

Highlands Newspaper

FREE Every Thursday

Volume 19, Number 48

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Thurs., Dec. 1, 2022

The firehouse, grubbing and leases ...

With a temporary Certificate of Occupancy in hand, the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department is now allowed to begin the move-in process at the new firehouse at Main and Oak streets.

The Town Board and press got to tour the building Nov. 17, and though empty, it's clear the structure and its accoutrements will see the Highlands Fire & Rescue Department well into the future.

Every scenario has been considered both for the upkeep of the building, the equipment and the comfort and safety of the crew.

There are 14 bays which will

• See **FIREHOUSE** page 30

If helping others is on your list this year ...

By Kristin Fox

With numerous families in Western North Carolina falling below the poverty line, Christmas can be a tough time of year for many. Fortunately, the people of Western North Carolina are known for their kindness and caring hearts especially at this time of year.

For those who need extra help during the holiday season, the communities' generosity in Macon, and Jackson counties can be seen in the many opportunities available during the Christmas season.

The following are just some of the local organizations in Macon and Jackson county that offer programs to help those in need

• See **HELPING** page 18

Highlands Christmas Parade is Sat., Dec. 1 on Main St.



The Highlands Christmas Parade is Saturday, Dec. 3 at its new time 10:30 a.m. to noon. The route is along Main Street and will include marching bands, llamas and camels, creative floats and – of course – Santa and Mrs. Claus. After the parade, there is a booksigning at Shakespeare & Co. in Village Square on Oak and 5th streets with The Dickens & Christie Cozy Mystery Series author Kathy Penn from 12:30-3:30p. At 2 p.m. it's the annual Christmas Carol Sing at Highlands First Presbyterian Church.

Photo by Kim Lewicki

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U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree came from area's Pisgah Nat'l Forest

By Brittney Lofthouse

Ruby the Red Spruce from the Pisgah National Forest has been delivered to the U.S. Capitol, decorated with thousands of ornaments hand made by North Carolinians.

Hailing from the mountains of North Carolina, Ruby the Red Spruce from the Pisgah National Forest standing 78 feet tall will adorn the U.S. Capitol grounds this holiday season as the 2022 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. The tree's nickname "Ruby" is shortened from the red spruce's scientific name, *Picea rubens*.

Also known as the People's

• See **TREE** page 15

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

• HIC'S VIEW •

Let's go fishing!

The trout are back in Harris Lake. The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission has restarted their winter pond stocking program. As a result, Harris Lake has several hundred trout for the public to harvest.

The popular program was started several years ago. The floods on the Pigeon River the summer before last damaged the state hatchery so there were no trout available for stocking this past year. But this year the hatchery had a surplus of fish so the popular winter program is back. The winter stocking makes room in the hatchery for new trout for the upcoming season.

The rules for catching the trout are pretty simple. Adults have to have a North Carolina fishing license. Any bait, live and artificial can be used. The limit per fisherman is 7 fish a day. Any size trout can be harvested. Catch and release rules do not apply for this program. All fish need to be harvested before spring because rising lake temperatures will not support trout.

So, take your children, grandchildren and friends and go fishing right here in



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

town. Please be a good sportsman and remove any trash such as bait cans and snack materials after fishing.

My favorite way of cooking trout is to stuff a whole trout with onions and other herbs and bake it. Fried and smoked trout are great, too.

I want to thank the owner of the lake, Terry Potts, for his cooperation with the Wildlife Resources folks. Also, normally

Harris Lake is catch and release. So, if you do happen to catch a fish that is not trout, please release it.

Let me also update everyone about trash collection for Christmas. The town picks up trash on all holidays except Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our holiday collection schedule goes well beyond what most trash collection operations do. Since Christmas is on Sunday this year, there will be no interruption of residential collection. Commercial collection will stop for the Christmas weekend.

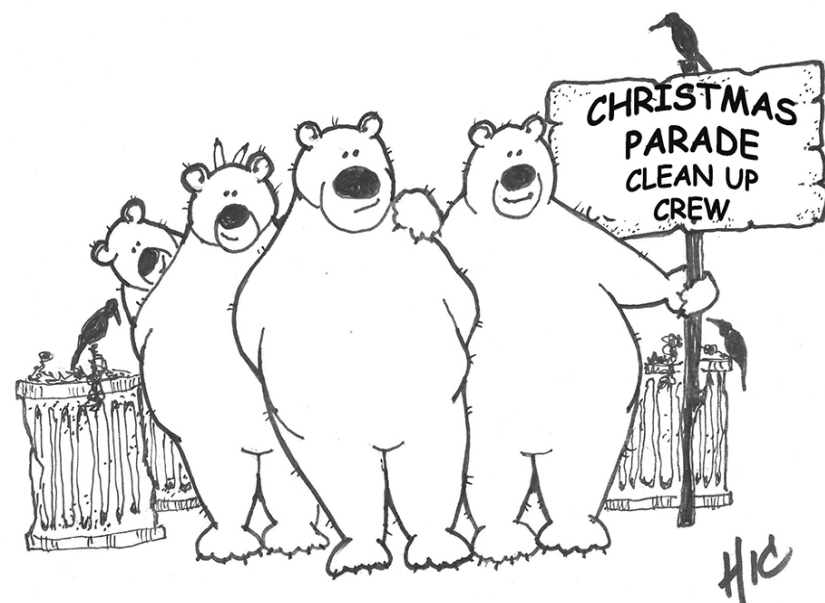
Please remember to place all garbage and foodstuff in plastic bags and place them in bear resistant containers. Trash container cannot be over filled to where the lid can't be closed. We all need to work together to keep Highlands beautiful during this special time of the year.

The Christmas season has become one of the most populated and busiest times in Highlands. Our electrical usage spikes to its highest point during this period. Please be cognizant of electrical usage during this period. It used to be that the number of people in Highlands in December was at a yearly low, but now that is just the opposite.





With so many people in town, everyone needs to be mindful of careful driving and posted speed limits. Our police will be patrolling for speeders and dangerous or impaired drivers. We all want to keep the town safe during the holidays.

Finally, I want to thank the chamber of commerce for organizing a wonderful town and Christmas Tree lighting this past Saturday evening. I also want to thank all the town employees who worked

• See MAYOR page 12



• WEATHER •

Thu, 1-Dec	Fri, 2-Dec	Sat, 3-Dec	Sun, 4-Dec
			
51°F 22°F	50°F 39°F	55°F 43°F	54°F 43°F
Plenty of sunshine	Partly sunny	Cloudy with a few showers	Rain and drizzle in the p.m.
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High 55 Low 17	High 53 Low 26	High 56 Low 43	High 54 Low 43

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All About Books

• INK PENN •

Discovering new authors is always a treat

It's been a good week for reading—two authors I haven't tried before and two strong heroines I want to get to know better. First up is Ashley Weaver's Electra McDonnell series. It's not often that I spend time during the day reading, but when I discovered this new-to-me British mystery series, I found myself reading a few pages every chance I had. The heroine is enchanting; the plot is clever, and the story is set in England. I couldn't ask for more.



Kathy Manos Penn

A Peculiar Combination

It's London during WWII, and Electra McDonnell is an intelligent, witty, savvy woman who holds her own with the men who want to treat her like--well--like a woman who needs protecting, a woman who may not "understand" what's going on. Wrong! She won't stand for it. She's feisty, speaks her mind, and never fails to surprise the men in charge with her intelligence and resourcefulness.

Described as a "delightful mystery filled with spies, murder, romance, and wit," it was a book I couldn't put down. Read it for the intrigue, for the hints of romance, and for the humor sprinkled throughout. Though the mystery is satisfactorily solved by the end of the book, you'll be eager to dive into Book II in the series to see how the relationships evolve and what fresh assignment Major Ramsey will involve Electra in. I've already added "The Key to Deceit" to my TBR list.

Checking to see what else Ashley Weaver had written led me to her seven-book Amory Ames series set in 1930s England. This review of "Murder at Brightwell," shortlisted for an Edgar award, tells me that I've stumbled on yet another author who will rank up there with my favorites:

"Lovers of Agatha Christie and Jacqueline Winspear will enjoy this elegant murder mystery set on holiday at the English seaside. What starts out as a lark, intended to make Amory Ames's misbehaving-but-oh-

so-delicious husband jealous, turns into a dangerous and deadly game of whodunit for Amory and her friends. Love, jealousy, and revenge are tangled together in this smart and sophisticated British mystery reminiscent of the genre's golden age." — October 2014 Library Reads List

This next book isn't set in England, my favorite locale, but it too has a strong heroine who can take care of herself. I found it through one of the several Facebook readers'

groups I belong to.

Flipped for Murder

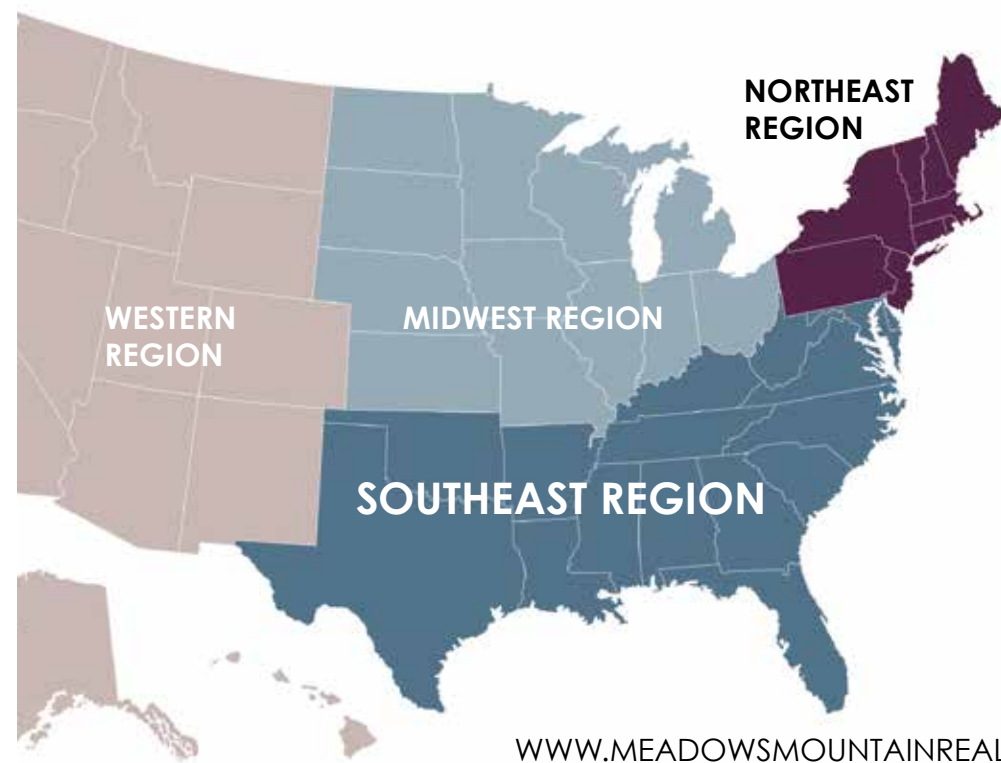
What an entertaining mystery! Dare I say tasty? This book checks all my boxes. The plucky heroine, Robbie, is an accomplished chef who opens a restaurant in small-town South Lick, Indiana. Stir in the vivid descriptions of the countryside, the food, and the characters, and you have a delectable read.

Okay, I'm going with foodie descriptions, here. The cherry on top, for me, is the fact that Robbie is an avid cyclist, as I was in my younger days. I've already downloaded book two in the series, and I'm looking forward to getting to know Robbie and her friends even better.

Once again, I'm adding too many books to my TBR list, and I already have six library books on my desk, four of which are only two-week checkouts. It's times like these that make this Frank Zappa quote one of my favorites: "So many books, so little time."

PS. Please stop by Shakespeare & Company on December 3 after the parade. I'll be signing books, and I'd love to see you there!

• Award-winning author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her cozy mysteries in Franklin at Franklin Office Supply & Gifts and at Shakespeare & Company in Highlands, and on Amazon. Contact her at inkpenn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPennAuthor/.



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• LETTER •

Memories of Michelle Bears on the Closing of The Toy Store, The Book Nook and Bags on Main

Dear Michelle... Where to begin? You have been a dear friend for so many years. It has been a joy to work with you and Harry through the last ten years. I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate your caring, self-sacrifice and generosity, not only for myself, but everyone who comes in contact with you.

As owner of The Toy Store you have made it an institution in Highlands that has brought fun and happiness to more than one generation. No one can replace your welcoming, bright hello and genuine pleasure when a customer walks in the door. You have created ongoing friendships with customers that will endure long after the doors close.

When I think of you and The Toy Store, I can't help but remember you in all the costumes and characters you have been from Snow White to Puff the Magic Dragon for the Children's Art Walk at the Nature Center. You have always been so willing to contribute to the community and generously sponsor every cause, large or small. I appreciate your support and donation to my niece, Nicki's, fund raiser that took her on an amazing adventure to Turkey while in elementary school.

There was Tucker "the shop dog." Such a sweet one! When things got a little overwhelming for him in The Toy Store, he would slip through the curtain to Bags on Main and go behind a display, lie down and go to sleep.

It amazes me, that you could keep so updated on so many different toys, games, puzzles, books and gadgets. Not only ordering all the hottest new items, but managing to keep up with and pay all those vendors! Some day you will look back on it and say "did I really do that?"

You opened the Book Nook when Cyrano's Book Store closed and took on the challenge of being updated on all the latest bestsellers as well as stocking books on his tory, local interest, local authors and more. Always willing to place special orders for those who wanted something specific, you delivered their orders quickly and efficiently. That was in your spare time!

Ten years ago you added Bags on Main and situated it in the former puzzle section of The Toy Store. What creativity it took, to turn that space into a store full of beautiful handbags and accessories. You called me in Louisiana and asked me to manage it and I am so grateful that you did. I have loved every minute of it and working with you, Harry and all of our wonderful customers. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I look forward to our new adventure at The Southern Way. I'm glad we will carry a little bit of Bags on Main with us.

Here's to you Michell Bears, your generous spirit, love of Highlands and a future filled with new opportunities and happiness.

Janet Wilson
Manager
Bags on Main



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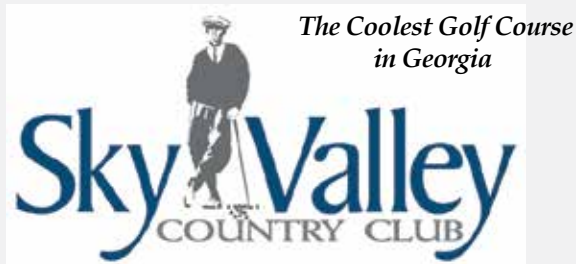
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Small Town USA...Here We Are

What a wonderful Thanksgiving our small town shared with so many from various parts of our country! During the week I had the privilege of meeting many visitors and members of their families. One nice lady asked me what it is like to live in a town this small. So, I mulled it over and knowing that I have loved Highlands as a "local transplant" for almost 30 years decided to first define just what is a small town and secondly the characteristics that make a small town so special.



Pat Allen BIC
 Allen Tate Realtors/Pat Allen Realty Group.

Almost nothing is more idealized in the American imagination than small town, USA. Thirty percent of Americans, when asked, would prefer to live in a small town. So, just what does that mean to the average American? Rather than headcounts, small towns are defined by such characteristics as a slower pace of life, less traffic and congestion, a safer environment, walkability, a close-knit community with involvement including family-oriented events, and proximity to nature for exploring and green space that allows fresh air to breathe.

In my research, I was surprised to see these statistics specific to Highlands:

- 1: In our 6.1 square miles the current population is 1,102.
- 2: Our current rate of growth since 2020 is 2.80%
- 3: The median age is 57.6 with 51.4 being males and 59.9 for females (this one did surprise me!)

I can speak from personal experience that when my dear husband passed away, I felt such support from the entire community and knew they genuinely cared. Anyone who knew him loved him and he loved them back. He walked in a restaurant and within seconds they automatically brought his favorite wine. For dessert at Wolfgang's he loved the frozen peanut butter pie but decided he liked it a little warm so the waitstaff knew: "It's for

Dr. Pat so microwave for 10 seconds!" When my grand dog passed away suddenly a few months ago, my daughter, Julie, and I felt such an outpouring of love because the whole town loved Lucy and loved watching her stroll by in her pink stroller on the sidewalks on Main Street. Shop owners and restaurant workers would literally come outside to greet her. Many wept with us and were always there for support. And on the flip side I always do my best to help those in need who know I genuinely

care about them.

Watching the crowds gather for the tree lighting with kids in arms and some in strollers was heartwarming to say the least. I met one of the cutest little girls ever who was about 3 years old. She was dressed to the nines in her cute little dress with black tights and little patent leather boots and a little purse to match! She was pleasant and engaging and so well-mannered. I commented to her parents how adorable she was and sensed her interest in what was happening around her. They attributed it to the fact that she hasn't ever watched television and no cell phone is allowed to entertain her. I thanked them for being such good parents and for dressing in an appropriate manner for a sophisticated town.

With our small-town Christmas parades this Saturday in both Highlands and Cashiers we will not look like the Macy's Day Parade but love and laughter will warm your heart and the spirit of Christmas will unfold you.

• Pat Allen is broker-in-charge of Allen Tate/Pat Allen Realty Group in the downtown office at 295 Dillard Road. She is a Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist, consistent award-winner, and a top producer every year for her real estate career of 19 years. You may reach her at 828-200-9179 or email her at pat.allen@allentate.com



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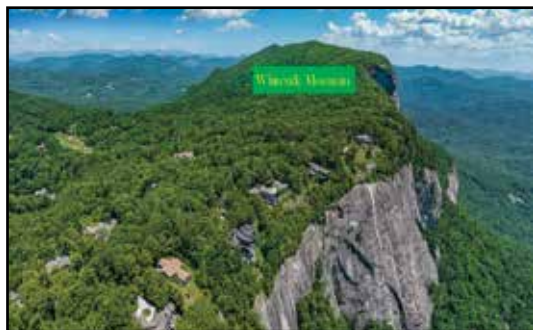
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• THANK YOU •

Thanks for the Food Boxes

A big thank you to the sponsors of the Thanksgiving Food Boxes.

We at the Highlands Emergency Council would like to thank the sponsors for the Thanksgiving Food boxes that were given out; we served 31 families. Sponsors were: August Produce Inc. and TJ Bailey's.

Thank you again for your generous support. Without you and the community we could not do our mission.

Thanks for helping at the Ramey Benefit

We would like to thank all the volunteers for the help with Gene Ramey's Benefit.

We made \$1,600 dollars for this family. We could not do this without the help of Kristy Lewis for preparing the Spaghetti Dinners and all the community support.

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Pat Allen | 828-200-9179
Julie Osborn | 828-200-6165



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• ON THE SUNNY SIDE •

Christmas Parades in America

The very first Christmas Parade in the United States was in Peoria, Illinois. The year was 1887. Peoria was celebrating the completion of a new bridge on the Illinois River. The parade consisted of boats and derricks sailing down the river. Santa Claus was riding on a large barge.

In 1888, the parade was moved to downtown Peoria. Santa was riding in a covered wagon. This year will be the 135th consecutive year of the Peoria Christmas Parade without missing one year. The Peoria parade persevered through the 1929 stock market crash, blizzards, rainstorms and even World War II.

Chris Roberts never missed a Peoria parade as a young kid. It became a part of his life. In 1998, he surprised his college sweetheart by carrying a sign in the parade that said, "Kate, will you marry me?" She accepted his proposal as soon as she saw the sign. They have now been married 24 years. They watch the parade every year at the corner of Monroe and Hancock Street. This is where Kate accepted his proposal.

Perhaps the most famous Christmas parade today is Macy's in New York City. The first Macy's parade was in 1924, and was started by their immigrant employees who wanted to give thanks for their lives in America. Today, hundreds of Macy's employees, friends and family of employees all volunteer to make the parade what it is.

The first Macy's parade was based on featured floats of famous children's nursery rhymes. There were 4 floats. The floats included, "There was an Old Lady Who Lived in a Shoe, Three Men in a Tub, Little Miss Muffet and Santa's Sleigh."

Macy's Parade draws thousands of spectators to New York City every year. The parade includes giant balloons, floats, clowns, marching bands, cheerleaders,



Kenny Youmans

many celebrities and animals borrowed from the Central Park Zoo. The giant balloons include Felix the Cat, Mickey Mouse and many more.

The first Christmas parade in Highlands was in 1986. It was inaugurated by the Highlands Merchant Association. It is a parade you don't want to miss. There is everything from a live nativity, camels, other animals, a marching band, motorcycles, classic cars, tractors, the fa-

mous dancing ladies of the Mountain Garden Club and of course Mrs. and Mr. Santa Claus.

I was a Wise Man in the first Highlands parade that included camels. My camel was Omar. He was the largest of the 3 camels and he really wasn't very friendly. He spit all over me. Somehow though, Omar and I bonded. He has since died. Omar is my all-time favorite camel.

Jane and I bought our first home in Highlands in 1998. One event we would never miss is the Highlands Christmas Parade. I believe my fondest memories of this parade was when Buck Trott was mayor of Highlands. Buck was the Highlands Santa Claus. He would make double appearances in the annual parade. He would lead the parade as mayor and then rush back to the end of the parade, change into his Santa suit, and ride in a sleigh down Main Street at the end of the parade. He devoted countless hours during the Christmas season visiting with children and community groups as Santa. I miss Buck Trott. He was a true American hero. He flew nearly 1200 combat missions in the Vietnam conflict.

The Highlands Christmas Parade this year is Saturday, December 3rd. It starts at 10:30 AM.

Let's get there early. We don't want to miss the famous dancing ladies!

...MAYOR continued from page 2

on putting up the Christmas decorations throughout the town. And the Highlands Fire Department did a great job of getting Santa Claus to the tree lighting.

I hope to see everyone on Saturday

at 10:30 am at our holiday capstone event, the annual Christmas Parade on Main Street. I always look forward to seeing all the community organizations that are in the parade.

Thanks to the generous support from the following donors to Highlands School PTO!

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• OBITUARIES •

Doris E. Bryson Hicks

Doris E. Bryson Hicks, 88, of Highlands, N. C. passed away Saturday, November 19, 2022. She was born April 12, 1934 in Macon County, N. C. to the late James Lawrence Bryson and Ellie Lazelle Talley Bryson. She worked for many years at Burlington Industries before retirement. She loved to sew and work in her flowers. She also loved bird watching, especially cardinals. She was of the Baptist faith.

She is survived by her son Keith Hicks of Highlands, N. C. Sisters; Mae Ivester (Dennis) of Clayton, Ga.; Gail Henry of Liberty S. C.; Opal McCall of Highlands, N. C. She is also survived by her grandson; Justin Hicks



(Virginia) of Franklin, N. C. Three great-grandchildren; Sadie Hicks, Lucas Hicks and Oliver Hicks.

In addition to her husband, James Hicks, she is preceded in death by a daughter, Celeste Hicks; brothers; Homer Bryson, Wendell Bryson and Wymer Bryson and sister Lois Hawkins.

A graveside service was held at Clear Creek Community Cemetery, Tuesday, November 22, 2022. Rev. Zane Talley officiated. Online condolences may be made at bryrantgrantfuneralhome.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the family.

Sarah Lucille Ray Sloan

Sarah Lucille Ray Sloan joined her beloved husband, Wiley G. Sloan, in heaven on Friday, November 18, 2022.

The fourth of six children born to Rev. Albert and Mrs. Alouise Ray, Sarah was a life-long Methodist, and she and Wiley built their lives around their church and community endeavors.

Born in Milburn, KY, Sarah Lucille (named for her mother's cherished sister, Lucille) grew up moving throughout her childhood as her father pastored Methodist organizations throughout Georgia. She graduated from Montgomery County High School and from Georgia Southern, with a Bachelor's in home sciences and went to work for Georgia Power as a home economist. Sarah met Wiley in Columbus, GA and married him there in 1979.

In what was then a male-dominated field, Sarah stood tall. Through her distinct combination of applied and learned knowledge, Sarah rose to positions of increasing scope and scale in the Georgia Power organization across more than 35 years of service, ultimately retiring as the regional manager of community affairs.

After retirement, Sarah and Wiley permanently relocated to their treasured Highlands, NC community, where they had a second home for years. There Sarah rolled-up-her-sleeves to dig into volunteer positions through the Highlands United Methodist Church and the Mountain Garden Club, her favorite activities being the Highlands Christmas Parade and the annual plant sale. They also shared their love of antiques through



a consulting business that ranged from appraisals to estate sales. They spent their winter months cruising around the world – from Alaska to Turkey and many ports in between.

When the issues of age and health collided, Sarah and Wiley sold their home on Big Bear Pen and scaled down to a condominium in Highlands and a townhome near family in

Athens. Sarah became active at Athens First United Methodist Church, became a member of the Outreach Sunday School class and its Bible Study.

Sarah is preceded in death by her husband, Wiley G. Sloan and brother, Dr. Al W. Ray, Jr. (Kay). She is survived by four siblings: John Ray (Sue), Freeda R. Chapman (Harold), Rita Hollingsworth (Thomas F. II), and Kathy R. King (Russell). Numerous nieces and nephews, as well as great nieces and nephews will continue the family legacy of service in their respective communities. A deep appreciation to the vast family of friends who supported Sarah in recent years and her devoted caregiver Nicole Hull as well as Abundance of Care.

Service of remembrance will be held on Monday, December 5, 2022 at 11 a.m. at Athens First UMC, 327 N Lumpkin St, Athens 30601 with a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked that memorials be made to Athens First UMC or the charity of their choice.

Online condolences may be made at the Memorial Wall at lordandstephens.com.

...TREE continued from page 1

Tree because it is a gift from the people's public lands to the U.S. Capitol Building – the people's house – where it stands for all to see, the tree will be lit from dusk through 11 p.m. each night through January 1, 2023.

Every year since 1970, the USDA Forest Service has provided a Christmas tree.

This is the third time the People's Tree hailed from the Pisgah National Forest, which is nestled within a high-elevation spruce-fir forest in the southern Appalachians. The Pisgah National Forest provided the tree in 1974 and 1998.

Finding Ruby

Ruby may have made the cut, but the tree had heavy competition and passed several important tests along the way. To start, a team of biologists, silviculturists, forestry technicians, and arborists spent months combing the mountainsides of the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests looking for just the right tree.

Specifically, the team was looking for a tree that fit the mold of a traditional Christmas tree. In western North Carolina, that could only mean a red spruce or Fraser fir, these being the only traditional Christmas tree species found in the state.

Apart from looking like a Christmas tree, the team needed to consider other characteristics. For instance, the tree had to be very tall, at least 65 feet, so that people can see it from far and wide around the National Mall in Washington, D.C. It also had to be well hydrated to remain healthy through the holiday season. Not to mention that it needed to grow close to a road to ensure the arborists could harvest the tree with the absolute minimum disturbance to other trees and wildlife.

In the end, Ruby was chosen over seven other trees, all red spruce, but not until the team had a final, thorough inspection to be sure Ruby was the best fit.

One of the main criteria of

the inspection? Make sure Ruby the Red Spruce wasn't home to any critters that were not expecting to make a trip to the capital this holiday season. You may be wondering: how does one inspect a 78-foot-tall tree? By climbing it!

On a crisp July day in the middle of summer atop a 6,000-foot mountain peak, a group of arborists, biologists, foresters, climbers, and silviculturists gathered, equipped with their climbing gear, ready to inspect the top candidate trees.

They had to check hollows deeper than five inches and had to check for lichen hot dots, an important food source for the Carolina northern flying squirrel."

At the end of the day, Ruby passed the test. The climbers scrambled over every inch of the 78-foot spruce and found no signs of squirrels, spiders, or lichens.

Ruby Leaves a Lasting Legacy in Southern Appalachia

Ruby is already leaving a legacy that will benefit the spruce-fir ecosystems of southern Appalachia for generations to come. Ruby is contributing to a movement among land managers in the southern Appalachian region to redouble efforts to restore red spruce habitat.

As part of the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree Program, the Forest Service is partnering with the National Forest Foundation to raise funds for a new state-of-the-art nursery that will grow red spruce seedlings. So far, the Forest Service has raised \$50,000 and the National Forest Foundation plans on raising \$200,000 more.

The nursery will be managed by the Southern Highlands Reserve a nationally recognized nonprofit arboretum and research center. This organization has embarked upon the epic task of raising 50,000 new red spruce trees from seed to be planted on public lands in North Carolina, Eastern Tennessee and Virginia, where more than 6,000 Southern Highland Reserve trees are already planted. Other partners in

these restoration efforts include The Nature Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"We are very excited to partner with the U.S. Forest Service and Southern Highlands Reserve on efforts to restore these unique, high-elevation, spruce-fir forests of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia," said Mark Shelley, director of eastern programs for the National Forest Foundation. "We are actively working to create a supply of trees to meet these restoration goals."

The team of silviculturists and foresters that helped select Ruby has also collected Ruby's cones, which contain seeds that will be transported to a tree nursery to be stored and eventually grown into seedlings. These seedlings may be among the next generation of red spruce trees growing in places across the southern Appalachian region that need them the most. Through the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree Program, Ruby is helping to raise awareness of these iconic trees and the ecosystems they support.



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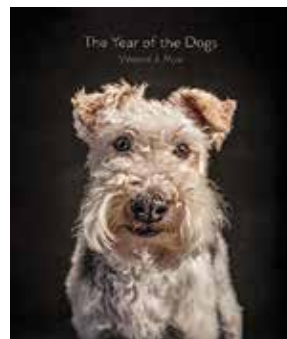
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Sunday, December 4	11:00am	Sunday Celebration - Elizabeth
Sunday, December 11	11:00am	Lessons & Carols
Sunday, December 18	11:00am 12:00pm	Sunday Celebration - The Shepherds Congregational Luncheon
Saturday, December 24	4:30pm 5:00pm	Prelude by John Wickey, Harpist Christmas Eve Service with Candlelight - The Angels
Sunday, December 25	11:00am 12:00pm	Christmas Stories & Songs Congregational COOKIES!!!

*All are welcome!
Todos son bienvenidos!*
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...HELPING continued from 1

this holiday season.

**Macon County
Holiday Angels**

For 30 years, Holiday Angels, an emergency assistance program, has helped families with the greatest need during the Christmas holidays. Macon County Program for Progress (MPP) assists young children, elderly over sixty-five, and special needs adults through the Holiday Angels program. Applications for assistance are still being accepted for the program until November 30.

Holiday Angels work with other family service providers to help support a maximum number of clients while working to limit duplication of services. Sponsors include church groups, clubs, businesses, families, and individuals. This program is self-supporting and operates solely with donations and sponsors. All monetary donations, toys, and other donations go directly to needy families.

Holiday Angels will match sponsors with a needy family or individual in early December. Sponsors and donations are still needed for this year's Holiday Angels program.

Whether someone or a group wants to help one child or 20 children, an elderly person, or a special needs adult, sponsors receive their family information by the first week of December. Sponsors will be matched following their preferences as close as possible and can shop, wrap, and deliver gifts to their family or bring gifts to MPP by December 12 and delivery will be arranged.

Holiday Angels also accepts tax-deductible donations; checks for donations should be made payable to MPP Holiday Angels, PO Box 700, Franklin, NC 28744.

Eligible families must provide valid proof of all household income for the year and meet Federal Poverty guidelines.

For more details, including how to apply for assistance, make a donation or be a sponsor, contact MPP. If you have questions, you may contact Felicia Roberts,

• See **HELPING** page 19

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...HELPING continued from page 18

MPP Family & Outreach Specialist, or a member of the Holiday Angels committee at (828) 524-4471 ext. 406. Applications are available at MPP main office, 82 East Orchard View Lane, behind LOWES of Franklin. MPP office hours are 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Toys for Tots

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Toys for Tots program. Toys for Tots was founded by a United States Marine Corps reservist in 1947 as a way to make sure underprivileged children received toys at Christmas.

Since then, the U.S. Marine Corps has sponsored the program which collects new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year. The toys collected are distributed as Christmas gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted. The program's goal is to deliver, through a new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to less fortunate youngsters that will assist them in becoming responsible, productive, patriotic citizens.

This year, 828 Vets is taking over and will operate the local program moving forward. Prior to 2021, Smoky Mountain Toys for Tots was headquartered in Franklin; however, the Toys for Tots Programs served families in Macon, Jackson, Swain, Haywood, and Rabun counties. Because it is 828 Vets' first year taking over the program, they have scaled down to just Macon County to get off the ground.

In 2021, the local chapter of Toys for Tots sponsored 762 children by distributing 3,933 toys to children in Western North Carolina. 2021 was also more the first time in the local program's history that a new coordinating agency handled distribution. The Franklin Chamber of Commerce volunteered to take on the program last year when the program might not have otherwise occurred.

Local toy collection campaigns began in October and lasts

until mid to late December. Toy distribution also takes place mid to late December. Members of the community drop new, unwrapped toys in collection boxes positioned in local businesses. Coordinators pick up the toys and store them in central warehouses where the toys are sorted by age and gender.

Drop-off boxes for new, unwrapped toys are located in several local stores, including the Macon County Detention Center and Macon County Sheriff's Office Annex in town. Suggested donations include games, any building or constructing toys, puzzles, STEM toys, and anything for the 0-2 ages.

For more information about 828 Vets Toys for Tots, email Coordinator Jack Brennan at JB@828Vets.com. or visit the Toys for Tots website at smokymt.toys-fortots.org.

I Love My Town Christmas

Every December, the Discover Church expands its "I Love My Town" initiative, a community focused effort, to provide Christmas gifts and practical items to foster and underprivileged children and families. For its "I Love My Town Christmas," program, the church partners with Macon and Jackson County Department of Social Services, Swain Family Resource Cen-

ter, MPP, and schools in Macon and Graham counties and Rabun County, Georgia to help provide Christmas to those who may go without.

The church's goal for the program is to be sure no children

are left out during Christmas. To identify children in the area who need help, the church reaches out to local principals and school counselors and gets names of children and families who might go without Christmas presents.

The schools provide information about the children such as clothing and shoe sizes and a particular gift or interest they may have.

Instead of having regular service, the congregation spend

• See **HELPING** page 22



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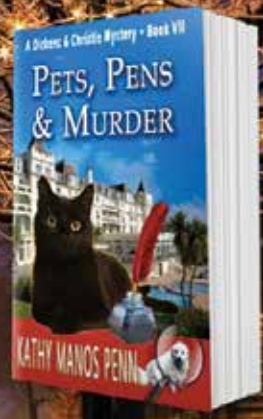

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •



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12 NOON

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For more information contact Phil Potts at 828-200-9753 or ppotts63@frontier.com



Christmas Carol Sing is Saturday after the Parade!



Everyone is cordially invited to a Christmas Carol Sing at Highlands First Presbyterian Church at 2pm on Saturday, Dec. 3 after the Highlands Christmas Parade. Stell Huie will be the song leader with Angie Jenkins at the piano. If you enjoy singing familiar Christmas Carols, you will definitely want to make this a part of your Christmas tradition. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicapped accessible entrances are located on Fifth Street and on Church Street.

ICE RINK SCHEDULE

(Nov. 17 - March 5)

• Thursday: 3:30-8 p.m.; Friday 3:30-10pm; Saturday 1-10pm; Sunday 1-5pm. \$5 for skate rental & skating

NEW Rec Pool Schedule

• Public Swim: Sat. 11a-6p; Sun., 1-6p. Adult Swim: Tues & Wed 11a-5p and Mon., Thurs., Fri., 11a-2p. Lap Swim: MOn-Fri 6a-9:45a and Sat. 10-11a. 828-526-1595.

Mondays

• ESL classes are held at the Presbyterian Church in Highlands from 5:30-6:30pm. No registration required – just show up and participate. Questions? Visit www.maconncliteracy.org, call 828-526 – 0863 or email info@maconncliteracy.org

Second Mondays

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

1st Tuesdays

• Indivisible Highlands from 5-6:30 pm at the Hudson Library.

2nd Tuesdays

• Highlands Writers Group meets on alternate Tuesday afternoons at 3pm. Writers still uncomfortable with in-person gatherings may participate via Zoom meetings held on the second or third Tuesday of each month at 3pm. Members receive weekly notification regarding when and how the group will assemble. For more information contact Bud Katz at either 828-526-3190 or at budan-dlynn@me.com

Tuesdays

• Strength Training 8:15-9:15am. Aim for strong, lean muscles using light weights, body weight, and high repetition to shape and tone.

Mon-Fri

• Water Aerobics 18 years plus 10-11am. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

• Pickle Ball inside and outside. 10am-1pm, everyone is welcome so come out and enjoy a game of Pickle Ball.

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

• The Food Pantry behind the Meth-

odist Church on Spring Street is open from 10a to 6p.

Mon. & Wed.

• New Mobility Class with Anna Norton It's all about movement. 5:30-6:30pm and Wednesday 6:45-7:45. For more information, call Anna 267-825-0716.

Mon, Wed, Fri

• Heart Healthy Exercise Class 8:30-9:30am. \$25 a month, The class is led by Cathy Hodgson. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

• Aerobics w/Tina Rogers 8-9a. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more info.

Tues. & Thurs.

• New Zumba class with Gay Chalpin from 4:30-5:30p. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with different types of exercise. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15am. An exhilarating and fun mix of martial arts for a calorie-burning workout. Contact the Recreation Department at 828-526-3556 for more information.

• At Hudson Library, Kids Zone at 3:30 pm with a wide variety of STEAM, nature, and craft activities. For more information about any of these summer activities, contact Hudson Library at 828-526-3031.

Saturdays in December

• Santa in the Park in Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park. Santa will appear in the park each Saturday to hear wishes from children of all ages. He will also periodically stop by to retrieve letters placed in a special mailbox in the park.

2nd Saturdays

• The Western North Carolina Woodturners Club meets in Highlands at The Bascom at 10 a.m. March thru November.

3rd Saturdays

• The American Legion Post 370 meets at the First Methodist Church at 315 Main Street in their Community Room/909 Chapel. We serve breakfast at

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

9am and hold our monthly meeting at 10am. We invite ALL Veterans to attend. Contact Ed McCloskey, Commander for any information @828-787-1660.

- At the Rec Park, Senior Lunches noon in the meeting room. For any other information call Lester Norris or Maxine Ramey at 828-526-3556.

Fri., Dec. 2

- At the Highlands Performing Arts Center, Great Art on Screen. Venice: Infinitely Avant Garde at 5:30p. Tickets are \$19. For more info call 828-526-9047.

Sat., Dec. 3

- Highlands Christmas Parade from 10:30 a.m. to Noon along Main St. Marching bands, llamas and camels, creative floats and – of course – Santa Claus as part of this longtime tradition.

- At Shakespeare & Co in Village Square on Oak and 5th streets, meet author of the The Dickens & Christie Cozy Mystery Series Kathy Penn after

the parade from 12:30-3:30p.

- Christmas Carol Sing at Highlands First Presbyterian Church at 2pm on Saturday, after the Highlands Christmas Parade. Stell Huie will be the song leader with Angie Jenkins at the piano. If you enjoy singing familiar Christmas Carols, you will definitely want to make this a part of your Christmas tradition. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicapped accessible entrances are located on 5th and Church streets.

Sat., Dec. 10

- At the Highlands Performing Arts Center Live via Satellite Met Opera The Hours at 1p. For more information call 828-526-9047.

Sun., Dec. 11

- At Wayfarers Unity Chapel, Death Cafe, a group-directed discussion with no agenda, objective or themes — and no intent to lead participants to any conclusion, product or course of action.

Please come enjoy tea and cake (a nod to Death Cafe's British origins) and talk openly and confidentially about all things death related. The session is facilitated by Jan Brewer, M.A., CMT and Teresa Weiser, Ed.D. For further information please contact Jan at 510-684-5555 and/or visit www.deathcafe.com. 2-4 pm. 182 Wayfarer Lane, Dillard, GA.

Mon., Dec. 12

- HMH Salon Series with Patterson Hood of the Drive-by Truckers 7-9pm. Patterson Hood, of the Drive-by Truckers, is playing a fireside show at the Highlander Mountain House.

Dec. 16-31

- The Mountain Theatre Company presents Home for the Holidays, a Christmas Tradition. Celebrate the season as we make magic in the mountains

this holiday. at The Playhouse on Oak Street. Wednesday - Saturday @ 7:30p and Saturday & Sunday @ 2p. For tickets go to www.mountaintheatre.com.

Sat., Dec. 17

- Ceremony and wreath laying at noon in the cemetery. Ceremony is at the Community Building and shuttles will take volunteers to and from the cemetery to lay veteran wreaths. For more info, call Phil Potts at 828-200-9753 or email ppotts63@frontier.com

Sat. & Sun, Jan. 28-Jan. 29

- Snow Fest in Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park. It's back and better! Bring friends and family for guaranteed winter fun (courtesy of snow blowers, if needed) in the park. A snowball toss, a merry-go-round, a snow slide, s'mores, "snowga" (a twist on yoga) and more.

Come meet columnist and author Kathy Manos Penn and get a book signed too!

**Booksigning at Shakespeare & Company in Village Square
Dec. 3 from 12:30-3:30**

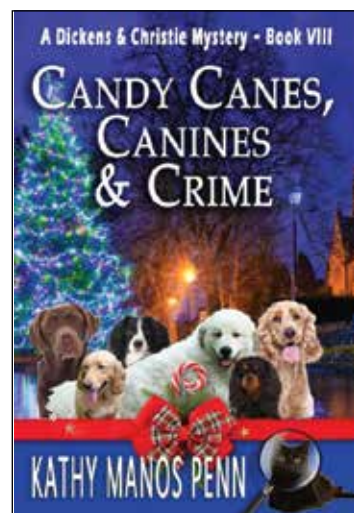
If you've been reading the Highlands Newspaper for a while, you'll know Kathy Manos Penn as a long-time columnist.

Through the years, she's written about holidays, travel, books, and as she describes it—whatever strikes her fancy. Lord Banjo the pooch and Puddin' the calico cat also got in on the act, writing columns with a pet perspective.

These days, the pets have retired, and Kathy is all about books, as both a columnist and a mystery author.

You may have discovered a new book because she reviewed it in a column, and if you're a mystery fan, you've likely read her Dickens & Christie mystery series, set in the fictional Cotswolds village of Astonbury.

She will be signing her latest book "Candy Canes, Canines & Crime" at Shakespeare & Company in Village Square at Oak and 5th streets after the parade 12:30-3:30p.



Memory Lane collection debuts at Fontana Regional Libraries ... the Hudson Library in Highlands



Fontana Regional Library, including Hudson Library, is pleased to announce the debut of a new Memory Lane Collection at all library locations. This collection offers books, DVDs, and jigsaw puzzles created primarily for older adult library patrons. Folks who enjoy reminiscing and telling their stories will appreciate this alternative-format collection. All items are available for checkout.

Hudson Library is delighted to be able to offer these new resources to the community. The Memory Lane project is made possible by funding from the

federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (IMLS grant number LS-249980-OLS-21).

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 10:00am-5:30pm Tuesday through Friday and 10am-4pm on Saturday.



**Hair • Nails • Waxing • Tanning
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Maggie Barden and Desiray Schmitt

Nail Tech: Jenna Schmitt
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(Between N. 4th & N. 5th)
828-526-3909

...HELPING continued from page 19

a few minutes worshipping together, then choose an ornament with information about the children and go shop for that child. Gifts are given to the parents so they can wrap and give the gifts on Christmas.

I Love My Town Christmas takes place December 4 for both services at 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. For more information contact Discover Church.

REACH'S 2022 Adopt-A-Family

REACH of Macon County, a non-profit service provider for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault, is looking for help this Christmas season. The holiday season is an especially difficult time of year for many families, but the folks at REACH of Macon County are hoping that the community can come together to make this Christmas a little more special for the families having to spend the holiday in their shelter. Each Christmas, the shelter provides Christmas for the families that are spending the holidays in the shelter.

Individuals or groups can choose to sponsor a REACH family and make a difference in a big way. Those who choose to help out with this year's Adopt-A-Family program and adopt will be assigned a family and given all necessary information such as ages, sizes and a "wish list" of wants and

needs. Anything provided will be greatly appreciated and will help to ensure a joyous holiday for survivors at REACH.

Please bring all unwrapped items to the REACH office at 29 Meadowlark Drive, Franklin. For more information call (828) 369-5544

Buy a Tree, Change a Life

Since the day after Thanksgiving, Buy A Tree. Change a Life. (BATCAL), sponsored locally by Prentiss Church, has been selling Christmas trees at a tree lot at Crabtree General Store to benefit children in need globally as well as locally. The simple purchase of a Christmas tree can help to feed and cloth children around the world and also in the local community.

BATCAL is a non-profit organization founded in 2012 to help children globally and locally. All proceeds raised during the project go directly to efforts chosen by area hosts. Last year BATCAL raised over \$33,000 and was able to bless several projects in the community with over \$2,000 each including Shop with A Cop, Pregnancy Care Center, KIDS Place, Union Academy and South Macon Elementary.

In addition to helping local charities, BATCAL funds the ongoing ministry efforts of Prentiss Church in Cambodia.

BATCAL funds building projects, clothing, food, education, the needs of orphans, and more in Cambodia which has struggled with poverty for decades.

Fraser fir trees, purchased regionally when possible, are paid for by donated funds from individuals and businesses. Business sponsorship are still needed; to sponsor this worthwhile charity contact Prentiss Church at (828) 369-3885. Although BATCAL is a Christmas season-focused fundraiser, donations may be made year-round. For more information, visit www.buyatreechangealife.com.

Shop With A Cop

For close to 30 years, the Macon County Sheriff's Office has sponsored Shop with a Cop, a program created to give Christmas to the less fortunate youth in Macon County. The event is made possible through the tremendous outpouring of community support and generosity.

Each year, up to 300 children from Macon County are treated to a day of Christmas fun filled with shopping, food and a visit with Santa Claus. Youth are given \$100 gift cards to spend on anything they wanted with the stipulation that they purchase one gift for someone else. The children spend the money on clothes, toys, food or whatever they want to buy; sometimes a child may even decide to use all the money to buy gifts for others.

Following the shopping trip to Walmart and other area businesses, youth were taken to the Drake Education Center where volunteers helped them wrap their gifts and have their picture taken with Santa.

In mid-December, over 100 volunteers gather to make this event an annual success. Volunteers from several local groups including the sheriff's office, police, fire, emergency services, social services, schools, forest service, wildlife and many others are paired with Macon County needy children for an afternoon of shopping and Christmas fun.

Volunteers are needed for the program. If anyone is interested in volunteering for this year's shop with a cop contact Dani Burrows by email at dburrows@maconnc.org or by calling her office at (828) 349-2107 or contact Cassie Shuler at cshuler@macon.nc.org or (828) 200-2243.

The Shop with a Cop program is entirely funded by donations from the local community, with no tax dollars used to fund the event. Donations for the program are accepted all year and can be made by

• See HELPING page 23

Welcome Dr. Jones!

**The Dental Practice of
Christopher T. Dyer DMD is
pleased to announce the
addition of
Thomas C. Jones DDS**

- 30 years experience owning a successful practice in Palm City, FL
- Graduate of The Ohio State University College of Dentistry
- Advanced training in cosmetic and restorative dentistry with a caring touch
- Relocating with his wife Patty to the community year-round



Dr. Thomas C. Jones

**Call (828) 526-3513 for an appointment.
479 South St., Highlands, NC**

...HELPING continued from page 22

sending your donation to Shop with a Cop Program, c/o Macon County Sheriff, 1820 Lakeside Drive, Franklin, NC 28734.

Jackson County

Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry

Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry, Inc. is a non-profit corporation established in 2005 by six Cashiers area churches. During the holidays, the organization distributes holiday dinner items at their donation center at 549 Frank Allen Road, Cashiers, in Jackson County directly behind the Cashiers Volunteer Fire Department

In addition to the organization's regularly scheduled Monday and Thursday food box distributions, Fishes & Loaves distributes holiday dinner items in Jackson County. Acting as a special holiday food pantry serving individuals and families in all areas of Jackson County, the surrounding areas in Western North Carolina, and beyond, Fishes & Loaves distribute holiday meals for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas each year.

The holiday dinner items include: turkey or ham, potatoes, canned vegetables, onion, yams, cranberry sauce, rolls and an apple or pumpkin pie.

Holiday dinner items and regularly scheduled food boxes will be distributed at the Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Monday and Thursday preceding the holiday.

The community can help to alleviate food insecurity in Jackson County and the surrounding areas by donating to the organization. As a local food donation center, Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry accepts all generous support and appreciates any time, food or money that is donated.

Items that can be donated to the donation center in Jackson County include non-perishable food items and personal care products with the expiration date. The center also accepts financial donations. Farmers can donate fresh produce. People and farmers can drop off fresh produce and other perishable foods such as meats, vegetable, fruits and eggs when the pantry is open on Monday and Thursday from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Donations can be dropped off at Fishes & Loaves Food Pantry. There is a donation box on the front porch where you can drop off non-perishable foods and/or personal care products within the expiration date when the pantry is closed. If items are too large for the box, please place the items on the front porch near the box. There is a donations mailbox next to the front door where people can leave their

monetary donations.

Christmas Connection

The Christmas Connection, a non-profit organization, brings delight to countless children throughout Jackson County each year through the provision of new Christmas gifts. This is a large task that requires the goodwill of both donors and volunteers alike uniting throughout the year to truly give every child and every family a Merry Christmas.

Created in 1989 as Jackson Christmas Store and transitioned to new ownership in 2014, the Christmas Connection of Jackson County seeks to provide Christmas to local children in need through the donation of presents. With 25% of Jackson County children falling under the poverty line, a large portion of youth in the community will not receive gifts this year. However, the Christmas Connection is working to change that one child at a time.

Beginning in September, the Christmas Connection receives referrals from social service agencies, schools and churches. No self-referrals are accepted.

Once the need has been verified, the family is entered into a database and asked to complete information about each child, such as clothing sizes and desired toys. Families are also asked to identify if there are any special needs. Sometimes families identify items, such as coats, that are not generally part of the Christmas Connection's provisions, but the charity tries to meet special needs where possible.

Unlike Toys for Tots® or The Salvation Army, the Christmas Connection seeks to involve the children and parents in the gift choosing process by sending out wish lists and allowing parents to choose many of the gifts their child will receive. In this way, they are going beyond simply providing free toys. Instead, they are working together with the families in the community to bring Christmas presents to the children.

Completely volunteer-run, Christmas Connection gives 100% of received donations to children across Jackson County, from Cashiers to Sylva to Cherokee. Currently, the organization serves about 750 children, yet they would like to serve more because of the immense need.

While children and their needs are being identified, the Christmas Connection solicits support from the community. The totally volunteer-run charity depends on community members to do three things: sponsor (a child or children); donate (money and items); and volunteer.

• See **HELPING** page 27



Don't miss the *Highlands Christmas Parade!*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

MAIN STREET — 5TH ST. TO 2ND ST.

**10 a.m. — Pre-show Appearance by the
Dancing Ladies of Mountain Garden Club**

10:30 a.m. — Parade Begins

Noon — Parade Ends

Special appearance by the
Pride of the Mountains marching band from
Western Carolina University and
— of course —

Santa & Mrs. Claus!



HIGHLANDS
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISIT HIGHLANDS, NC

This event is organized and hosted by the
Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC.

visithighlandscnc.com
828-526-2112

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Highlands School Winter Sports Teams

Middle School Boys Basketball



Timmy McDowell - 21, Stephen Pierson - 10, Chase Kenter - 12, Pierre Damian Suarez - 44, Francisco Gooch - 4, Jack Sumner - 20, Charlie Sherwood - 33, Tucker Wilson - 22, Rowen Carnes - 15, Juan Avia - 14, Sam Conner - 23, Walker Kittrell - 3, Michel Munoz - 2, Felix Reyes - 45 and Coach Todd Sherwood.

Middle School Girls Basketball



Coach Borino, Westenderf, 12
Borino, 32
Green, 22
Hays, 11
Torres - 10
Zagal, 2
Brooks, 1
Hays, 24
Talley, 5
Bosdell, 20
Edelheit, 25

Middle School Cheerleaders



Front:
Hayden Andrews
Back front left:
Bella Lopez, Cassie McDowell, Arabel Aulisio, Libby Hall, Trinity Faust

Photos by
Brian O'Shea

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Our 37th year in Highlands
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Highlands School Winter Sports Teams



Varsity Girls Basketball

Cayden Pierson - 1, Aislynn Wyatt Luck - 2, Beatrice Bryson - 3, Lillian Rutter - 4, AE Woods - 5, Lilly Bryson - 10, Heidi Doerter - 20, Mackenzie Woods - 23, Jayliln Raby - 24, Ezra Brahham - 32, Hunter Conner - 33, Bella Wilson - 34, Riley Conner - 35, Hendy Ruiz - 44.



JV Boys Basketball

Paulo McRae - 0, Jesus Mendoza - 2, Jim De La Cruz - 3, Bryan Juarquin - 4, Isaiah Vilardo - 12, Aiden Crook - 22, Aniah McKim - 23, Gavin Small - 20

Not Pictured Boys Varsity: Kasen Mitchell - 1, Luke Ramos - 3, JD Head - 4, Land-on Green - 10, Owen Munoz - 3, Cooper Hall - 21, Nathen Keener - 23, James Earp - 25, Harrison Gates - 40, Head Coach Kaitlin Bishop, Assistant Coaches Destin Gearhart and Cole Lamb.



Varsity Cheerleaders

Front row from left; Evangelina Silverthorn, Layla Babac, Madi Smith, Darby Templeton, Kaki Dyleski, Bria Taylor, Ashlynn Wilson, Sara McDonald, Rea Miller. Back row from left Anna Steihler, Savannah Bozeman, Katie Earp, Brooke Fogarty, Shirley Diaz, Annamaria Silverthorn. Not pictured: Soraya Lopez



Varsity Swim Team

Finneaus Garner, Paulo McRae, Aniah McKim, Conner Hughes, Tate Wilson, Layla Babak, Jesus Mendoza, Jim De La Cruz, not pictured Mark Gross, and Head Coach, Steve Hott

• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Advent is a time to slow down



Rev. Bentley Manning
Episcopal Church of the Incarnation

This is a busy time of year, and many of us are overwhelmed by everything we need to do. We still need to wrap the presents, send out our invitations, set the menu, trim the tree, etc. And yet, Advent (the season before Christmas) isn't about checking things off our to-do lists. Instead, this season is about preparing our hearts for the coming of the Messiah. It is about learning how to keep awake during a time of waiting.

But waiting is not what many of us like to do. We like to have things when we want them. We prefer Peach Passes on our cars, two-day Prime shipping from Amazon.com, credit cards that take the waiting out of wanting, and faster internet speeds. The world we inhabit is often in a hurry. Yet despite our penchant for instant gratification, the church would have us wait for Christmas.

To be sure, Advent is a time that invites us to slow down so that we might open our hearts up a bit more to the full reality of what will come at Christmas. Of course, we already know the difference Christ's arrival has made, but certainly, there is still more to discover. We are still waiting to see what might happen if Jesus was allowed more fully into our lives, into our families, into our Churches, and not our world. What might happen if we were to "wake from sleep" and see "the salvation of God more clearly?"

As we journey toward Bethlehem, may the gift of Advent be a time of blessing and renewal, expectation and watchfulness, patience and hope that we may greet our Lord with joy when he comes again in power and great glory.

News from Highlands Fire & Rescue

Chief Ryan Gearhart and Asst. Chief Robbie Forrester ask that ashes gathered from fireplaces or grills or fire pits be deposited in metal containers.

So far this year, there have been a few fires started due to hot ashes not being deposited correctly.

Typically, there are several each year.

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. Aryn 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

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: 10:30 a.m.

Testimony meeting: 3rd Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

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

Sundays: Service 10:45am, Children's 10:30am

Wednesdays: Youth 5:30-7pm; Women's Bible Study: Mondays

4:30pm, Tuesdays 10am; Men's Bible Study: Wednesdays &

Thursdays 7am @ Zookeeper Bistro

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, Rector • 526-2968

5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org

Sunday Services Chapel: Rite I spoken, 8a. Rite II with Choir in

Sanctuary 10:30a; Morning Prayer Mon-Thurs 8:30a in Chapel

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

828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

Sun.: Adult Ed.: 10 a.m.; Worship 11 a.m.

Tues: Men's Group 10 a.m. Wed: Bell Choir 4 p.m. 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

Wed. Bible Study: 6 p.m.; 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 Worship is at 9a. Wednesday Worship is 6:30p

HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Dr. Randy Lucas. Pastor 526-3376

In-Person and live-streamed Worship Services

909a Bluegrass and 11a Traditional

www.highlandsmethodist.org

HOLY FAMILY LUTHERAN CHURCH: ELCA

2152 Dillard Road • 526-9741

Worship/Communion: 10:30 All are welcome.

Visit our website: Holy Family Lutheran Highlands NC

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

Franklin • 828-634-1312 • mountainsynagoguewnc.com.

Services: 1st /Fri. and 3rd Sat.

and Rosh Hashanah & Yom Kippur.

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.

OUR LADY OF THE MOUNTAINS

CATHOLIC CHURCH

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

Tues. - 9:30am Latin; Thurs. - 9:30am English; Sun. - 11am English

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

Sunday Services: 8a. 9:30 & 11a

Visit our website www.goodshepherdofcashiers.com for

schedules of activities both virtual and in-person.

Bazaar Barn is open Fri. & Sat. 10a -2p.

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 Nov. 21. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Nov. 21

• At 11 p.m., Christopher Anthony Poplawski, 28, of Waynesville, NC, was arrested for DUI on NC 28 south. He was issued a \$1,500 unsecured bond. His trial date is Jan. 11, 2023.

• At 11:15 p.m., Gabrielle A. Evans, 27, of Highlands, was arrested for resisting and hindering arrest on NC 28 south. She was issued a \$1,500 unsecured bond. Her trial date is Dec. 8.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Nov. 22.

Nov. 22

• At 9:02 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Zachary Road.

Nov. 23

• At 2:12 a.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Department.

• At 1:39 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a location on the

Franklin Road.

Nov. 24

• At 12:02 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a possible brush fire at a residence on Cobb Road.

• At 2:54 p.m., the dept. rescued an animal on Blue Valley Road.

• At 4:48 p.m., the dept. provided mutual aid to the Cashiers Fire Dept.

Nov. 25

• At 7:05 a.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Cobb Road.

• At 10:31 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Rock Ridge Road.

Nov. 26

• At 11:14 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 10:05 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a location on Spring Street.

Nov. 27

• At 11:47 p.m., the dept. responded to a Co2 alarm at a residence on Hemlock Ridge.

Nov. 28

• At 2:58 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of an electrical fire at a residence on Cole Mountain Circle.

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Michael Lanzilotta, Mountaintop Rotary Club of Highlands President, accepts donations from Laura Harris.

Mtn. Rotary Coat Drive is in full swing

The Winter Coat Drive, spearheaded by the Mountaintop Rotary Club of Highlands, has collected 385 coats, 104 sweaters, 90 hoodies, 58 scarfs, and 12 winter vests since the November 1st kickoff.

The Coat Drive is co-administered by the Highlands Emergency Council. Those in need of winter clothing should contact the Emergency Council.

At last week's meeting, Laura Harris, Mountain Garden Club president, presented multiple coats, hats, scarfs, and gloves that her club members collected. She also presented a generous check from the garden club for \$775 to be used for the Coat Drive.

This year, the drive will last through March 2023.



Pictured front from left: Fran Leftwich, Judy Lipham, Gerri Tulley. Back from left: Jeannie Smith, Sarah Wallin, Paula McDonald, Becky Byard, Marci Henderson, and MaMary Ann Ray. **P.E.O has new-crip Georgia pecan halves just in time for Christmas baking. \$13 per pound. Call Sarah. Leave a message at 828-200-1598.**

...HELPING continued from page 23

Volunteers are the backbone of the Christmas Connection. Hundreds of individuals from schools, churches, service organizations and businesses rally together to ensure that no child in Jackson County goes without a Christmas present.

For more information, contact the Christmas Connection at (828) 399-1216 or email thechristmasconnectionofjc@gmail.com. To donate, mail checks to The Christmas Connection, P.O. Box 250, Webster, NC 28788. Applications for the program can be picked up at the Jackson County Department of Social Services.

Christmas Break Food Bag Project

United Christian Ministries (UCM) of Jackson County is a non-profit crisis ministry designed to provide aid and advocacy for people with urgent physical, economic, social and spiritual needs. The ministry's goal for the Christmas holidays is to make sure no family goes hungry at Christmas. While the ministry provides a food pantry, personal items, and financial assistance for essential bills to residents of Jackson County year-round, it is currently working on its annual Christmas Break Food Bag project. The collection for the Christmas Break

Food Bag project is now underway.

The group packs large bags of food for Jackson County schoolchildren in need. Each bag will contain canned green beans, corn, condensed soup, Spaghettios, macaroni & cheese cups, fruit cups, granola bars, peanut butter, jelly, ramen, hot chocolate mix and cereal. Donations of any of these items would be greatly appreciated. Donations may be brought to the UCM building or placed in the UCM donation carts inside Food Lion or Harold's Supermarket.

The bags will be sent home with the kids just before the long holiday break. This year the group plans to make 500 bags.

Volunteers will fill bags at the First United Methodist Church in Sylva from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on December 17. To volunteer for the "bag packing party," email UCM with your name, the number in your group and what time you would like to help.

For more information about UCM and the Christmas Break Food Bag project call (828) 586-8228, email ucmsylva@gmail.com or visit the ministry's website at www.ucmhelp.com. Donations can be made to United Christian Ministries of Jackson County, Inc., P.O. Box 188, Sylva, NC 28779.

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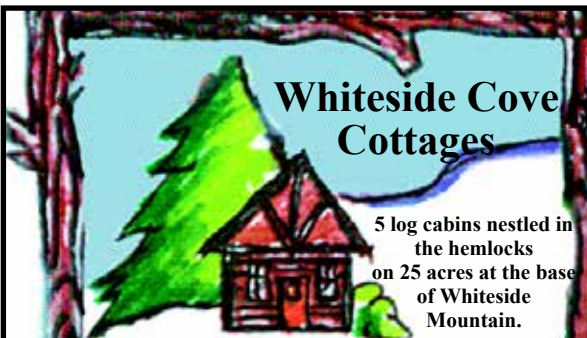
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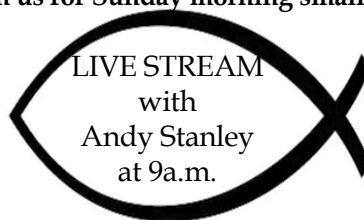
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...FIREHOUSE continued from page 1

hold 12 trucks - including the new tanker truck coming some time next year - sports a heated floor that not only makes the space comfortable but whose purpose is to keep the undercarriage and the equipment on the trucks, dry and in good working order regardless of the weather.

Off the bay area, there are rooms where turnout gear can be sanitized and cleaned of hazardous materials often picked up on the job.

The huge kitchen and dining area will be the envy of many a chef in town and includes food lockers so the people on duty can stock their own food.

There are training and instruction spaces, a fitness room, bathrooms, showers, computer areas, six single dorm-type rooms and a fireman's pole so firefighters can reach the ground floor quickly when called to respond.

Chief Ryan Gearhart said statistics show that there are more accidents when firefighters wake up in the middle of the night and attempt to rush down stairs to answer the call versus sliding down the pole.

Fire tax proceeds, which have been saved over the years, have paid for the new firehouse which for now will be home to the 27 volunteers but with hopes of hiring six full-time paid firefighters in the near future. The plan is to have two per shift with three shifts.

When not responding to calls, those on duty will be responsible

for keeping the trucks in running order, maintaining the hydrants, and keeping the entire complex clean from top to bottom and to exercise in the fitness room at least 30 minutes per day.

Gearhart said the department will take occupancy once the punch list is completed and all the equipment and furniture is moved in - hopefully by the end of the year. At that point there will be an open house for the public.

Burning and Grubbing

At the Nov. 17 Town Board meeting, ordinances were amended to make it clear that burning construction waste including vegetation that accumulates when land clearing is not allowed.

However, homeowners are allowed to burn leaves, sticks and grass clippings as long as there isn't a burning ban and as long as a water source is nearby.

"I believe people can burn safely and use common sense," said Commissioner Brian Stiehler.

The vote was 4-1 with Com-

missioner Amy Patterson voting against burning of any kind due to air pollution and the chance of a fire getting out of hand.

Leases

Three leases with the town are pending - the Chamber of Commerce, WHLC and that with the Ham Radio tower attachment.

All the leases were looked over by Town Attorney Jay Coward who said he didn't feel they were ready to be signed because there is no escape hatch - no termination clause - for the town.

"The first thing I do when I look over a lease is to see if there is any way I can get out of it," he said. "And in all these cases, the town can't get out of them, and it should be able to," he said.

The board unanimously agreed to have Attorney Coward insert a termination clause where the town can cancel a lease at any time without cause and present them at the December Town Board meeting.

- Kim Lewicki

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Chief Ryan Gearhart explains the kitchen and dining layout in the new firehouse.
- Photo by Kim Lewicki

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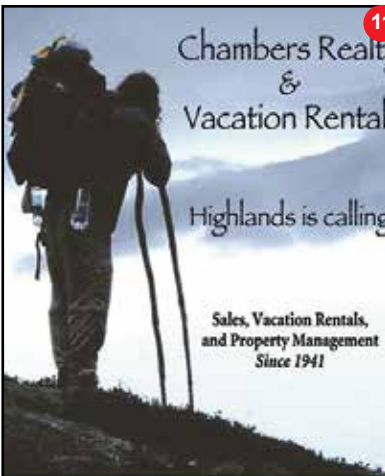
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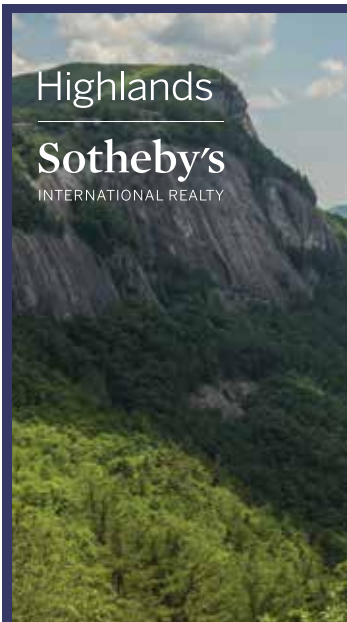
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