. States receive funds based on the same proportion that each state receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title-IA. States must distribute at least 90% of funds to local education agencies (LEAs) based on their proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. States have the option to reserve 10% of the allocation for emergency needs as determined by the state to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, 2020, provided \$13.5 billion to the ESSER Fund.

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), passed on Dec. 27, 2020, provided \$54.3 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER II fund.

The American Rescue Plan Act, passed on March 11, 2021, provided \$122.7 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER III fund.

The funding does have requirements and regulations attached to it. The school system is required to reserve at least 20 percent of the funding they receive to address learning loss.

Two-thirds of ESSER funds were immediately available to states, while remaining funds will be made available after states submit ESSER implementation plans. The U.S. Department of Education is tracking state plans, 28 states have submitted their plans for review and approval.

Macon County Schools established a task force, to determine the best way for the funds to be spent and have asked the public for input on ways they would like to see the funding improve public education in Macon County.

The Community Collaborative group is made up of school board members, commissioners, teachers, parents, business leaders, and central office staff. This list of possible initiatives where ESSER funding could be used to invest in our students, teachers, and school system infrastructure, came out of data collected from students, parents and teachers in our community.

The Macon County School Board is now asking the general public to review the list of possible initiatives and to rank each area with ONE (1) being a low priority and FIVE (5) being a high priority. There is also a section after each option where the public can provide written comments related to each funding area.

Macon County Schools will be utilizing ESSER funding in several priority areas.

Based on survey data, the five initiatives that all stakeholders agree upon are:

- Hands on / experiential / outdoors
- More art /music / extracurriculars
- More / enhanced science / STEM
- Less testing
- More fun

After the survey is completed, the Community Collaborative Group will analyze the response to formulate a plan for how to utilize the funding that will be approved by the Macon County Board of Education.

To participate in the survey, visit the News and Announcements section of the school system's website (www.macon.k12.nc.us) for a direct link to the Public Comment Form.

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Highlands Real Estate-101

REAL ESTATE UPDATE:

Business is great, Prices are way up, Inventory is way down.

I know what you're saying, "Tell me something I don't already know." I'll try.

If you're reading the Highlands Newspaper from afar, you probably want to know what our "Loveliest town on the Plateau" is all about.

Should you consider the trip from your over-heated, over-populated, traffic laden, smog filled, too busy, and now unsafe city?

Taking it one step further, should I look for a second home or perhaps think about moving to the mountains permanently?

To that end, we thought it best to provide a Highlands-Cashiers primer of sorts, a guide that may prove helpful should you decide to consider our area for that next chapter of your life. Here goes:

#1). A Drop in Blood Pressure: The statement we hear most from the "regulars" (locals, frequent visitors, second homeowners, resident commuters) is this: "As I'm driving up and I get that first glimpse of the mountains, my blood pressure drops almost as fast as the temperature." It's just healthier here folks, so lower that dose of Lipitor.

#2). This is not Gatlinburg: No offense to Dolly Parton, mini-golf, or fine dining at Applebee's but this place is very different, and you'll sense it right away.

People say "please" and "thank you" and we stop our cars in the middle of the street to let you cross or wait patiently as you take five minutes to parallel park.

Shop owners sell very few sleeveless t-shirts but a ton of nice sweaters. What we lack in donut shops, we make up for with fresh beignets and croissant.

#3). "Driving" People Crazy: It's a



Pat Gleeson
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good idea if you visit to learn the local traffic laws, which are unique to our mountain culture.

First of all, lose the horn. It's simply not polite to honk at people in Highlands unless it's accompanied by a wave hello. Next, curves in the road are meant to be driven at the prevailing speed limit, and not 3 miles per hour. And finally, if the car in front of you has a "Go Gators" bumper sticker, they may be from Florida, so slow down accordingly and try to refrain from any bad language if you happen to be a Bulldog fan.

Oh yes, one more thing. If you see a parked squad car and you ask for directions don't be offended if the nice policeman doesn't answer, because he may be a dummy (ask a local to explain).

#4). Face Time: The masks are gone, and you see people smiling again, and for good reason. You simply need to be here to experience the nearly everyday rainfall, the freshest air, and the cleanest water. You'll be smiling too.

In Highlands we practice "anti-social media," and everyone concentrates more on mountain time, fishing time, tee times, and nap time than they do screen time. People here are pretty much high on life rather than other substances.

#5). Be nice to the Bears.

Our firm uses this line all the time but it bears repeating if you haven't heard it before. It goes like this: "Highlands, NC. Come for a visit, stay for a Lifetime!"

• Pat Gleeson, Bee, Tom, Christal, Michael, Susie and their dog Gemma are Helpers and Brokers of White Oak Realty Group, in downtown Highlands (4th Street across from the Old Edwards Inn). Since 2009, White Oak Realty Group remains one of the leading boutique brokerage firms on the Highlands-Cashiers Plateau. You can reach all of us at 828.526.8118.

..TOWN BOARD continued from page 1

the General Fund Capital Projects Fund due to a recent payment to DR Reynolds for the fire department project.

Neither tax rates nor fees are changing for citizens this upcoming year.

However, in a surprise move at the June Town Board meeting, Commissioner Marc Hehn voted not to adopt the FY '21-'22 budget with a vote 4-1.

• See TOWN BOARD page 7

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Dr. Ann Davis, Blue Ridge Health-Highlands-Cashiers (BRHHC); Dr. Kristy Fincher (BRHHC); Robin Tindall, Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation (HCHF); Zach Claxton, Rotary Club of Highlands; Ashlie Mitchell Lanning, HCHF

..TOWN BOARD continued from page 6

“As I’ve said before, I am against paving a private road in a new subdivision. I have been getting complaints from citizens who live on private roads that the town won’t maintain; they feel they are being treated unfairly,” he said.

The road Commissioner Hehn is referring to is a gravel road that bisects a parcel of land owned on both sides by one party which connects Sherwood Forest Road to Little Bear Pen Road.

When the parcel was purchased, the new owner asked if the town wanted to take the road over and pave it because it is gravel and prone to erosion, because town water lines that service one-quarter of the town run under the road and “because it serves as the only escape route available to Little Bear Pen residents should a road in that vicinity slide off the mountain,” said Town Engineer/Public Service Director Lamar Nix.

Though the town doesn’t usually take over private roads Nix said he considered it civic-minded of the owner to suggest it due to the underlying circumstances.

This year \$180,000 is being used to repave Spring Street; \$120,000 to repave Sherwood Forest with \$15,000 of that going to pave the gravel spur; \$85,000 to pave Upper Lake Road and \$135,000 to pave Lower Lake Road, both of which are gravel.

The ad valorem tax rate of \$.1565 per \$100 valuation is unchanged with the 1 ½ cents previously earmarked for recreation

• See TOWN BOARD page 8



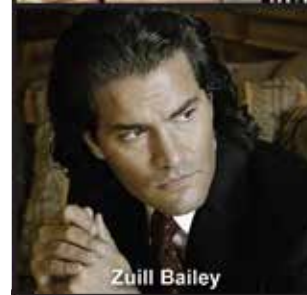
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PAST & PRESENT

My truck's bigger than your truck!

Did you know that Southerners love trucks as much if not more than any other region? And here in the mountains?

In 2016, North Carolinians registered 4,496,137 trucks, 3,546,263 automobiles, 195,618 motorcycles, and 32,525 buses. Although the mythic nostalgia of Thunder Road, NASCAR, and Smoky and the Bandit persist, most locals know it's really all about trucks, not sculpted cars, trans-ams, or "really cool cars."

All kinds of trucks, big, small, tall, rusty, dirty, not very new, some really old, bad mufflers and noisy baffles, and with almost anything thrown in the truck bed, beer bottles, tools, trash, scrap lumber, a kid, cousin, or friend or two, and even a sometimes-chained, snarling junk yard dog named Kujo or Brutus or Callahan from the movie Dirty Harry.

Don't dare peer into a half-open window or look curiously down into a truck bed. You never know what's in there. Often a super-sized truck might cost more than a tolerable double wide and even be as large.

Still, you won't find many trucks with Florida license plates here in the Carolinas. Instead, look for those on Mercedes, Lexus, BMW, Audi, Cadillac, Land Rover sedans and SUVs pouring out of pricey, gated country club communities sprouting up everywhere.

What about convertibles? Really?

Here in the mountains of western North Carolina? Guess who owns most? Trucks, sedans, SUVs, and convertibles are cultural markers but only one of many.

In my native Texas and elsewhere, trucks also represent independence, namely that you "own your own work" and no one "owns" you. If your job "plays out," you simply throw your wife, kids, and cooler in the truck, turn out the lights, whistle for the dog, and drive off into the sunset looking for another opportunity.

Yet why the obsession with ever larger,



Milton Ready

super-sized, longer, and taller trucks, some so lofty you need a ladder to climb into them? Is it because Americans like everything bigger? Kitchens, refrigerators, bathrooms, homes, TVs, SUVs, and trucks? Because the South lost the Civil War and has never gotten over it? Or because America is still considered a frontier but, instead of a horse, you need a big ol' truck to get around?

Practicality?

Trucks now can tow, haul, or drag anything from an RV to the Giza pyramid. Most have brands on them like "Ram Tough" and "King Ranch Super Crew" as well as intimidating names like Bandito, Rolling Thunder, and the Finisher. You can also name a truck after an ex-wife or girlfriend, something like Banshee or Black Widow.

Do you think there's just a little bit of macho swagger, overcompensation, and phallic symbolism in all this? Nah! Remember the commercial for Chevy Silverado, probably the most successful truck ad ever, one that had Bob Seger singing "Like a Rock?" Not suggestive, is it?

Perhaps 87%+ of truck owners are male, vehicles can weigh anywhere from 4,300 to 5,800 pounds, be as long as 21 feet and as high as 7 feet, have applique steer "horns," a dead "buck" lashed to the hood, remotely "erecting" tow hitches, and "power" tailgates. Wow!

Yet most trucks only tow or are taken off-road perhaps once a year while less than a third regularly are used for hauling. Instead, most are used for pleasure, commuting, and work. No matter. They're always "Ram Tough" ready.

Finally, truck owners will tell you they "look good" while driving, even tough and macho, they stand out and above in a crowd, people notice them, and, in the best of worlds, their truck will always be bigger and better than yours. They're an American icon and always will be. Keep on trucking!

..TOWN BOARD continued from page 7

now being used for Street Paving Projects each year.

Commissioner Hehn also said he was voting against the budget because he feels the town is falling behind on its water plant "to-do" list, namely not spending \$3 million on a water holding tank this coming budget

year.

Nix said the tank is slated to be replaced but since it isn't a critical or catastrophic situation, he has budgeted for other water plant projects this year — specifically a new high service replacement pump with variable

•See TOWN BOARD page 11

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Ganilla's ... everything vanilla ... opens in Wright Square



The Highlands Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Ganilla's, located at 175 Main Street (Wright Square) Highlands. Piper Gilman was joined by friends and family and Chamber staff for this special event. Ganilla's is a purveyor of fine vanilla beans, vanilla extracts vanilla infused coffee beans from around the world. Come and check out their unique selection of vanilla products at their beautiful shop in Wright Square.



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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Highlands Banking Company (Proposed) receives conditional approval from the FDIC for local bank

Submitted

Highlands Banking Company (proposed), has received conditional approval from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ("FDIC") to move forward in the organization of a new local bank in Highlands. This approval signifies that Highlands Banking Company has satisfied the federal applicable regulatory and policy requirements for conditional approval. The

proposed bank's charter application is pending conditional approval from the North Carolina Office of the Commissioner of Banks ("NCCOB"). Once all required capital and all other preopening requirements are met, Highlands Banking Company (proposed) can be granted final approval to open by the FDIC and the NCCOB.

"We are pleased that the FDIC has granted us conditional approval," said Rob-

by Roberts, organizer and proposed Chairman and CEO. "It gets us one step closer to our goal of opening a 'uniquely local' bank for the citizens and businesses of the Highlands area. We anticipate raising the preliminary capital required by the NCCOB over the summer months, and once they grant us conditional approval, we can begin to move forward with our plans to open the bank later this year. We feel confident that all requirements for final approval will be achieved."

In October of 2020, the organizers announced that an application had been filed with state and federal regulators to open Highlands Banking Company (proposed).

"The positive initial response from the community was interrupted by the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic and economic uncertainty," said Tony Potts, proposed president. "With the return of life to normal this spring and summer and the economic upswing for businesses as they reopen and welcome back customers, we are already seeing the initial excitement for a new local bank returning and we anticipate being able to open our doors later this year.

He continued, "The pandemic has not changed the long-term need for a local bank in our community and has made that even more clear. Throughout the nation it has been the community banks that have been nimble and able to react quickly to help their small and mid-sized business customers during this unprecedented crisis. We plan to be here in the future to be responsive to their needs."

According to Potts, the equity raise will continue until the required minimum shares to close the offering have been subscribed for and the organizers conclude the equity raise. The organizers expect to end the equity raise no later than September 30, 2021.

The proposed new local bank has a two-year lease on property located at 670 N. Fourth Street as their location. Currently, it is the headquarters for the officers and organizers providing them with a central location to meet with prospective investors.

"We were pleased to be able to secure this site for our new 'uniquely local' bank," said Potts. "It is in an excellent location and allows us to conveniently visit with people in our community who might have questions about us or be interested in investing in a

local bank."

"We are committed to serving our new customers and communities in the Highlands area with responsive personal service, local decision making, and innovative technology. It's something we are excited about and look forward to," said Potts.

The proposed management team includes Robby Roberts as Chairman and CEO, Potts as President, Susan Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer, and Deanna Mote, Chief Financial Officer. Proposed board members include Jeffery Adams, Melissa Delany, Ted Gammill, Jimmy Garner, and Anita Lupoli and Jim Tate.

For questions or additional information about the proposed bank visit www.highlands.bank.

The offering of common stock of Highlands Banking Company (proposed) (the "Bank") will only be made through the means of an offering circular.

Copies of the offering circular may be obtained from Tony Potts, by email at tpotts@highlands.bank or phone (828) 526-0300 or Lee Bradley, by email at lbradley@communitybankcapital.com or phone (770) 310-9574 or by writing to Highlands Banking Company (proposed), attention: Tony Potts, President (proposed), P.O. Box 2079, Highlands, NC 28741.

THE SECURITIES OFFERED BY THE BANK ARE NOT DEPOSITS AND ARE NOT AND WILL NOT BE INSURED OR GUARANTEED BY THE FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION ("FDIC") OR ANY OTHER FEDERAL OR STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCY. THE BANK'S COMMON STOCK IS SUBJECT TO INVESTMENT RISK, INCLUDING THE POSSIBLE LOSS OF PRINCIPAL.

This communication does not constitute an offer to sell, or the solicitation of an offer to buy in any state or other jurisdiction, to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such offer or solicitation in such state or jurisdiction.

Neither the FDIC, the NCCOB, the Securities and Exchange Commission, nor any other federal or state regulatory authority has approved or disapproved our common stock or the terms of the offering.


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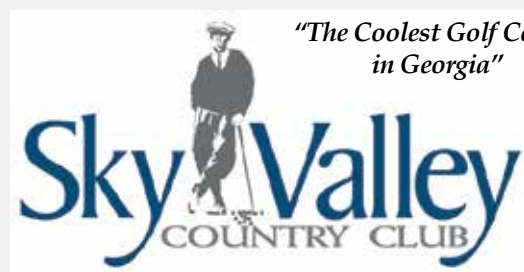
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...HURRICANES continued from page 1

All 30 Hurricanes who swam scored in the meet. They brought home 165 ribbons, 87 of them blue which is first place.

Of particular interest were new National Team members Jr. Olympians Mad-die Cohen and Finneas Garner who both qualified again for the AAU Jr. Olympics to be held in Houston, TX in late July. Both qualified in the 50 free-style. Cohen scored 21 pts, and Garner 15. Cohen and Garner also had three Allstar qualifying swims each.

Jr. Olympian Jelehna McKim broke two team records in the 15-18 girls 100 butterfly and 100 back-stroke, scored 25 pts, and had a Jr. Olympic & an Allstar qualifying swim.

Tate Wilson broke the team record in the 13-14, 100 back-stroke by scoring 24 pts.

Vivian Kennedy, Gweneth Higgins, and Jayce Powell all scored 24 pts. CC Barry scored 22 pts.

Jr. Olympians Aniah McKim and Chase Kenter each scored 21 pts. McKim

and Kenter also each had three Allstar qualifying swims. Kenter had two Jr. Olympic qualifying swims.

Emelina Hernandez, Anabella Batista and Jr. Olympian Jack Sumner all scored 20 pts. Batista had two Allstar qualifying swims. Sumner had three.

Corena Dearth, Beata Higgins, and Jr. Olympian Elias McKim each scored 19 pts. Dearth had three Allstar qualifying swims. McKim had three Allstar qualifying swims.

Asa Garner scored 18 pts and one Allstar qualifying swim.

Caedmon Higgins scored 16 pts and had three Allstar qualifying swims. Penelope McRae scored 15 pts.

Jordan Powell and Ian Batista added 14 pts each. Powell also had two Allstar qualifying swims.

Jojo Cohen and Max Jestin scored 13 pts. Cohen had three Allstar qualifying swims.

Paolo McRae scored 11 pts and had two Allstar qualifying swims.

Conner Hughes and Alex López scored

10 pts. Hughes had three Allstar qualifying swims.

Miley Zagal scored 8 pts and Tirienne Higgins scored 6 pts.

The Highlands Hurricanes Swim Team is a Highlands Recreation Park Team that practices at the Rec Park Pool Monday through Thursday evenings.

The next swim meet is Thursday, June 24 against the Franklin Amateur Swim Team in Franklin.

The only requirement to join the team is a swimmer must be able to swim 25 yards unassisted. For more information please call 828.421.4121.



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...TOWN BOARD continued from page 8

flow devices that will ensure continuous service to the town should there be a major waterline break. The town is spending a total of \$885,000 for improvements to the water treatment plant this coming year.

Nix said the 2019 Water Master Plan Report/Study lays out a potential list of projects for completion over the next 30 years and he believes it is that report Commissioner Hehn is referring to.

"First, many of the projects on the list have been completed or are in the process of being completed but also, priorities change with time. And with the potential of grant money for infrastructure coming our way it was best to make a few projects 'shovel ready' for funding, of which the water tank is one. Should that money come in, that water tank can be replaced and much, much more," he said.

Online Utility Payments

Also at the June meeting, commissioner voted to forever waive the online fee it has traditionally charged citizens when paying their utility bills online with credit cards.

For several years, the town allowed customers to utilize online bill pay with credit card payments along with e-check payments. However, in March of 2020 during the Covid pandemic, the town waived the 2.75% fee for credit card payments and

the \$1 per e-check to help customers access online bill pay and eliminate a little extra cost during the pandemic.

Consequently, since March 2020, the town has seen online payment collections go up about \$325,000 since FY'19-'20 -- from approximately \$1,121,000 to \$1,447,000.

"Citizens are definitely utilizing the system more now that they are not being charged the fees," said Town Treasurer Rebecca Shuler.

Though the town will lose about \$15,000 a year in fees, Shuler said online payments save the town's customer service representatives time considering the daily handling of mail, processing checks into the software and then scanning and filing checks into the vault for records retentions.

"Online payments are definitely the more modern, electronic and paperless route," said Shuler. "Online payments take approximately 10 minutes to process as opposed to an afternoon (about four hours) to process a check run."

Commissioners voted unanimously to do away with credit card fees as well as e-check fees from now on.

Anyone who wishes to change to online billing and credit card payment for utilities is encouraged to call the town at 828-526-2118.

— Kim Lewicki

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

NOTICE

• The Church in the Wild-wood, Horsecove Road, will not be holding June services. Please check papers and radio for possible July opening. Questions? 1-828-506-0125 and leave message.

Ongoing

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

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

• 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 Tuesday-Saturday from 10a to 1p.

• 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. In person meetings have resumed and are held at 12 Noon Wednesday And Friday at 1st Presbyterian Church Library, 471 Main St., Highlands. On line meeting information can be found @ www.aawnc80.org or to speak with a member of A.A. call (828) 349-4357.

Every Saturday

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

Fri. June 25

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

Fri. & Sat., Sun. June 25-27

• Movie at The Playhouse: "Dream Horse" starring Toni Collette. Fri. & Sat., 4 & 7 p.m.,

and Sun., 1 & 4 p.m. Tickets are \$12, available at the door.

Sat. & Sun., June 26 & 27

• Mountaintop Art & Craft Show (previously the Village Square Show) will be held in downtown Highlands at K-H Founders Park (Pine St.) from 10 to 5. The FREE event features regional potters, jewelers, woodworkers, fine artists, etc. plus food. For more info call (828) 526-9227 or visit www.mountaintopshow.com.

Sat., June 26

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Southern Botanics Trunk Show, 10a to 5p. Description: Specializing in collecting, pressing, mounting and framing flowers, leaves and other plant materials in the style of botanical engravings, all items are original hand-crafted artworks. The Latin and common names, dates and locations are recorded in the style of herbariums on archival quality, 100% cotton rag paper. Call (828) 787-1877

• NO CONCERT in the park.

• Author Deena Bouknight will have a book signing of her book "Light Fracture" at the Hudson Library in Highlands at 11 a.m.

Thurs.- Mon., July 1-12

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Ali & Bird Jewelry Trunk Show, 10a to 5p. Ali & Bird jewelry was founded by Ali Howell, an Atlanta resident, and Memphis native, in 2009. Ali brings her passion for bold color combinations and timeless design to the creation of each piece of Ali & Bird jewelry. She designs unique jewelry that brings a modern flair to classic looks; no two Ali & Bird pieces are ever the same and all materials are real, unique, and sometimes quite rare. For more info: call (828) 787-1877

Fri. July 2

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

Sat. July 3

• 9-11a: Boy Scout's Water Rocket Launch at the Town Ballfield.; 11a-12p: Traditional Field Games at the Town Ballfield; 11a-2p: Hot Dog Lunch at Town Ballfield; 12-1p: Helicopter Landing Town Ballfield; 1:30-2:30p: Rotary Duck Derby at Mill Creek; 6-8:30p: Live Music - Blaze the City in K-H Founders Park.

Sun., July 4

• Chamber event: Fireworks and Concert. Moon Dance. 6-8:30p. Fireworks at Sunset.

Beginning Tues., July 6

• 7-week Bible Study with Martha Rodenbeck at the Rec Park 5:45-7:30 p.m. every Tuesday. "Elijah - Faith and Fire." Text: 828-399-0510 for more information.

Wed., July 7

• The Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival's first FREE Interlude Concert will be staged at 2 p.m., Wednesday, at the First Presbyterian Church of Highlands (471 Main Street). This will be a free performance of Musical Fireworks, and will feature the talents of violinist Alice Hong, cellist Charae Krueger, and pianist and Festival Artistic Director William Ransom. Everyone is invited to attend. For information on these concerts, and information and tickets for the performances and events that comprise the remainder of the Festival's 2021 season, visit hcmusicfestival.org or call (828) 526-9060.

Thurs., July 8

First Presbyterian Church of Highlands will host the Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival's FREE Family Concert and Ice Cream Social at 3 p.m., Thursday. This is a free family concert and will feature Peter & the Wolf and Ferdinand the Bull, with violinist Alice Hong, pianists Julie Coucheron and William Ransom, and narrator Lois Reitzes. Kilwin's Chocolate & Ice Cream will be providing

the ice cream, and the Highlands Community Child Development Center is co-sponsoring. For information on these concerts, and information and tickets for the performances and events that comprise the remainder of the Festival's 2021 season, visit hcmusicfestival.org or call (828) 526-9060.

Fri., July 9

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Southern Highlands

Sat., July 10

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Theresa Forman Trunk Show, 10a to 5p. As a child, Theresa Forman had a passion for art and the process of creating something beautiful. However, it was not until later in life that she was able to pursue fine art and painting. Theresa most enjoys painting inspiration from life where she can observe both the colors and subtle nuances in the landscape or in a still life. Working primarily in oils, she uses the plein air studies and photographic references to produce studio pieces that reveal the harmony found in nature. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. Kurt Thomas Band

Fri., July 16

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Johnny Webb

Sat., July 17

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Carol Misner Trunk Show, 10a to 5p. There is no mistaking Carol Misner's botanical paintings. Each is her unique interpretation of flora, in monochromatic tones, reflecting the simple beauty, gracefulness and fragility of the botanical it portrays. Ms. Misner so delicately layers her acrylics to achieve a diaphanous, gossamer quality that it has been said her works resemble x-rays in watercolor. The majority of Ms. Misner's



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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

subjects come from the beautiful flora she finds in her community and in her travels. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. Shane Meade

Sat., July 21

• At Acorns on S. 4th Street, Highlands, Phillip Curcuru Trunk Show 10a to 5p. Philip Curcuru, 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, North Carolina. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

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. For more info: call (828) 787-1877.

Fri., July 23

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

Sat., July 24

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

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 is pleased to welcome 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.olderwardhospitality.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

• 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

• 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. The South has long been known as a region rich in storytelling culture. 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 in August. Book Your Stay at <https://www.olderwardhospitality.com/calendar-of-events/southernwriters>.

ity.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

• 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, Tennessee. 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/el-dinner-with-steven-satterfield-joseph-lenn-tickets-67065> or call 828-787-2525 to book.

Sat., Aug. 16

• Twilight K Run.

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.

Fri., Aug. 27

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

Sat. & Sun. Aug. 28-29

• Mountaintop Art & Craft Show (previously the Village Square Show) will be held in

downtown Highlands at K-H Founders Park (Pine St.) from 10 to 5. The FREE event features regional potters, jewelers, woodworkers, fine artists, etc. plus food. For more info call (828) 526-9227 or visit www.mountaintopshow.com.

Sat., Aug. 28

• NO CONCERT

Fri., Sept. 3

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Silly Ridge Roundup

Sat., Sept. 4

• Saturdays on Pine. 6-8:30p. A Social Function

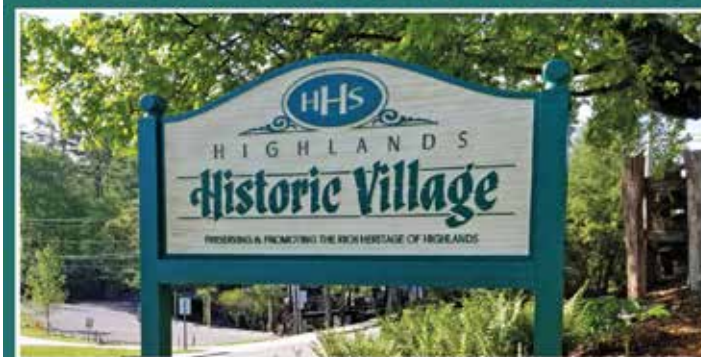
Fri., Sept. 10

• Friday Night Live in Town Square: 6-8:30p. Curtis Blackwell

Sat., Sept. 11

• See EVENTS page 14

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...EVENTS continued from page 12

The Highlands-Cashiers Music Festival extravaganza begins

The Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival launches its 40th season in spectacular fashion on Monday, July 5.

Legendary violinist Pinchas Zukerman opens the Festival with his wife, cellist Amanda Forsyth, and brilliant young pianist George Li in a program of Trios of Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich.

This concert will only be offered once, and will be the first concert in the Festival's new home in Cashiers, in the beautiful new addition to the Village Green.

The Village Green Commons will serve as the performance stage for all of the Festival's Cashiers performances.

Highlands performances will continue to be presented at the

Highlands Performing Arts Center.

Yet, true to its founding principles to bring exquisite music to everyone on the Plateau, Highlands-Cashiers Chamber Music Festival will offer a pair of concerts at other venues to audiences beyond its pool of patrons.

The festival's Interlude Concert will be staged at 2 p.m., Wednesday, July 7, at First Presbyterian Church of Highlands (471 Main Street).

This will be a free performance of Musical Fireworks, and will feature the talents of violinist Alice Hong, cellist Charae Krueger, and pianist and Festival Artistic Director William Ransom. Everyone is invited to attend.

First Presbyterian Church of Highlands will also host the

Festival's Family Concert and Ice Cream Social at 3 p.m., Thursday, July 8. This is a free family concert and will feature Peter & the Wolf and Ferdinand the Bull, with violinist Alice Hong, pianists Julie Coucheron and William Ransom, and narrator Lois Reitzes. Kilwin's Chocolate & Ice Cream will be providing the ice cream, and the Highlands Community Child Development Center is co-sponsoring.

For information on these concerts, and information and tickets for the performances and events that comprise the remainder of the Festival's 2021 season, visit h-cmusicfestival.org or call (828) 526-9060.

Deena C. Bouknight 'Author Talk' at Hudson Library

Local author Deena C. Bouknight, who just released her book *Light Fracture*, will give a talk about this historical novel on Saturday June 26 at 11am

In 1886, the strongest earthquake ever to hit the Eastern United States struck in the Charleston area, killing dozens of people and destroying much of the city. *Light Fracture* is set at the time of this earthquake, weaving the quake into a story about lighthouses, lighthouse keeping, and the Morris Island Light.

Macon County resident Deena C. Bouknight is the author of

two previous novels and has written for over 30 years for regional, national, and international publications. She is a regular writer for local publications including *Laurel Magazine*.

Books will be available for purchase and signing at this free program.

For more information or to request an accommodation, please call the library at 828-526-3031.

Hudson Library, 554 Main Street in Highlands, is open 10 am-5:30 pm Tuesday through Friday and 10 am-4 pm on Saturday.



Art & Craft show Sat. & Sun. in K-H Founders Park



The June 26/27 Mountaintop Rotary Art & Craft Show is this weekend in Highlands' Founders Park. This show has a huge selection of rustic furniture and wood products, such as these nesting bowls by Michael Mason. 80+ artisans will bring a wide assortment of regional fine art and crafts. Now in its 16th year, this show is considered one of the best in the area. Sponsored by Highlands Mountaintop Rotary. Free admission, 10a-5p rain or shine. For more info text/call (828) 318-9430.

...EVENTS continued from page 14

Amos Lee, Hiss Golden Messenger, Devon Gilfillian, and Rufus Lee and The Handful to headline 5th annual Highlands Food & Wine Festival

Highlands Festivals, Inc. announced today the musical headliners for the 5th Annual Highlands Food & Wine Festival, which is set to be held Nov. 11-14, 2021, in Highlands, NC, will include Amos Lee, Hiss Golden Messenger, Devon Gilfillian and Rufus Lee and The Handful. Presale will begin at 10 a.m. EST on Tuesday, June 22, for festival newsletter subscribers. Remaining tickets will go on sale to the general public Wednesday, June 23, at 10 a.m. EST.

"After celebrating the launch of the inaugural Bear Shadow music festival in April, we are thrilled for the return of Highlands Food & Wine. Keeping with the tradition of showcasing great chefs, beverage partners and live music, Highlands Festivals is proud to announce an incredible lineup of artists that will help us toast to five years of food, wine, music and mountains," said Casey Reid, Highlands Food & Wine Festival Director.

The festival will include the popular Grand Tasting, Truckin', Main Event, and Sunday Shindig events, featuring live music combined with world-class food from local and regional chefs. Fine wine and spirits seminars, specialty dinners and other culinary experiences also dot the weekend schedule.

"We are tremendously excited for the stellar musical talent that plan to join us in November. We have also secured some great food and beverage partners and look forward to announcing the full roster in the coming weeks," Reid added.

Tickets

The festival's activities begin on Thursday, Nov. 11 and continue through Sunday, Nov. 14.

Early-bird tickets are available exclusively for those who sign up for the festival's newsletter on the Highlands Food & Wine website at <https://highlandsfoodandwine.com/>.

Ticket to the general public begin are available on the Highlands Food & Wine website.

Tickets will range from \$150-\$800 for Weekend VIP passes. All tickets are inclusive of food, beverage and live music entertainment.

Music Lineup

- Grand Tasting (Thursday, Nov. 11)

The festival kicks off with a performance by Greenville, SC-based Rufus Lee and The Handful, who promise outlaw and honky-tonk country with a unique rock n' roll edge. Rufus Lee and The Handful will feature songs from their latest album.

- Truckin' (Friday, Nov. 12)

Nashville-based American folk pop band Erin Rae, led by singer-songwriter Erin Rae McKaskle, will open Friday's performances.

The band will showcase songs from their two critically acclaimed studio albums, *Soon Enough* and *Putting on Airs*. The band is known for their genre-busting songs and McKaskle's unique modern indie folk sound.

Durham-based American folk/country rock band Hiss Golden Messenger, led by MC Taylor, will headline Friday's event.

The band crosses various musical genres that include bluegrass and country soul to swamp pop and rhythm and blues. The band's discography includes 12 studio albums and three EPs. Their latest studio album, *Quietly Blowing It*, is set to release on June 25.

- Main Event (Saturday, Nov. 13)

On Saturday, Diana DeMuth will bring her folk rock sound to the Main Event stage, performing songs from her debut album, *Misadventure*. The album features the single "Into My Arms," which Rolling Stone called a "must-listen barnburner elevated by sharp lyrics and a relentless rhythm."

Amos Lee, American singer-songwriter whose musical style encompasses folk, rock and soul, will headline the Main Event. Lee has toured as an opening act for Adele, The Avett Brothers, Elvis Costello, Dave Matthews Band, Bob Dylan, David Gray, Merle Haggard, Jack Johnson, Norah Jones, Van Morrison, John Prine, Paul Simon, and the Zac Brown Band. His music has also appeared on the soundtracks of numerous TV shows and movies. In 2011, his album *Mission Bell* debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 chart. His discography includes 7 studio albums, 3 EPs, and 2 live albums.

- Sunday Shindig (Sunday, Nov. 14) – Returning to Highlands after a performance at the Bear Shadow Music Festival, Nashville-based singer-songwriter and bandleader Devon Gilfillian will round out the festival at the Sunday Shindig. Gilfillian, known for his deep soul sound, will be performing Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On* album during the Sunday Shindig.

Highlands Food & Wine Festival is proudly presented by Highlands Festivals, Inc., and presenting sponsors include: Visit Highlands, Old Edwards Inn & Spa, Pat Allen Realty, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Meadows Mountain Realty, Monarch Capital and Tryon Distributing.

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To study

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Elijah - Faith and Fire

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Order the Study Guide from Amazon or Lifeway.com

(Bring your own nibbles)

Hospice House Foundation of WNC receives continued support from Nantahala Health Foundation

Hospice House Foundation of WNC (HHFWNC) is honored to be among 27 western North Carolina not-for-



profits and public service agencies selected by Nantahala Health Foundation (NHF) for a 2021 Needs Immediately Met (NIMble) grant. NHF's 2021 NIMble grants totaled \$204,000, of which HHFWNC received a \$10,000 award in support of the purchase of appliances needed for our region's new Hospice House now under construction in Franklin, NC.

The 2021 NIMble grant is the fourth grant HHFWNC has received from NHF, bringing NHF's total cumulative support of HHFWNC's initiative to \$82,500, including a \$50,000 CHIP grant (Collaborative Health Innovation Project grant) in support of furniture and equipment for SECU Hospice House of WNC.

SECU Hospice House of WNC in Franklin will become the only free-standing inpatient

hospice facility in North Carolina west of Asheville, serving the six far western counties of North Carolina and the Qualla

Boundary, as well as northeast Georgia. Currently, the closest Hospice Houses to this rural mountain region are over an hour's drive for most people.

SECU Hospice House is a collaborative initiative between two not-for-profits, HHFWNC and Four Seasons The Care You Trust, that addresses three health and wellness concerns in the six far western counties of North Carolina: 1) Lack of quality end-of-life inpatient care, 2) Inadequate access to mental health support, and 3) Health risks of caregiving. HHFWNC is raising the funds for construction of SECU Hospice House and once completed, Four Seasons will operate this new hospice inpatient facility. Construction is currently 80% complete and slated to become operational this fall.

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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Duke Energy-backed bill would lock North Carolina into dirty, dangerous fracked gas for decades

Environment and faith groups strongly oppose HB 951, which would strip oversight, fail ratepayers, miss state climate goals, and further harm communities

RALEIGH, N.C. — A bill drafted by Duke Energy behind closed doors with legislators was unveiled on Tuesday.

The bill would mandate the construction of 3,500 megawatts of new fracked gas plants, locking North Carolina into dirty energy generation for decades.

The bill also decreases utility transparency and allows Duke to increase customers' rates for three consecutive years at a time, requires customers to pay a \$50 million subsidy to Duke for a new nuclear reactor permit, and would leave customers paying billions for Duke's bad investments.

This bill is in stark contrast to Gov. Roy Cooper's goals to address the climate crisis and transition North Carolina to a clean energy economy.

The bill would also reduce oversight of Duke Energy, one of the largest and most polluting utilities in the country.

The bill limits the authority of the N.C. Utilities Commission and restricts how it reviews energy plans by Duke Energy and other utilities.

Under Duke Energy's plan, some communities now experiencing pollution from coal plants would continue to be burdened by living next to fracked gas plants, while allowing less opportunity for public input.

In response to the legislation, Drew Ball, State Director of Environment North Carolina stated:

"For the sake of our climate and communities across our state, we know that we must shift our economy to 100% clean and renewable energy. Instead, this bill would make that transition harder

by mandating our reliance on dangerous fossil fuels for decades. By reducing public input and transparency in the ratemaking process, and failing to ensure adequate protections for ratepayers, the legislation is simply a bad deal for North Carolinians."

Josh McClenney, Energy Democracy Field Coordinator for Appalachian Voices, stated:

"After years of working with diverse stakeholders across the state, Duke Energy has decided to turn its back on North Carolina families, and worked behind closed doors with Republican lawmakers to draft a bill that lines the pockets of shareholders at the expense of residential ratepayers. This is not good public policy."

Rev. Susannah Tuttle, Director of NC Interfaith Power & Light stated:

"I am extremely disappointed that the lack of transparency throughout the process of writing this legislation has culminated into a bill drafted by industry for industry, with no respect or care for North Carolina's families and especially children who will inherit the pollution and environmental disasters of energy policies that do not prioritize fossil-free climate solutions."

Will Harlan, senior representative for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal campaign in the Carolinas, stated:

"It's no surprise that Duke Energy, one of the biggest and dirtiest utilities in the country, would support a bill that's just as big and dirty. Not only was it drafted secretly behind closed doors, but it requires construction of two unnecessary fracked gas plants and lets Duke keep burning 4,000 megawatts of coal, polluting our air, water and climate for decades to come. And even as North Carolinians are struggling to recover from the

pandemic economy, this bill would let Duke increase customers' rates for three consecutive years at a time, with very little public oversight or transparency. Corporate polluters shouldn't be able to make their own rules, and communities shouldn't be forced to pay for their greed. This bill should be scrapped so we can start over with an equitable, transparent process that prioritizes clean energy resources and the public health of everyone in North Carolina."

Cathy Buckley, Director, Statewide Organizing, NC Alliance to Protect Our People and the Places We Live stated:

"HB951 removes decision-making from our NC Utilities Commissioners, experts who understand the intricacies of the electricity market and the needs of ratepayers. Out of a secretive process, led by Duke Energy, that barred our elected Democratic representatives, comes a set of rules that benefits the NC utilities. It's not good legislation, but a nice 'thank you' gift from the members of the NC General Assembly who have received on the order of millions of dollars of campaign contributions from Duke Energy."

Ethan Blumenthal, CEO, Good Solar Organization and E2 Southeast Chapter Director stated:

"This bill would effectively bar nonprofit organizations and marginalized communities from participating in the renewable energy economy for years into the future by ensuring that anyone who cannot afford the upfront costs themselves pays a premium for the right to access clean resources. The people who most need help reducing utility costs are all but locked out. After years of diverse stakeholder processes, it is disheartening to see the resulting legislation ignore the needs of so many North Carolinians."

...HOLLAND continued from page 1

believe that, together, we have made a positive difference for the citizens of our county.”

Sheriff Robert Holland was elected as Sheriff of Macon County in 2002 following the retirement of Sheriff Homer Holbrooks. Holland first began his career with the Macon County Sheriff's Office in 1991, working his way through the ranks of the department, serving as Detention Officer, Deputy Sheriff, Juvenile Investigator, K-9 Handler, and Detective Sergeant.

Holland was re-elected each term while facing both primary and general election opponents and after the 2018 election, decided that it was time for him to retire and take time for his family.

“My wife and I knew that after my victory in the 2018 election, my opportunity to retire had been secured and mine to take when and if I decided to do so,” said Holland. “Following much prayer and discussion with my family, we set a date to publicly announce and today is that day. Today, I am formally announcing that I will not be seeking a sixth term. Protecting and serving this community since 1991 and holding the office of Sheriff has truly been an honor. However, my service has come with great sacrifice by my family. Their love and support have allowed me to faithfully carry out my duties and responsibilities as Sheriff. I am blessed to have had that love and support through the very best of times and through the many difficult days and nights that come along with a career in law enforcement. Although a difficult decision, I am incredibly thankful to have reached this milestone in my career and I am excited to have earned the opportunity to retire and start another

chapter in life. I feel that this is the right time for me to pass the torch. It is my hope and belief that, in the very near future, the voters will choose my replacement to be someone who has a proven track record of dedicated service and commitment to Macon County and who will keep YOUR Sheriff's Office moving in the right direction.”

Filing for the Macon County Sheriff's race officially opens in December, however, several candidates have already come forward expressing their interest... suggesting the field for Macon County's next sheriff will be a crowded one.

“I will be forever grateful for the trust afforded to me by the citizens of Macon County and for the blessings bestowed on me by God. In 2001, I well remember being a young 34-year-old detective announcing my intentions to seek my first term to the Office of Sheriff,” said Sheriff Holland. “A statement I often repeated during my initial campaign and one I have made during each election is, ‘If elected as your Sheriff, you will continue to get the very best of me and my staff from the first day until my last day in office.’ Although I plan to retire at the end of my current term, I want the citizens of Macon County to know that while my retirement may be on the horizon, our work is not complete. My staff and I will continue to work diligently, and we will remain committed to providing our very best until my last day as Sheriff of Macon County. I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to the citizens of this community for believing in me, for trusting me, and for every act of kindness that you extended to me and my family throughout the years. Serving as your Sheriff has truly been an honor and a privilege. THANK YOU Macon County.”

...BREAK-IN continued from 1

jewelry, prescriptions, and various other items. According to a victim statement given to the Police Department, the owner of the vehicle had parked the vehicle near the dam around 1:50pm, explored the dam and river area for 20-30 minutes, then returned to find the vehicle had been broken into.



Investigators are looking for any information regarding persons or other vehicles which may have been seen parked in the area of the Lake Sequoyah Dam on Saturday, June 19 around 2pm. Anyone who has any information about this crime is asked to contact Highlands Police Department by calling (828) 526-9431.

The Police Department would like to remind citizens and visitors to secure their homes and vehicles by locking doors and windows when unattended. Items of value should be secured out of sight and should never be left in a vehicle. If you see any suspicious activity around a home or vehicle, please call 911 to report as soon as it is safe to do so.

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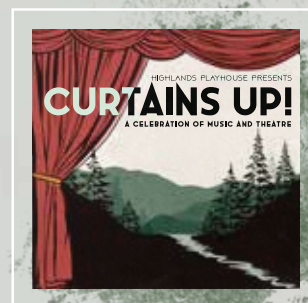
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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



Good friends & good food seasoned with just the right amount of faith

Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins
Community Bible Church

This past week, my wife and I hosted two relatively large social gatherings. Many long-time friends came our way for charcuterie, pasta, barbecued ribs, chicken, greens, games, fun and fireworks. It was a glorious weekend in so many ways.

On the second night, 21 friends sat down together for a thoroughly delectable four-course meal. There was much laughter, storytelling and reminiscing. It was one of those enjoyable nights causing me to pause and take it all in. The evening had a flow and rhythm to it as did the ever-evolving conversation and laughter. Evenings such as this one are all too rare and all too crucial for those stressed out and weary.

Laughter is certainly good for the soul and just being together after this past year made this glorious evening so much more welcomed and medicinal. Everyone remained mask-less in more ways than one.

As I enjoyed this interactive feast, I also took into consideration an even richer way of appreciating what was happening. As I looked around the massive table I was reminded of the adversity and challenges that many around the table had overcome in recent years. Each owned a victory over a distinct personal challenge or trial that made being together so much more than it could have been. As I peered around the table I was reminded of personal victories since forgotten. Victories over sadness and depression, heart ailments, loss of income, loss of a loved one, loneliness, a brain tumor and brain seizures.

Solomon, said he be the wisest man in the world, wrote this regarding seasons in life: There is a...time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance (Eccl. 3:4). Isn't that the way of life? We seem to encounter seasons of harvest and seasons of lack. Trials in life are inevitable for we live in a broken, gross, icky, sin-ridden, fallen world. We can search for heaven on earth, but it just isn't here. As much as we want it, as much as we want the absence of problems, heaven is elsewhere. Heaven awaits those who believe. What purpose do trials serve the here and now? How can we leverage a trial into a blessing?

- Allow trials to be a catalyst to "lean into" the One big and strong enough to make your challenges seem small and manageable.

- Relate to Christ who, without question, has experienced the very same, emotions and frustrations that you are experiencing in your trials.

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 19

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

BLUE VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

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

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

BUCK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Sundays: School at 9:30 Worship 10:30

Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

CHAPEL OF THE SKY

Sky Valley, GA • 706-746-2999

Sundays: 10 a.m.; Worship

Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

828-743-1701 • 464 Hwy 64E, Cashiers, NC 28717

www.christanglicancashiers.com

Sun. - 8:30am Worship (no music); 9:30am Sunday

School; 10:30am Worship Service.

Mon. Night Bible Study & Dinner, 6pm, call for details.

CHRIST CHURCH OF THE VALLEY, CASHIERS

Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

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

Tues. Guys study 8am, Gals 10am.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

283 Spring Street

Sunday Service: 11 a.m.

Testimony Meeting: 5:30 p.m. on the 3rd Wed.

CLEAR CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Jim Kinard

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

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

Wednesdays - Supper at 6 p.m.

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

www.cbchighlands.com • 526-4685

3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC • Sr. Pastor Gary Hewins

Sun.: 9:30am - Adult Sunday School; Worship Service 10:45am;

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

Women's Bible Study 10am-noon

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

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH OF SKY VALLEY

706. 746.3144 • 696 Sky Valley Way #447

Pastor Steve Kerhoulas

Worship: Sun. 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion 2nd. Sunday

EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

Rev. W. Bentley Manning • 526-2968

Sunday Services Live-Stream at 10:30 a.m.,

Morning Prayer Weekdays on Facebook live at 8:30 a.m.

Holy Eucharist at noon in the garden on Mon and Wed

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

828-526-4153 • www.fbchighlands.org

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

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

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

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Curtis Fussell & Emily Wilmarth, pastors

526-31 • 75 • fpchighlands.org

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

Mons: Men's Prayer Group & Breakfast 8 a.m. Wed: Choir: 6p

GOLDMINE BAPTIST CHURCH

(Off Franklin/Highlands Rd)

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF CASHIERS

Non-Denominational-Contemporary Worship

242 Hwy 107N, 1/4 miles from Crossroads in Cashiers

www.gracecashiers.com • Pastor Steve Doerter 743-9814

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

HAMBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

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

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

Wed. Kidsquest 6p.; Worship 7p.

HIGHLANDS ASSEMBLY OF GOD

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

Sundays: Worship: 11

HIGHLANDS CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily sharing the facilities of the Shortoff Baptist Church.

Sunday Evening Worship 5PM 1st and 2nd Sundays

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas, Pastor 526-3376

In-Person and live-streamed Worship Services

909 Bluegrass and 10:50 Traditional

www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

We wear masks and social distance.

MACEDONIA BAPTIST CHURCH

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

Pastor Zane Talley

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

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

MOUNTAIN SYNAGOGUE

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

MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

743-2583 • Independent Bible Church

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

4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

Mass: Wed. noon (Latin), Thurs. noon, Fri. 9a; Sat. 4p; Sun., 11a

SCALY MOUNTAIN BAPTIST CHURCH

Rev. Marty Kilby

Sundays: School - 10 a.m.; Worship - 11 a.m. & 7

Wednesdays: Prayer Mtg.: 7 p.m.

SCALY MOUNTAIN CHURCH OF GOD

290 Buck Knob Road; Pastor Donald G. Bates • 526-3212

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

SHORTOFF BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Rev. Andy Cloer

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

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

ST. JUDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass: Tues. noon (Latin), Thurs. 9a.; Fri., noon; Sat. 5:30p; Sun. 9a

THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

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

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

Nursery available for Rite II services

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

Thursday: Noon Healing Service with Eucharist.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST FELLOWSHIP

85 Sierra Drive, Franklin • uufranklin.org

Sunday Worship - 11 a.m.

WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Sam Forrester/Cashiers

Sunday School: 10 am, Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from June 12. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

June 12

• At 1:48 p.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Carolina Way.

June 15

• At 11:25 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident on Maple Street.

June 17

• At 2:08 a.m., officers responded to a call of a simple assault of a female at a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

June 19

• At 10:55 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident in the parking lot of the Satulah Brewing Company on Carolina Way.

• At 10:05 p.m., officers were called about a verbal argument taking place at a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

• At 12:05 p.m., officers were called about a shoplifting incident at Potpourri on Main Street where clothing was concealed and taken from the store.

• At 2:18 p.m., officers responded to a call of theft from and destruction of a vehicle parked at Lake Sequoyah Dam. Jewelry, a drivers license and various prescription drugs were taken.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from June 15.

June 15

• At 9:27 a.m., the dept. responded to

a motor vehicle accident on Horse Cove Road.

June 17

• At 9:34 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Skyline Lodge Road,

• At 2:07 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Sassafras Gap road.

• At 2:46 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence in Falls Village Court.

June 18

• At 4:23 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a power line down on Spring Street.

June 20

• At 9:04 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Center Drive.

• At 9:29 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

• At 11:24 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on the Dillard Road.

• At 2:37 p.m. the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Big View Drive.

June 21

• At 6:58 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clubhouse Trail.

• At 7:02 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Morewood Circle.

• At 1:54 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Upper Lake Road when a medical alarm was activated

...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 18

• Rise above common and become uncommon. Live an uncommon transcendent life in Christ.

• Show others how to handle adversity with integrity in the midst of a trial. Many are watching.

There is a time for incredible, loving feasts but there too is a time for trials and testing. There is a refining process taking place in your life today; often allowed via trials, so that you will develop a greater need and desire for God. There is a refining process that cleanses us of ingratitude, apathy and aimlessness that also provides a healthy hunger for faith and adventure. There is a refining process necessary for us to grow as men and women and grow into the best version of ourselves we can be. James, the half-brother of Christ, who at first thought Jesus was crazy, said this after coming to an experiential awareness of the deity of Christ:

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and

sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything... Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him (James 1:1—5,12)

Our dinner parties were so very enjoyable because they were deeply sweetened by victory over previous adversity and trials. I have come to know that such victory is not simply rooted in self-discipline, motivational and affirming words but in friendship with Christ who grieves and weeps with us through seasons of trial and laughs and dances with us when it's time to feast and celebrate. I implore you to directly invite him into your heart through prayer so that the Refiner and Redeemer will sustain you in every season of your precious life.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



From left: Lori Smith, MBA, RT (R) RDMS, RDCS, RVT, Regional Manager Radiology/Imaging; Meg Ham, RT, R, M, CT; Laura Ammons, RT, R, M, CT.

3D Mammography now available at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital

3D mammography (tomosynthesis), available at Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, is a tool that helps us find more cancers and find those cancers earlier.

With traditional mammography, the image is flat. During a 3D mammogram, multiple images are obtained in seconds as the x-ray machine sweeps across the breast.

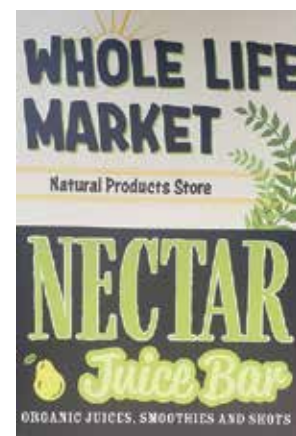
Images are displayed as a series of thin slices that allow our team to view the breast tissue one thin layer at a time. Cancers can be detected that otherwise would be hidden by overlapping breast tissue.

Since the breast tissue is able to be viewed in thin slices, our radiology team is able to reduce the number of women that need to come back for additional images, thus minimizing anxiety, inconvenience,

and extra costs for our patients.

3D mammography is recommended for any woman needing a mammography regardless of breast density.

For more information, contact the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital Radiology Department at (828) 526-1467. To schedule an appointment, call (828) 883-5021.



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- 50 mg CBD 30 Gel Caps
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Hey gang! My name is Andrew Harvey, and WOW am I excited to be back in Highlands this summer!

My first summer here was back in 2019, when I was fortunate enough to portray Buddy Holly in that season's production of "Buddy!: The Buddy Holly Story" and got to be a member of the ensemble in Oklahoma! shortly thereafter.

That spring, when I found out I'd been hired, I was sold the moment I found out I'd be provided travel accommodations (that was the definition of the "big time" for me as a college sophomore). It wasn't 'til I arrived and got to working with the rest of the team, though, that I realized how truly lucky I was to have been provided that opportunity.

As a performer, that summer was nothing short of a dream, from sharing the stage with incredibly talented actors and musicians every night to pickup basketball and dinner at the Pizza Place after Tuesday rehearsals, to exploring so many of the natural wonders Highlands has to offer.

Admittedly, I'm a bit nervous to come back to performing after this past year's hiatus on all things live theater, but I was pretty nervous when I first arrived back in 2019, too.

Looking back now, I had no reason to be; the people of Highlands — whether they were cast mates, production crew members, or audience members — welcomed me with open arms. By the time that season ended, I felt completely at home as part of the Highlands Playhouse family.

Now, I couldn't be more ecstatic to spend another summer with that family as we ramp up to welcome even more new members to our beautiful home away from home.

So, get ready Highlands, because we've got one heck of a comeback season lined up for you, and I can't wait to get it started!

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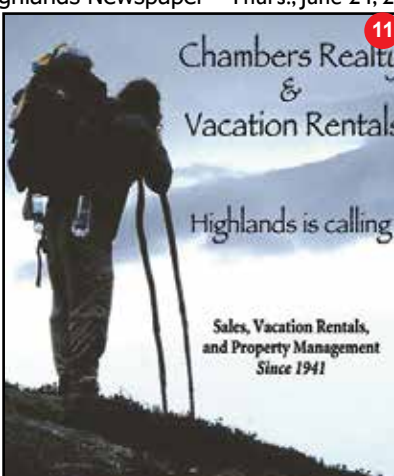
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