

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., Oct. 6 2022

Special sales tax question to be on the ballot in November

Tax would be earmarked for Macon County schools

By Brittney Lofthouse

This November, voters in Macon County will not only be

voting on the next group of leaders but will also have the chance to decide whether a special sales tax

is used to generate funding specifically designated for education.

• See **SALES TAX** page 30



BKLYN: The Musical wows audiences

"One of the most moving performances the Playhouse has ever housed."

- The Laurel Magazine

Mountain Theatre Company opened the riveting "BKLYN: The Musical" at The Highlands Playhouse on September 23.

The show is described as a fast-paced, modern fairytale founded in the American Dream. Set on a street corner in Brook-

lyn, it tells a tapestry of stories as rich as the borough that inspired it. A show within a show, a troupe of street performers share a story of a young woman using her gifted voice to find the father she never knew. It is a show that is both

• See **BKLYN** page 21

County to purchase 24 new voting machines

By Brittney Lofthouse

Twenty-four new voting machines from Hart InterCivic Systems will get their first official test run during the next municipal election in Macon County before rolling out county-wide during the 2024 Presidential Election after a September vote by the Macon County Board of Commissioners.

Members Macon County Board of Elections presented its recommendation to purchase 24 new voting machines from Hart InterCivic Systems to the board of commissioners in September, following two public demonstrations held to test out the new equipment and ask various questions of two different companies.

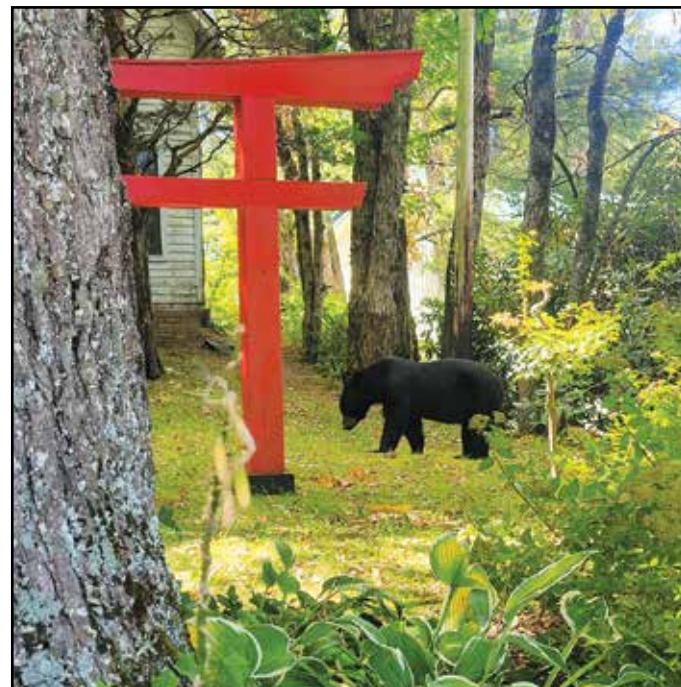
Longtime Board of Elections member Gary Dills spoke to com-

• See **MACHINES** page 23

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Bears are roaming about, fattening up for winter



Visitors enjoyed an "up close and personal" experience with one of Highlands' original natives who was roaming around Main Street on Monday. He settled for the grassy area behind Loafers Bench in search of grubs.

- Photo by Rachel Lewicki

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

How we stand by for catastrophes

The town was spared the remnants of Tropical Storm Ian this past weekend. Earlier in the week town staff and I had worried that we might have very heavy rains and high winds in the 50 to 80 mph range. If that had occurred power lines would have most likely gone down.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

As I have stated on numerous occasions, when we lose power, patience should be everyone's first level of response. Like with the past weekend our crews were on standby, and when the town did have a power outage on Sunday morning, they responded quickly to get it back on. We live in a mountainous forest with tremendous amounts of rain, snow and strong winds, so power outages are inevitable.

I have also emphasized that residents should not overburden the 911 emergency system with calls reporting outages as soon as they occur. Our electric department has one of the fastest response systems available. During inclement weather crews are on standby and in some instances actually staying in the buildings at the town yard.

Instead of calling 911, please call after

hours (828) 526-4131 to report outages if power has been out for a long period of time. The 4131 number is the nonemergency dispatch number for Macon County. Dispatchers will then radio our crews and report the problem. During regular business hours please call town hall at (828) 526-2118 to report outages. Our staff also has radios in order to contact electrical crews.

This past year our staff researched and explored contracting with a second-party provider to create an after-hours call center. Initial inquiries were very promising, but when it got to the level of implementation several problems were identified. The companies we contacted normally serve large systems and municipalities, and Highlands did not qualify for the scale these companies normally serve. We also discovered they insisted on package contracts where they would handle all utility billing, service requests and service issues.

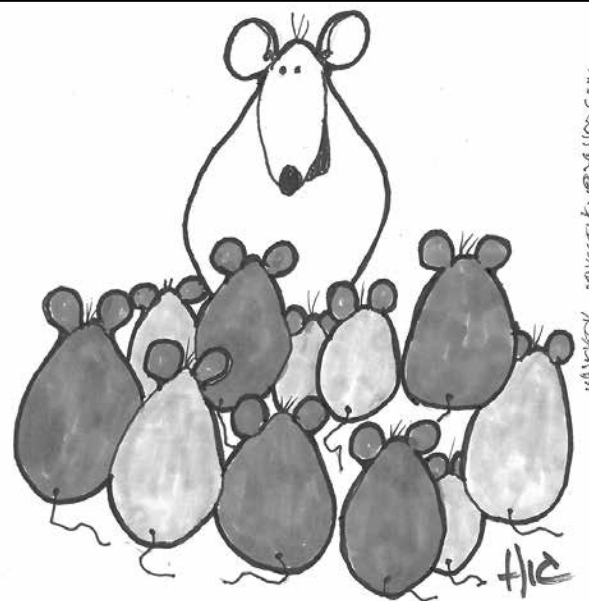
Another big problem was the interface with our electric crews. We have to rely on radios in order to communicate over the extreme topography of Highlands. This challenge would be problematic if the call center was somewhere like Lincoln, Nebraska or Boise, Idaho. Since our town already offers a direct service for billing and requests, coupled with the communications challenges, the staff was hesitant to embrace such an off-site system.

This is not to say we are giving up on the idea of an after-hours call center. Nevertheless, the staff is having to rethink how this system would function.

Also, I want to thank Representative Karl Gillespie and State Senator Kevin Corbin for being our guests at the Community Coffee this past Friday. They are both Macon Countians and are very knowledgeable and supportive of the Highlands community.





I also want to thank everyone who attended and participated in the question, answer and discussion session. While we may not agree on all issues, it is always good to see citizens coming together to discuss critical issues with their elected officials in a civil manner.

• HIC'S VIEW •



"We Rendezvous at two AM at the new restaurant on Main. Intel says the chef special is to die for."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 6-Oct	Fri, 7-Oct	Sat, 8-Oct	Sun, 9-Oct
			
70°F 45°F	70°F 45°F	64°F 42°F	64°F 42°F
Plenty of sun	Partly sunny and delightful	Partly sunny	Mostly sunny
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High: 75 Low: 45	High: 74 Low: 48	High: 69 Low: 74	High: 69 Low: 46

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Up, Up, and Away

Up, Up, and Away was a smash hit for the 5th Dimension in the late '60s, and before that, Superman himself used the catchphrase before zooming skywards. Oh, but that's so last century. Want to know something else we haven't heard since the last century? Double-digit interest rates. We're not there yet, but some economists aren't discounting the possibility. Pun intended.

According to NAR (National Association of Realtors), mortgages in September of 2022, the average \$400,000 home was about \$2,470. compared to \$1,660. just one year ago. In a September 28th article from an online Realtor magazine, Melissa D. Tracy said, "House hunters are backing away as mortgage rates continue to rise sharply. The NAR Pending Home Sales Index (a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings), fell 2% in August compared to July and is down 24.2% compared to a year ago. This marks the third consecutive month that pending home sales have fallen."

NAR's chief economist, Lawrence Yun said, "The direction of mortgage rates- upward or downward is the prime mover for

home buyers, and decade-high rates have deeply cut into contract signings... If mortgage rates moderate and the economy continues adding jobs, the home buying should also stabilize."

Further reading suggests the mortgage rates will continue to rise. Whether we reach double-digits again is questionable, but we could see upwards of 7% rates. The Mortgage Bankers Association has reported a drop of close to 30% in mortgage loan applications over the last year.

According to a recent CNBC article, "Main Street economy is headed dangerously close to the edge of a lending cliff."

Katie Collins, reported in a September Time.com (NextAdvisor) piece, "That doesn't mean you need to cancel your plans to purchasing a home."

Collins further quoted Shashank Shekhar, founder and CEO of InstaMortgage, "If you have a good job and your credit is fine, you should be able to refinance in a few years."

Isn't that what happened about 10 years ago? According to a Freddie Mac graph and report, the 30-year mortgage rate dropped from around 8% in 2000 to approximately 5% by 2003, and that was great news for homeowners, but it didn't stop there. Ten years later the interest rates dropped below 4% and the rush to refinance kept the lenders busy.

Highlands wasn't the only one caught up in the economic frenzy between 2019 and 2022. It may take the nation's economy a little longer to reach us, but we are still affected. As shown in our local Highlands-Cashiers MLS stats, real estate is still strong, but is far from the bustle of 2021. When I compared residential homes/townhomes/condos September 2021 vs. 2022, here's what I found:



Jeannie Chambers
Chambers Realty
& Vacation Rentals

tail may have slowed down a bit as well. Vacation rentals have slowed down tremendously when compared to 2021 but are right on track with 2019 and other years before the pandemic. 2021 was an anomaly.

If the blizzard of 1993 taught me anything, it taught me that records can be extreme, records can be broken, but it may never be the same conditions again that allowed it to happen. It was the perfect storm weatherwise, and 2021

was the perfect storm economy wise. It wasn't just one thing that made it happen, it was a conglomeration of many things.

So, here we are 14 years later since the interest rates were the same. What have we learned in that 14 years? What is your home worth? I don't mean in dollars, what is it worth in value, to you? If someone came up to you and offered you the current tax value for your home, would you take it? Where would you go if you didn't have your primary residence? If your mountain home isn't your primary residence, and if you sold it, would you buy another second (or third) home?

Don't let the current interest rates scare you away from buying your next home. The rates may be up, up, and away from what they were, but as the old saying goes, what goes up must come down. We don't know if it will be two years or 20 years, but one thing that remains the same is change, right?

The value of a home is in the eye of the homeowner, and ultimately, the buyer. Listing prices are based on recent sales. The sales price of a home is what the market will bear.

Although the climate of our seasonal, resort town is changing, and I don't just mean weatherwise, we are still far removed

	Active Listings	In Due Diligence	Pending Contract	Closed
2021	239	116	73	143
2022	289	86	58	72

Homes aren't as scarce this year, although the prices seem to be holding steady. You can tell by the number of September closings; the market has slowed from the wild and crazy of 2021. I would imagine that business in general, restaurants and re-

from other communities. We're not in an isolation-bubble, and we're not Utopia, but we still enjoy a less-hurried, mountain-time atmosphere, and I hope that never changes.

Mountain life IS up, up and away.

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LAKE OSSEROGA | \$1,995,000 | MLS# 100855

Sited just above a rushing waterfall with views of the pond below and the mountain in the distance, this beautiful, high-quality home has been impeccably maintained. There are hardwood floors throughout and granite countertops in all bathrooms. The floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace is the focus of the great room, which also boasts a wood-beamed vaulted ceiling. There are a total of three stone fireplaces with gas logs; one fireplace is also wood-burning. An updated kitchen with Wolf/Sub Zero appliances and honey-honed granite countertops makes cooking a pleasure. Deeded water access.

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• LETTERS •

Help us celebrate the history of Highlands

Dear Editor,

Did you know?

- Highlands was founded in 1875. The first school house was built in 1878. It served students ages 6 to 20 in a single room.
- The oldest house in Highlands was built in 1877; it serves as Highlands Historical Society's living history museum.
- The Wright family arrived in Highlands in 1875 as Highlands first settlers. Baxter Wright was Highlands first post master and justice of the peace.
- The second oldest library in North Carolina was created in Highlands in 1880 by Louise Emmons Wells.
- The Ravenels built Highlands first summer house in 1879. They accumulated 30,000 acres including the forest between Bear Pen and Whiteside.



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The Historical Society's Living Museum on N. 4th Street.

• HM Bascom in 1883 built a two-story general merchandising store. In 1890 he built the Davis House, a fabulous inn.

• Alfred Hawkins purchased 1,000 acres southeast of Highlands. A farmer by trade Alfred served as Highlands first doctor.

• In 1885 the First Presbyterian Church was built at a cost of \$3,000.

• In 1885 two bootleggers were confined by revenuers which led to the Moccasin War.

• Henry Sloan came to Highlands in 1900 and owned one of the first cars in Highlands. He brought the first movies to Highlands -- silent films.

• In 1911 the incredible heroism of Charles Wright on Whiteside Mountain saving Gus Baty from falling off of a cliff. It took two and a half hours. Wright later received a gold medal awarded by the Carnegie Commission.

These are just a few of the stories found in Dr. Ran Shaffner's book, HIGHLANDS.

Our beautiful town of Highlands has a wonderful history and I hope these highlights wet your appetite to learn more about the history of Highlands and our founding fathers.

In today's world we are consumed with so many distractions, we have little time to reflect on our heritage. To be honest in today's up-scaled Highlands, it is difficult to comprehend the life in 1900.

However, Highlands is fortunate to have many families who live in the area who have family roots dating back for more than 100 years.

Highlands Historical Society and the Highlands Chamber will celebrate Heritage Day on October 29. Events are planned but for sure an event honoring families who have had Highlands residents for the past 100 years will be invited to a reception sponsored by Highland Historical Society. I wonder what family will have the greatest turnout. I know the Potts, Chambers, Edwards, Hawkins, Crowes, Picklesimers and Wrights come to mind and look forward to Heritage Day and meeting all the family members whose heritage goes back 100 years or more.

Harry McDonald
President Highland Historical Society



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• INK PENN •

A few fall reading suggestions

Three books from three eras – post-WWI, WWII, and modern-day – shared my nightstand last month, and all were enjoyable in different ways. Can you tell I'm an eclectic reader? As a cozy mystery author whose characters are avid readers, I get to indulge my reading passion by having a book club meeting as a staple in my series. And I regularly mention books my characters enjoy – so much so that in later books in the series, I list the books in the back.



Kathy Manos Penn

the WWII resistance fighter Nancy Wake, a New Zealander who becomes a journalist, marries a Frenchman, and goes on to become a freedom fighter known as the White Mouse. This would be an enthralling read at any time, but its depiction of how she trains a band of ragtag French resistance fighters and leads them on successful missions against the Nazis is eerily familiar given the Ukrainian battle with Russia today.

When you read about the French resistance blowing up bridges and tanks with dynamite and grenades, substitute today's javelin missiles. When you read of savage reprisals against French villagers, insert what is going on in Ukraine today. This is a book for all times and especially for TODAY. I highly recommend it.

Sanatorium by Sarah Pearse

When I see a book compared to those by Christie and Du Maurier, I have to grab it. The Sanatorium did not disappoint. DI Elin Warner and her boyfriend arrive at a resort in the Swiss Alps to celebrate her brother's engagement. She's been on leave from her job on the coast of England since a horrific case and the atmosphere at the isolated resort--that was once a sanatorium-- isn't helping her anxiety.

Strained family dynamics, a major snowstorm that strands the guests, and people going missing provide the classic ingredients for an edge-of-the-seat experience. Better yet, there appears to be a sequel!

Here's hoping one of these choices suits your reading fancy. Drop me a line and let me know!

The White Cottage Mystery by Margery Allingham

What a treat to read an author I'd long heard of but never tried. When a friend stumbled across this book at a library sale, she read it before sharing it with me. Her request: I want to know what you think of the ending. The answer: I didn't expect it. Isn't that a mark of a good mystery? An unexpected ending that fits.

Written in 1927, this book is a quintessential golden age mystery. You'll meet Chief Inspector Challenor and travel from England to France. You'll enjoy a dash of romance.

"Margery Allingham stands out like a shining light," wrote Agatha Christie. "Margery Allingham is notable for the energy and inventiveness of her writing," said P.D. James. High praise indeed! I plan to find more Allingham books to add to my TBR list.

Liberation
by Imogen Kealey
This is a historical thriller based on

• Award-winning author Kathy Manos Penn is a Georgia resident. Find her cozy mysteries in Franklin at Franklin Office Supply & Gifts and Books Unlimited, at Shakespeare & Company in Highlands, and on Amazon. Contact her at penn119@gmail.com, and follow her on Facebook, www.facebook.com/KathyManosPenn.Author/.



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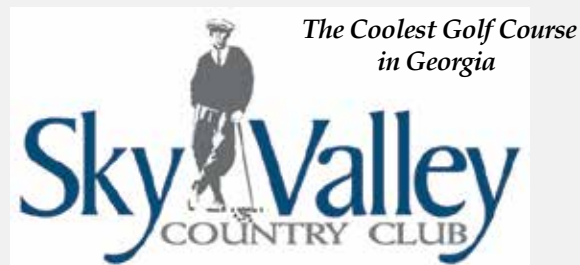
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• FINANCIAL MATTERS •

Recession – Yes, No or Maybe

Until recently, I was harboring some hope that inflation was indeed, at least to some degree transitory, and the Federal Reserve would have a little room to be less aggressive in its efforts to slow the economy, and just maybe avoid a “hard landing.”

Despite their tremendously bad history of hiking rates and avoiding recessions, my hope was that as fuel prices came down - and since fuel prices affect the larger worldwide economy - inflation numbers would be positively affected. Unfortunately, high inflation is still with us, and likely for a while.

The odds now firmly favor a recession within the next 6 to 12 months. As I’m writing this (Friday, September 16), FedEx is saying they’re seeing a sharp slowdown in business. Since FedEx is a global company, investors are paying attention to it and markets are rattled.

There are companies saying they’re not seeing a slowdown – yet. However, they are starting to see hesitation by their customers to spend. Even I’m taking a possible recession into the equation when making personal and business decisions.

There is a laundry list of things that we’ve never seen before and so how this will all end is up in the air.

Here are several notable differences between this rate tightening cycle and others:

- We had 12 years or so of Quantitative Easing (QE), now we’re facing several years of Quantitative Tightening (QT). The Federal Reserve has \$8.5 Trillion of Treasuries and Mortgage-Backed Securities on its balance sheet and is looking to significantly lower this amount. Since they started this reduction on September 1st, the yield on the 10-year Treasury has risen by 5.5% and 30 yr. mortgage rates are now average above 6.5%.

- The housing market is likely in a recession already, and since most home buyers are payment buyers, when their monthly



Michael P Henderson, CFP® CKA®
 Founder/Wealth Advisor
 Crossover Point Advisors

payments are several hundred dollars more than it was just six months ago, less people will purchase homes and prices will likely stagnate or drop. On the other hand, the people who bought or refinanced at or near the interest rate bottom will be reluctant to “trade up” or even downsize unless they can for cash, which may help buoy prices for a time.

- We still have an ugly war between Russia and Ukraine that could further upend the balance of power and economies around the globe.

- Our national debt is over 100% of GDP. The last time inflation was this bad and the Fed was this aggressive was under Paul Volker and debt to GDP was 30%.

- We have an “inverted yield curve, meaning longer term rates are lower than short-term rates. This is not normal because if you loan money for 2 years vs. 30 years, you expect to get a higher interest rate because you’re taking more risk. 12 of 14 times this has occurred since WW2, we’ve gone into a recession within 12 months.

With this backdrop, it’s certainly hard to make the case we’re not headed into recession. The only question is when and how severe.

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5

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— MACON COUNTY —

date Monday, October 10, 2022

time 7:00 PM

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• ON THE SUNNY SIDE •

The Fabulous Five

March 3, 2017, the Kansas City adoption agency put on their website, "AdoptKSKids.Org," five Kansas City siblings looking for an adoptive family. Three brothers and two sisters ages 2 to 11. They were all in different foster homes and wanted to be adopted in one family together.

The Kansas City Star weekly newspaper featured an article, "Family Wanted." The article triggered a nationwide response that filled the voice mailbox with over 1500 inquiries — more than the mailbox could hold. The article went viral and had over 7 million hits as far away as Ireland and New Zealand. The kids became known as the "Fab Five."

The State of Kansas Adoption Agency interviewed hundreds and hundreds of couples. Fourteen months later, May 30, 2018, Toni and Jeff Whaley became the parents of "The Fab Five." Toni and Jeff were a childless couple that lived just outside Kansas City. Today the kids are doing great. Now they have each other, 2 loving parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and 2 sets of grandparents. Toni and Jeff Whaley have never been happier.

A few famous people who were adopted you may recognize:

Babe Ruth

Famous baseball player grew up in an orphanage

Steve Jobs

Founder of Apple

Eleanor Roosevelt

Longest serving First Lady of the United States

Nelson Mandela

President of South Africa 1994-1999

Michael Oher



Kenny Youmans

Remember the movie "Blind Side"

John Hancock

Signed the Declaration of Independence

Dave Thomas

Founder of Wendy's

Edgar Allan Poe

American writer known for poetry and short stories

Famous adoptive parents:

Barbara Walters

Deloris and Bob Hope

Burt Reynolds

Diane Keaton

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt

Jane and I are adoptive parents. We have one boy and one girl. We adopted each when they were 3 months old - 3 years apart. They both graduated from college and are happily married. Today we have 3 wonderful grandchildren. We are truly blessed.

My hometown is Savannah, GA. One of the oldest, maybe the oldest orphanage is located in Savannah. Bethesda — it was founded in 1740. Bethesda is on 500 beautiful acres. It was an orphanage for boys. They had to work hard and I mean hard. It was like growing up on a farm. They were self-sufficient - cows, chickens, grew vegetables. They also learned a trade. The goal was when they left, they knew hard to work hard and make a living. It was Christian oriented.

When I was in the 9th grade, in one of my classes were twin boys from Bethesda. They were nice, nice-looking, smart and popular. We were pretty good friends. I often wonder how they did. I never saw them after that year. I wish somehow, I kept up with them. Big mistake on my part.

Highlands Middle School Swim Team travels to Rabun Gap Nagoochee School

Steve Hott

Head Coach

Highlands MS Swimming & Diving

On Thursday, Sept.29 the Highlands Middle School Swim Team traveled to Rabun Gap Nagoochee School (RGNS) to swim in a triangular meet including Macon Middle School (MMS). Missing 4 boys who were playing in a Highlands Middle School Soccer game, the individual performances were still good. Trinity Faust and Ian Shchelgachov led the teams with

45 pts each. Sadie Green scored 43 pts, Cassie McDowell brought home 37 pts and Hayden Andrews 24.

The outstanding swim for the Highlanders at this meet had to be Hayden Andrews 100 meter freestyle where she dropped more than 24% off of her time!

The Highlands Middle School Swim Team's next meet is Friday, Oct. 7 at the Buncomb County Aquatics Center for the 2022 Far West Middle School Swimming Championships.



Fall foliage is on its way

**By Andrew Moore
Forestry and Environmental Resources Research**

North Carolinians can expect to see the usual hues of orange, yellow, red and purple on trees as they visit leaf-peeping destinations across the state this fall, according to one NC State forestry expert.

“I think we’ll see leaves peak at about the same time as they have in recent years,” said Bob Bardon, a professor of forestry and environmental resources and the associate dean of extension at the College of Natural Resources.

Leaves can begin changing as early as late September, with colors peaking as early as mid-October. However, Bardon warned that it’s difficult to predict the exact timing of the process because it depends on how the weather unfolds throughout the fall season.

Sunny, but not hot, days and cooler nights provide the optimal conditions for fall foliage, with the lower temperatures slowing the production of chlorophyll — the pigment that gives plants their green color — and sunlight increasing sugar production.

As chlorophyll declines, carotenoid (orange) and xanthophyll (yellow) pigments emerge from within the leaves. Meanwhile, the increasing concentration of sugar produces a third pigment, anthocyanin, which creates hues of red and purple.

Warmer temperatures can cause leaves to remain green longer, delaying the onset of fall colors. The Climate Prediction Center’s outlook shows that the Southeast could experience above-average temperatures through November.

“It’s going to be a bit warmer in the southern Appalachians this year, but we’re probably not going to see much of a delay in fall colors,” Bardon said. “If there

is a delay, it will only be by a few days. Most people probably won’t even notice it.”

Some parts of the Piedmont and Coastal Plain regions are experiencing mild drought, which can cause leaves to die before they reach peak color. But an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season could alleviate these conditions.

On the other hand, the wind and rain associated with tropical storms can knock leaves off trees before they reach peak color, according to Bardon. Additionally, cloudy days and rainfall can reduce sugar production within leaves, lowering color intensity.

“We haven’t had a hurricane yet. So it’s a bit later than we normally see. That may give us an indication that fall weather is going to last longer,” Bardon said.

Bardon added that if North Carolina isn’t impacted by any major storms in the coming weeks and begins to experience cooler temperatures, leaf peepers could begin to see minimal color changes at higher elevations in the mountains as early as the first week of October.

Once fall foliage begins to appear throughout the mountains, the color changes will gradually move across the state to the coast, according to Bardon. Coastal areas usually see color changes one or two weeks after the other regions.

According to the Farmers’ Almanac, fall foliage will peak across the inland regions of North Carolina between October 12 and 28. Meanwhile, along the coast, foliage is expected to peak between October 19 and November 4.

Bardon cautioned, again, that if temperatures trend warmer and tropical storms become more prevalent, it could delay fall foliage by a couple of days and even mute the colors. “Any deviation from sunny days and cooler temperatures could impact the leaves.”



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• THEN AND NOW •

Me and Linda Ronstadt

Even as I peck this out I can still smilingly and imaginatively relive listening to Linda Ronstadt's Blue Bayou as I drove through the southern Delta on my way to Texas from North Carolina, a seasonal migration that compassed my life for decades.

Did you know that, late at night, AM radio signals that traveled hundreds of miles by bouncing off the ionosphere somehow managed to land in the radio of my old yellow and white VW bus, the very one they likely used in the movie Little Miss Sunshine?

And in that pre-historic age AM stood for American Music and FM for Foreign Music?

Usually Linda could be found somewhere between Pascagoula, Mississippi, and Grosse Tete, Louisiana but always, always singing Blue Bayou.

Even if I first heard her breakthrough song, Long, Long Time, I knew Blue Bayou inevitably would follow. It was just me and Linda.

My father, Bud Ready, really didn't much care for Linda or anything 'Cajun. Why? Often as bad as his cursing and singing, Dad's reasoning thought Linda "a Mexican" and not a "Texican" and 'Cajun food all "bottom feeders fancied up with a French-ified name" like Etouffee which, to him, meant burnt and smothered in a spicy sauce. Gumbo? Just leftovers of pigs, chickens, sausages, and shrimp mixed with a roux over rice. You needed a lot of beer to wash that down.

When passing through Breaux Bridge on I-10, the crawfish capital of the world just outside Lafayette,



Milton Ready

the epicenter of 'Cajun culture, my German radio, more powerful than its VW engine, sometimes came across one of Doug Kershaw's songs, typically Louisiana Man, Diggy Liggy Lo, or Jambalaya.

Surely Kershaw must have been an earlier Louisiana incarnation of Prince, so charismatic and captivating was he especially on stage. Look him up on YouTube and perhaps you'll agree. My Dad called him a "crazy Cajun" but delighted in belting out his Jolie Blonde with a cigarette precariously dangling from his lower lip and a bottle of Jax beer in his hand. Guess where Jax beer was brewed?

Some of Dad's greatest passions derived from that which, like 'Cajuns and their culture, he forever criticized, even outwardly disliked but nonetheless found himself drawn, charmed, and attached. That defined him.

One of my epiphanies occurred many years ago when I

pulled off I-10 and, in a small storefront on a muddy street in Breaux Bridge where everyone spoke creole except me and had the best gumbo of my life. I still failingly try to recapture that gumbo whenever I visit New Orleans or Louisiana.

In that long ago time of analogue radios and cassettes, I also listened to Creedence Clearwater Revival, Roger Miller, Janis Joplin, and to a fellow Texan, one of the worst singers and actors but best lyricists of all, Kris Kristofferson.

My children will attest to those traumatic travels and forced listening, perhaps why they eventually became Cajuns.

Traveling through the Delta I heard Joplin singing Kristofferson's Me and Bobby McGee almost as much as I did Blue Bayou, its lines as haunting as Kristofferson's bad English.

And, to me, that's what Linda Ronstadt's Blue Bayou is all about, a longing to return to an idyllic, spiritual place once known and beloved but now gone.

Did you know you can find a lot of spiritualism in country and western music?

As the song says, I'm still saving my nickels and dimes and looking forward to even happier times for me and Linda. You should, too.

I'm going back someday
Come what may
To Blue Bayou
Where the folks are fun
And the world is mine
On Blue Bayou

HS Fall Festival is coming up!

The Highlands School Fall Festival is Saturday, Oct. 29 from 5-8 p.m. There will be carnival games, bounce houses, a haunted house, a hayride, face-painting, a cake walk and a theme-box silent auction.

A fun time for the entire family!

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



Ironwood Tools visits local garden Club

Chris McGregor of Ironwood Tools in Lilburn, GA spoke to the Mountain Garden Club at their September meeting at the Highlands Recreation Center. McGregor, who has extensive training in arboriculture, brought several pruning tools and saws and explained the garden situations in which each would be applicable.

Scissor cut pruners, also called sheep sheers, are excellent for trimming leafy plants and for topiary shaping. Bypass pruners are the most versatile pruners and are excellent for pruning green wood. Anvil pruners provide a ratcheting action which can be useful in pruning tough woods. Chris explained that pruning tools require one hand use; loppers require two.

When asked what tool is best for dividing plants like hostas, McGregor said that the Japanese style hori-hori knife is a good choice. Hori-hori translates to dig-dig.

McGregor explained that moisture is what damages tools the most. Gardeners should always dry and remove all dirt from saws and pruners before storing them. Cold press orange rind oil is excellent for cleaning, lubricating and disinfecting tools. He said many people don't realize that it is best to store pruners with the springs open to extend the life of the tool.

During a demonstration of sharpening pruners and saws, McGregor said that the anvil pruner is the easiest to sharpen using a diamond tool sharpener. The secret, he added, is to use more strokes with less pressure.

• Mountain Garden Club was founded in 1979. Each year members dig and pot hundreds of mountain plants for the club's annual plant sale held Memorial Day weekend. Money raised from the sale provides scholarships for local students. MGC also maintains the gardens at Highlands School, Eckerd Living Center and the Historic Jail.

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

NEW Rec Pool Schedule

• Public Swim: Mon.-Wed. 3:30-7p; Sat. 11a-6p; Sunday 1-6p. Adult Lap Swim: Mon-Fri 6-9:45a; Mon.-Thurs, 5-7p. 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

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. "We welcome participation from anyone interested in writing, or just hanging out with writers," said Bud Katz. For more information contact Bud Katz at either 828-526-3190 or at budandlynn@me.com

Wednesdays in Sept.

• Community Yoga Class to benefit the Chattooga River Conservancy from 6-7:15p at Yoga Highlands, facilitated by Rachel Kinback CYT500. Fun and restorative movement. Come as you are. All skill levels are welcome. Suggested donation \$10-20.

Thursdays

• At Hudson Library, Family Storytime at 10:40a. For more

information about any of these summer activities, contact Hudson Library at 828-526-3031.

• 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.

Mon-Fri

• Water Aerobics 18 years plus 10:15-11am.

Mon., Tues., Thurs.

• The Food Pantry behind the Methodist Church on Spring Street is open from 10a to 6p,

Mon. & Wed.

• Cardio Kickboxing with Crystal Corbin 5:30-6:30 p.m. A full body workout for every muscle

• 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.

1st Tuesdays

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

Tuesdays

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

Tues. & Thurs.

• Pilates-Strength and Stretch with Autumn Lucas

• New Zumba class with Gay Chalpin from 4:30-5:30p.

• Exercise Class with Michelle Lane at 5:30. A combination class with different types of exercise.

Wed. & Sat in October

• Autumn Amble" leaf tours this October. Every Wednesday and Saturday at 4 PM, staff will lead an exploration of the Highlands Botanical Garden to discover what leaves are already changing and (the science of) why. All are welcome to participate in these free guided tours, and no registration is necessary.

Thursdays

• Kickboxing 8:15-9:15am. An exhilarating and fun mix of martial arts for a calorie-burning workout.

Fridays

• Friday Night Live Concerts in Town Square on Main Street. 6-8:30 p.m. Bring chairs.

Saturdays

• Saturdays on Pine in K-H Founders Park on Pine Street. 6-8:30 p.m. Bring chairs, blankets and a picnic.

• Live music at Frog Quarters just before the bridge over the Little Tennessee River in East Franklin.

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

Thru Oct. 16

• The Mountain Theatre Company presents Brooklyn: The Musical, A Sidewalk Fairytale at The Playhouse on Oak Street. Wed. - Sat. @ 7:30p and Sat. & Sun. @ 2p. For tickets go to www.mountaintheatre.com.

Thurs., Oct. 6

• At The Bascom, Instruments of Southern Appalachia

5-6:30 pm: Exhibition Reception, Tapping into Tone: Musical | FREE

Fri., Oct. 7

• At The Bascom, Curator Talk, 4p | FREE

Sat., Oct. 8

• In the Macon County Public Library Meeting Room - 2-4 p.m. Art Reception for Betty Cabe. Learn more about the craft of paper quilling during this informal reception with the artist and friends.

• "Fall into Dance" month which also street dance on Franklin's Town Square Gazebo with Motown/Soul band West-Sound on Saturday at 7 pm. Contact the Arts Council for details, 828-524-ARTS or email arts4all@ndnet.net.

• "Seriously Funny with Sirius XM's Mike Williams" at Highlands United Methodist Church 6-8:30 p.m. Info and registration at SmokeyPartners.com 828-349-3200. **Sun., Oct. 9**

• Highlands First Presbyterian Church will host an old fashioned Hymn Sing at 4pm on Sunday. Those attending may choose a hymn they wish to sing from the 1938 Cokesbury Hymnal. Song leader will be Stell Huie with Angie Jenkins at the piano. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicap accessible entrances are located on Church Street and on Fifth Street.

• Death Cafe conversation with Jan and Teresa, for a group directed discussion of death wit no agenda, objectives or themes. Light refreshments 2-4 p.m., at Wayfarers Unity Chapel, 182 Wayfarer Lane, Dillard, GA.

Mon., Oct. 10

• Meet and Greet the MC Candidates – at The Vineyard 37 High Holly Road in Scaly Mountain 7-9 p.m. Shuttle

Old Fashioned Hymn Sing



Highlands First Presbyterian Church will host an old fashioned Hymn Sing at 4pm on Sunday, October 9. Those attending may choose a hymn they wish to sing from the 1938 Cokesbury Hymnal. Song leader will be Stell Huie with Angie Jenkins at the piano. Everyone is cordially invited to attend. The church is located at the corner of Main and Fifth Streets. Handicap accessible entrances are located on Church Street and on Fifth Street.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

available from the parking lot to the pavillion.

Weds., Oct. 12, 19, 26

• At The Bascom, Youth Pottery. Clay Pumpkins. 3:30-5p.

Thurs., Oct 13

• Nantahala Hiking Club Program at 6pm at the Franklin Library. Speaker Sarah Adams, ATC Regional Manager GA & Nantahala. "Connections Between the Appalachian Trail and Japan's Shinetsu Trail. All are welcome.

Fri.-Sat., Oct. 14 & 15

• Festival and Craft Show at the MC County Fair Grounds. 1436 Georgia Road., Franklin. 10a to 5p. Friday 2-4p Ricky Gunter, Country Singer and his band; Saturday, noon-2p Curtis Blackwell & Dixie Bluegrass Boys. Crafters! Food Trucks! Raffles! Kettle Corn! ChicFilA! Fatz! Veronicas Cafe! Entertainment! Giveaways! Face Painting! Little Rascals pony rides! Games! Kaylee's Closet! Pet Adoptions w/gifts! Free Admission but please feel free to bring a pet item to put in the donation barrels for the rescues. (Appalachian Humane Society, Saving Paws of Lake-land and Horse Tales Farm)

• At The Bascom, 11th Annual Studio Barn Pottery Show, featuring work by studio members. 10 am-4 pm:

Sat., Oct. 15

• At the Highlands Performing Arts Center Live via Satellite National Theatre Straight Line Crazy at 1p. For more information call 828-526-9047.

• At The Bascom, Tapping into Tone: Musical performance 3 pm

Sat., Oct. 22

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

Mon., Oct. 24

• At The Bascom, Art League of Highlands-Cashiers monthly meeting 4:30 – 6 pm: | FREE

Fri., Oct 28

Join Jessica Willis Fisher fireside at the Highlander Mountain House for the latest musical performance in their Salon Series. at 9 p.m. Tickets on the hotel website www.highlandermountainhouse.com

Sat. Oct. 29

• Highlands Historical Society will celebrate our town's founding families with a reception beginning at 2p in the Fellowship Center at Highlands United Methodist Church. The festivities are in conjunction

with the inaugural Highlands Heritage Jamboree sponsored by the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Visit Highlands NC. Does your family have roots in Highlands that go back 100 years or more? Let us know you're coming by RSVP'ing at HighlandsNCHeritage@gmail.com.

• Highlands Heritage Jamboree featuring traditional music, dancing and crafts at Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park 3-7:30 p.m.

• HS Fall Festival 5-8 p.m. Carnival games, bounce houses, haunted house, hayride, face painting, cake walk, theme-box silent auction. Fun for the entire

family!

• At the Highlands Performing Arts Center, Sideline at 7:30p. For more information call 828-526-9047.

• Fall into Dance ARTS Daturday at the Macon County Public Library at 10:30 am,

for children and young families. Contact the Arts Council for details, 828-524-ARTS or email arts4all@dnnet.net.

Mon. Oct. 31

• Annual Halloween on Main. 5-8 p.m.

• HS SPORTS •

Congratulations to the Varsity Girls Golf and the Boys Soccer Team on their recent wins



Big congratulations to our Varsity Girls Golf team for winning the Smoky Mountain Conference Tournament yesterday at Old Union Golf Course in Blairsville Ga.

Highlands defeated their opponents by 27 shots!

Anna Stiehler was the medalist with a score of 78, Brooke Fogarty shot a 101 for second place. Khaki Dyleski shot 108 and Anna Maria Silverthorn shot a 120.

This win qualifies the girls for the regional tournament which will be October 18th at Mimosa Hills golf Course in Morganton NC.

The Boys Varsity Soccer Team beat Blue Ridge Monday night.

Brett Lamb

Highlands School Athletic Director

Reception for paper quilling artist Betty Cabe



Learn more about the craft of paper quilling during this informal reception with the artist Betty Cabe and friends from 2-4 p.m. at the Macon County Public Library in the meeting room on Saturday, Oct. 8.



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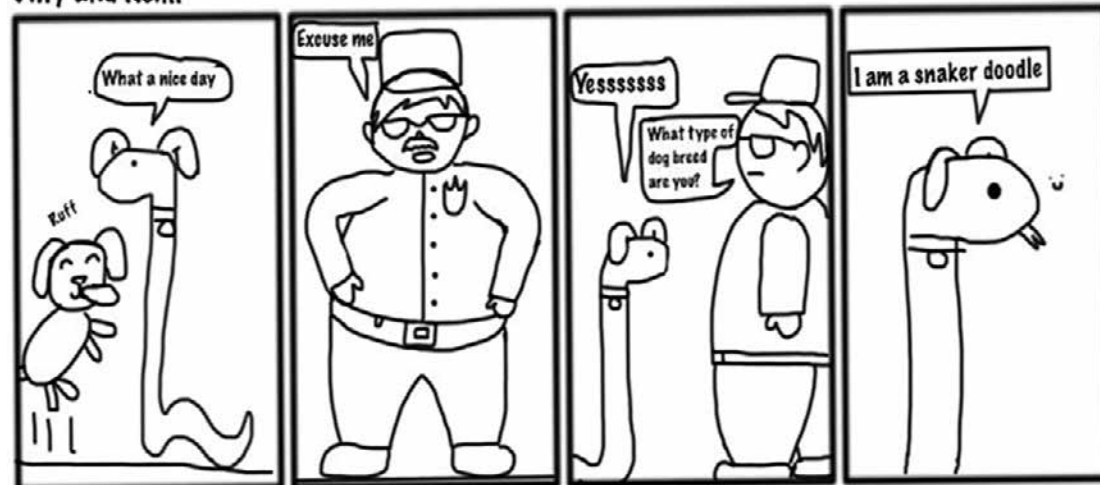
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• BUSINESS/COMMUNITY NEWS •


Billy and Remi



By Mariella Bishop

Last year Mariella Bishop sent a cartoon about her buddies Billy & Remi. Once again this summer, she was a day-camper at the Highlands Biological Station where she spotted her two favorite snakes, Billy & Remi, who live under the stone walkways next to the Teaching Pavilion on Lower Lake Road. Mariella also has a new puppy, a goldendoodle named Captain, so she's drawn a cartoon mashup inspired by all three of her favorite Highlands animals.

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To learn more about the Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC call 828-526-5841 or visit highlands-chamber.org.

• BUSINESS / COMMUNITY NEWS •

Traveler Shaw awarded Arts Council Scholarship

Traveler Shaw was awarded the 2022 Arts Council of Macon County's \$1000 Arts Scholarship. A recent graduate of Franklin High School, he is pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Film and Television Production at Western Carolina University. Traveler was a Franklin High honors student, was active in the FHS Marching Band, Jazz Band, and Theater Department, and is an avid skateboarder. He is the son of Merritt and



Timothy Shaw.

The Arts Council's Arts Scholarship is awarded annually to a Macon County resident seeking a college degree in an arts field. Award criteria include talent, commitment, educational and career goals, and financial need. For further information, contact any Macon County high school guidance office, visit www.artscouncilofmacon.org, email arts4all@dnet.net, or

phone 828-524-ARTS.

...BKLYN continued from page 1



touching and inspiring, and full of unforgettable music bubbling with the energy of a Brooklyn street.

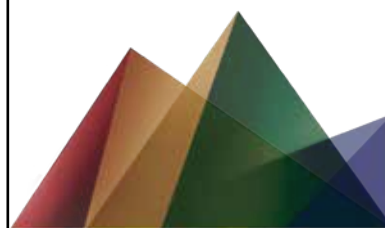
Ticket sales for BKLYN: The Musical have already surpassed 1,300, making it the most successful production Mountain Theatre Company has put in their fall season slot. Audience response to the piece has been overwhelmingly positive, with many audience members leaving declaring it the most moving performance they've ever seen at the Playhouse.

BKLYN: The Musical was written by Mark Schoenfeld and Barri McPherson, directed and choreographed by Scott Daniel, with vocal direction by Donna Rendely Peeler. The cast includes Camille Capers, Mackenzie Germain, Jason Scott MacLaughlin, Craig Smith, and Alyson Snyder. The creative team includes Scenic,

Costume, and Hair Design by Scott Daniel, Lighting Design by Cody Basham, and Sound Design by Stephen Kraack.

BKLYN: The Musical runs September 23 - October 16 at the Highlands Playhouse, located at 362 Oak Street in Highlands, NC. Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased in person at the Highlands Playhouse Box Office at 362 Oak Street, by phone at (828) 526-2695, or online at www.mountaintheatre.com. Box Office hours: Wed - Sun, 12pm - 6pm. Performance run-time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

Mountain Theatre Company's 2022 season continues with upcoming productions of A Wrinkle in Time and Home for the Holidays. For more information, visit www.mountaintheatre.com.



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Hello my friends, this is Sarah aka "Diva" asking for your help for my sweetheart husband Rick Miller. Rick has been hospitalized 7 times this year from his weak heart and sepsis from UTI infections twice. Sepsis is so serious and he is once again fighting to survive.

I am trying to raise money to enable him to live in his home. We have 22 cement steps and a ramp has to be built to wheelchair him in and a walk-in shower put in for him to function. Currently, we have the old bathtub type and he cannot lift his leg.

As you all are aware, Rick is a strong "American" man and has a strong love of life, his wife, family, dogs and friends. We have been happily married 47 years and together for 52! Many of you know him from Divas on Main, the apparel business in Atlanta and his political and community involvement in Franklin. Anything would help and be very much appreciated.

Love to you all, Rick & Sarah.

To donate, contact
Sarah Miller at
1-770-757-7500

or Divas on Main Facebook.



• BUSINESS / ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Area Rotary clubs are busy



From left: Rotary Assistant District Governor Bill Swift, District Governor Tammy Mosteller, and Highlands Rotary President, Chris Wilkes

'Governors' visit Rotary

At the meeting held on September 13, Rotary Club of Highlands welcomed Tammy Mosteller, District Governor. Mosteller, a member of the Lincoln Sunrise Club, is the current District Governor for District 7670, which is comprised of nearly 50 clubs and more than 2,000 Rotary members in western NC. Mosteller spoke on the importance of club membership, especially growth and retention. Rotary Club of Highlands has welcomed numerous new members this year.

Water fountains now aplenty in Tulum, Mexico

Mountaintop Rotary has generously funded the Tulum Mexico Rotary Club to place water fountains in Tulum and surrounding Mayan pueblos.

The focus has been on supplying these water fountains to places that serve children. Due to Covid and its after-effects in Mexico, most of the schools were unable to perform normal maintenance on the fountains. The Tulum Rotary Club is now putting the fountains in both schools as well as non-profit organizations that serve children where they can be maintained.

Three of the non-profits that have received the fountains are the Akumal library, Los Amigos de la Esquina in Tulum, and Movida Maya which works in Muxil with middle school Mayan students.



• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •

Highlands Chamber recognizes outstanding community contributors with awards

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce last night honored an individual, a group of volunteers and a local business with distinguished awards during its Autumn Ovation event. Held at the new Highlands Performing Arts Center (PAC), the annual event brings together Chamber members to network and celebrate the honorees. The awards included:

The Duke Power Award for Volunteer of the Year, presented to Cindy Trevathan. The award recognizes leadership, volunteer involvement and community service. Trevathan has served as a board member for REACH of Macon County; an elder, handbell choir member and Vacation Bible School volunteer at First Presbyterian Church; and a volunteer for Highlands Food Pantry and the Highlands Motoring Festival. Additionally, since 2015, Trevathan has played various leadership volunteer roles with the PAC as it raised funds and constructed its new facility – a monumental community project.

The Robert B. Dupree Award for

Outstanding Community Service, presented to the volunteers for Mountain Findings. The award is presented to an individual or a group who has a distinguished record of community service and represents the true spirit of selflessly giving to others. In operation for more than 50 years, Mountain Findings has supported more than 40 charitable organizations and scholarships, granting nearly \$5 million in financial awards. A non-profit, resale thrift store, Mountain Findings is completely operated by volunteers.

The Del Roberts Award for Outstanding Business, presented to Dauntless Printing. The award was created in 2005 to honor a business' unselfish contribution to Highlands. Russell Majors accepted the award on behalf of the company. Located in Highlands Plaza, Dauntless Printing serves an array of satisfied customers, helping them select the right printed product and service at a fair price, with timely delivery



Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC Board Chair Tricia Cox, Cindy Trevathan, Russell Majors of Dauntless Printing, volunteers from Mountain Findings, and Highlands Chamber of Commerce/Visit Highlands, NC Executive Director Kaye McHan

...MACHINES continued from page 1

missioners on behalf of the board Tuesday night explaining why the county wanted to purchase the Hart Systems over ES&S, specifically citing the professionalism and transparency of Hart.

The new voting machines will cost the county right at \$200,000 and will include 24 new machines, 20 of which will be used at various precincts, allowing four to be kept in case a need arises. Hart's overall cost was \$14,000 less than the ES&S software and the county stands to save even more over the proposed maintenance and recurring contract costs.

Macon County is one of only five counties in the state that use the current voting system within their machines. The system is 40 years old and currently facing issues with software and equipment no longer being available for repairs and upgrades.

The new machines will continue to utilize paper ballots, which is policy across North Carolina. The machines are in no way connected to the internet and will feature little change for voters compared to the machines they are more accustomed to.

With the county's vote to purchase the equipment from the county's fund balance, the board of elections is required to hold a simulated election in January which will be run by the North Carolina Board of Elections. If there are no issues during that election, Macon County would then move forward with purchasing the new machines and begin the process of training poll workers. According to Board of Elections Director Melanie Thibault, the county will need to train around 125 poll workers on the new machines prior to the 2023 municipal elections.

After the municipal elections, which will be the first real election the new machines will be utilized in, the county will then be ready to roll out the new machines for all voting precincts by the 2024 Presidential Election.

About Hart:

Hart InterCivic Inc. is a privately held United States company that provides election technologies and services to government jurisdictions. Headquartered in Austin,

• See MACHINES page 24



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• BUSINESS / COMMUNITY NEWS •

Birthday highlights maestro's celebration

By Lew Hege
The Warren Record

It's not often a gathering that begins in church is highlighted by a dinner and birthday celebration in a nearby restaurant. But that was the plan for famed musician and Grammy-winning choir director Fletcher Wolfe here Friday night.

When the esteemed maestro visits his hometown of Norlina, guests are in for a special evening, and this visit was possibly the most special.

Fletcher gathered about 20 of his close Norlina and Warrenton friends and relatives at the historic Emmanuel Episcopal Church on North Main Street in Warrenton. After a social hour in the fellowship hall, which included a violin and piano duet, the group moved into the sanctuary for a short service.

The Rev. Ted Malone, long-time vicar of the church, read the scripture. With organ virtuoso Angie Jenkins of Highlands at the keyboard, the group sang two classic hymns, directed by the maestro. The room was electrified by the talent of the guests,

including world famous opera star Irene Weldon, like Fletcher a Norlina High School graduate.

The guests then made the short walk to George's Restaurant, where another surprise was planned. Fletcher not only was the host for the party, but served as the emcee for the event. He reminisced about his days in Norlina and Warrenton and a friendship with the great pianist and Warrenton native Tasker Polk.

Fletcher recalled receiving a call from Tasker when both were in France with renowned actress Betty Hutton. Tasker asked Fletcher to "meet me in Morocco" to sing in a concert. Fletcher then shared his "pig painting" story, which had his guests laughing.

After introducing the guests, Fletcher introduced fellow nonagenarians Lou Traylor and Esther Delbridge. Lou celebrated her 95th birthday this year, and the surprise was for Esther, who is



celebrating her 96th birthday now.

Fletcher brought Esther up, and the group sang the traditional song, then enjoyed a special birthday cake for her.

Fletcher was accompanied by Angie and his executive assistant, Casey Anglin, also from Highlands. Memories are priceless and this was one of those evenings.

...MACHINES continued from page 24

Texas, Hart products are used by hundreds of jurisdictions nationwide, including counties in Texas, the entire states of Hawaii and Oklahoma, half of Washington and Colorado, and certain counties in Ohio, California, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

Hart entered the elections industry in 1912, printing ballots for Texas counties. The company, formerly a division of Hart Graphics, Inc., was established as a subsidiary called Hart Forms & Services in 1989. In 1995, to bet-



ter communicate its full scope of document management services, Hart Forms & Services changed its name to Hart Information Services, Inc. During the next five years, Hart Information Services rap-

idly expanded its market presence through the acquisition of three major election services providers: Texas County Printing & Services, Computer Link Corporation, and Worldwide Election Systems. Worldwide was the developer of the eSlate, Hart's direct recording electronic (DRE) voting machine. The eSlate was specifically designed to accommodate the needs of voters with disabilities. It is not a touch-screen device but uses a Select Wheel and digital push-button interface.

• OBITUARIES •

Shirley Anne Elliott McPherson

Shirley Anne Elliott McPherson, known as Sam by family and friends, was born on October 23, 1935, in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, to Annie Marie Johns Elliott and Eric Robert Elliott. She passed from this life on September 20, 2022.

Sam was reared in Oshawa, Ontario, and graduated from the Oshawa Collegiate and Vocational Institute. During high school she was a junior competitive figure skater and a long board high diver. After graduation she worked for and was a spokes model for General Motors-Canada and volunteered as a leader in Brownie Scouts.

Later, Sam worked as a flight attendant with Eastern Airlines in Miami, Florida, and in Atlanta, Georgia where she met the love of her life Capt. Charles "Charlie" Earl McPherson, Jr. They married in College Park, GA and lived in Laguna Beach,

California, and in New York, New York, prior to settling into her dream home in Newnan, Georgia at Bridlewood Morgans.

Sam was very civic minded and led an active and fulfilling life during her time in her beloved Newnan, GA. In addition to raising Morgan horses on their farm and showing them nationally, Sam also raised and cared for a multitude of animals ranging from a llama to exotic birds. She acquired her nickname, "Sam," during her tenure as Director of Arts and Culture for Peachtree City, GA. Professionally, Sam was a successful Realtor for over 20 years and retired as a Lifetime Million Dollar Member of the Coweta County Board of



Realtors upon which time she moved to the mountains of Western North Carolina in Highlands, NC to be close to both of her sons.

Of all her accomplishments, Sam will be most remembered for being a loving wife to Charlie, wonderful mother to both her boys, a fun Nana and a cherished friend to so many. Sam never entered a room without a smile and open arms. Sam's love for entertaining, her gracious hospitality, and her sincere ability to make every person she ever met feel special will be a part of her legacy.

Left with many wonderful memories are her sons, Charles "Chuck" Earl McPherson, III, (Dawn Hill McPherson) of Apex,

NC, and Jamie Elliott McPherson (George "Tra" Lloyd Raines, III) of Highlands, NC, along with her grandchildren, Chase Hill McPherson and Cole Reynolds McPherson. She was preceded in death by her parents her husband, and her sister, Barbara June Elliott Lorenzo.

A private celebration of Sam's life will be held at a later date in Newnan, GA.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to Cashiers Highlands Humane Society; <https://www.chhumanesociety.org>

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve such a great lady and her family.

Richard Melvin

Richard Melvin passed from this world the morning of October 1, 2022. His wife, Margie Edwards Melvin, and daughter, Elizabeth "Betsy" Melvin Batten, were by his side. He was born in New York City in 1941, a second generation American, to naturalized immigrant parents fleeing Czechoslovakia during World War II. He grew up in Palm Beach, FL, and Highlands, NC, the eldest son of his mother, Marie Kreysa Melvin, and William Harvey Melvin.

After completing high school at Rabun Gap Nacoochee School, Richard attended Duke University. He was a member of Sigma Nu fraternity and earned an undergraduate degree in English Literature. He completed his Juris Doctor degree at the University of Florida.

In tandem with his law studies, Richard completed a thesis on the 16th-century Spanish exploration of America. This proved to be a satisfying, lifelong adventure. Through 60 years of study on the subject, Richard found himself traversing rivers and swamps and flying airplanes across NC, SC, GA, and FL, pouring over ancient texts, maps, and property records; and spending hours of study into the wee morning hours in libraries along the eastern seaboard and across the globe. In a time before internet searches, Richard did the painstaking work of translation and discovery born of intense passion and curiosity. He was no "armchair scholar." Even into the final days of his life, Rich-

ard was having meetings to discuss his theory with friends, scholars, and archaeologists. He was one of the first members of The Society for the History of Discovery, where he presented and discussed his research at various national meetings.

Richard was a faithful American and volunteered for service in the Navy as a JAG officer during the Vietnam War. He served for five years, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Commander. He always said he learned to be a true professional in the United States Navy. He was stationed on the USS Independence and in Subic Bay, Philippines, but travelled around the world twice on various assignments, including investigation of the Forrestal fire and the Jordanian Crisis in the Mediterranean.

After his time in the service, Richard returned to Highlands and began over 50 years of service to the community as a lawyer with the firm, Jones, Key, Melvin, and Patton. He was a true counselor, known for his professional integrity. He had incredible foresight and an uncanny ability to see simple solutions through complex legal issues. He was devoted to his clients and pursued each day with the determination to use his gifts and his knowledge to accomplish some part of a greater good. In fact, he often began his daily conversations



with his daughter with a pressing question: "Did you do any good today?"

In addition to his law practice, Richard served his community in various roles at Highlands United Methodist Church, Highlands Playhouse, Highlands Biological Station, Highlands Planning Board, Macon County Historical Society, Macon County Library, and Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust.

Along with his wife and daughter, Richard is survived by his son-in-law, Wise Batten, Jr; cherished grandsons Wise Henry Batten III and William Rhain Batten; his brother, William Melvin; brother-in-law, Donnie Edwards (Linda); and a host of treasured nieces and nephews, who have been a source of joy and support. He was predeceased by his sister, Pauline Melvin Stevenson, and brother, Paul Douglas Melvin, and his loving parents.

Richard Melvin captured the treasure of a simple life. He knew the blessings of a home filled with family and friends, laughter, delicious, home-cooked meals, and lots of good books. We will celebrate Richard's life on Friday, October 7, 2022 at 2pm at Highlands United Methodist Church. The family will receive friends at a reception after the service. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust.

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• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •

Italy Votes: God, Country, Families!



Rev'd Jim Murphy,
Christ Anglican Church,
Highlands-Cashiers, NC

Wow! How dare the Italian voters endorse such a mundane, prosaic set of values? Haven't they entered the 21st Century yet? Don't those exquisite masters of the vineyard and purveyors of many and sundry culinary delights understand that the pseudo progressive, Neo-Marxism of our times has consigned God, Country and Families to the dustbin of history?

Yes, of course they have endorsed those vibrant values. Yes, a majority of the contemporary Italian voters have been thrust into the 21st century milieu of regurgitated and disjointed pseudo-progressivism and they don't like it. Yes, our creative, southern European friends have seen the creeping (and creepy) encroachment of the neo-Marxism of our day and they have rejected it. Yes, Democracy is beautiful when it's allowed to flourish and not be canceled because of some contrary or asinine notion of misinformation.

A recent President of the United States was fond of saying, "Without a border, we have no country." His point was that without definition and order (the operative part of the word "border") that a country or a people become nothing more than an amoebic blob of disjointed, disconnected protozoa, undulating in their ever-changing individual shapes and directions. No definition, no commonality, no connections, no country, no family, no God.

That is what our Italian friends rejected. A crap-hole abyss of atomistic individualism, a precursor to full-blown, forever failed communism. They decided that they would rather pursue and embrace the genuine progressivism of God, Country and Family. Not coincidentally, those are the same things that Jesus came both to reject and pursue. His nativity born connection to us was an outright rejection the ideas of non-country and non-family. Rather, the Lord of heaven and earth came to pursue and foment a full-throated connectedness with the Holy Family and blessed Trinity. He gave his life for us and his Father – our Creator and common source, so to foment. The Son of God loves us and does not want us to be anything less than family, anything short of connected to our heavenly Father and the country that flows therefrom.

It goes without saying that what the Italian electorate voted for was the same stellar, guiding principles and ideas that called legions of folks unto America, out of many kindred countries and tongues. They came answering a call and looking for a place where they could flourish as a people, as a country, and as families who could freely seek, worship

• See SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING page 27

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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Sept 18: 9 AM Morning Prayer, 4:45 Festival Eucharist

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

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

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Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

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Sunday Worship is at 9a. Wednesday Worship is 6:30p

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

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• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Sept. 27. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or public officials have been used.

Sept. 27

• At 10:03 a.m., officers were notified of a violation of valid protective order from out of state.

• At 8:15 p.m., officers were called to a residence on Brushy Face road involving a mutual affray between to men.

Sept. 30

• At 8:40 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle accident at Carolina Way and Mill Creek parking lot.

• At 10:30 a.m., officers were notified of a false report of the theft of a motor vehicle in the Asia House parking lot.

• At 4:08 p.m., officers responded to a report of larceny and identity fraud when a purse was taken at the Rec Park.

Oct. 1

• At 2:46 p.m., Matthew Garner, 43, of Carrollton, GA was summoned and cited for falsely reporting the theft of a motor vehicle.

• At 9:29 a.m., Gerald Alan Hedden, 48, of Highlands, was arrested for violation of a valid protective order. He wasn't issued a bond. His trial date is Oct. 19.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Sept. 27.

Sept. 27

• At 8:16 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Brushy Face Road.

• At 8:22 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on

Horse Cove Road.

Sept. 28

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

• At 11 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mirror-mont Road.

Sept. 29

• At 5:30 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on NC 106.

• At 8:40 a.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Charlotte Lane.

• At 4:27 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Falcon Ridge.

• At 7:37 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Kelsey Court.

• At 11:38 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Horse Cove Road.

Sept. 30

• At 9:14 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Panther Ridge.

• At 10:08 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Panther Ridge.

• At 8:31 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Wal-halla Road.

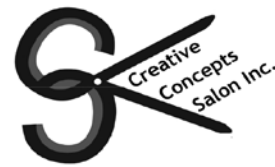
• At 10:10 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a gas leak at a residence on NC 106.

Oct. 1

At 7:12 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on NC 106.

Oct. 3

• At 6:06 p.m., the dept. responded to a call of a gas leak at a residence on Mayflower Lane.



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...SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING from page 26

and follow the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. All of our founding documents, including our U. S. Constitution, vouch for this fact. It seems that our Italian friends, when they voted this past week, were looking to return to America's infancy for the ideas the principles that have made us the envy of the world. No, rather the voters in Italy were looking back to Jesus Christ and why he gave his life: for the salvation of the Family of God.

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Branch Leader

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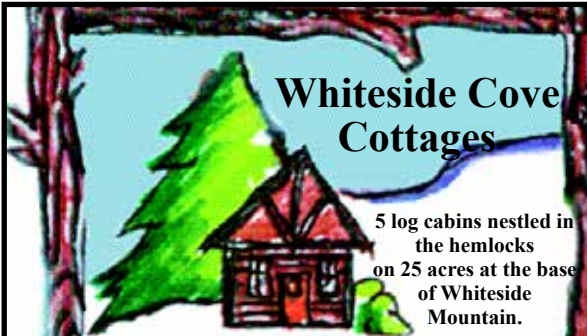
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...SALES TAX continued from page 1

The question on the ballot will read: “[] FOR [] AGAINST”

Local sales and use tax at the rate of 1-quarter% (0.25%) in addition to all other State and local sales and use taxes.”

North Carolina offers individual counties the option to increase the 6.75 percent statewide sales tax to an even 7 percent, with all revenues from the extra quarter-cent going back to the county — the base 6.75 percent sales tax is shared between the county and state.

As it stands, funding for the school system, including capital outlay projects and infrastructure needs, are funded out of the county's general budget, which is funded through the county's property tax-

es, meaning Macon County landowners and homeowners pay the bill.

Neighboring counties like Jackson County, and Rabun County, Georgia, have taken a different approach to funding school needs by approving an education-specific sales tax that generates revenue for infrastructure needs.

Rather than raising property tax rates to generate additional revenue from property owners, a sales tax revenue would mean anyone shopping in Macon County and paying a sales tax, would be funding the school improvements, rather than just residents.

Property taxes are assessed based on the value of property you own, while sales taxes are generated from monetary transac-

tions. By design, the added one-quarter of one-cent sales and use tax will allow non-property owners, as well as those traveling to Macon County to shop or make purchases, to help share the burden of funding local school projects and construction costs.

According to Macon County Manager Derek Roland, the increase to sales tax in Macon County would generate an additional \$2 million that would be earmarked for schools.

Sales tax is often rounded up to 7 percent already, and those dollars get rolled into the redistribution of sales tax across the state. Out of the 6.75 percent sales tax, less than 3 percent is currently returned to the county. An education-specific 1/4 of a

penny tax would be guaranteed to Macon County each year.

The sales tax may become effective on the first day of any calendar quarter so long as the county gives the Secretary of Revenue at least 90 days advance notice. For example, if a referendum is held in November during the general election and passes, the earliest a county could begin collecting the revenue would be April 1st of the following year, provided it adopts a resolution levying the tax and forwards it to the Department of Revenue prior to December 31.

The sales and use tax referendum excludes gas, prescription medication, and non-prepared foods or groceries.

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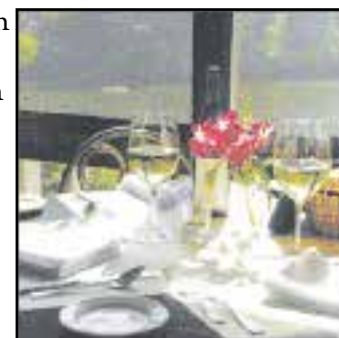
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