

Highlands Newspaper

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Thurs., March 2, 2023

MC BOE is split on decision to terminate contract for PreK project at Highlands S.

MC Commission nixed project last week

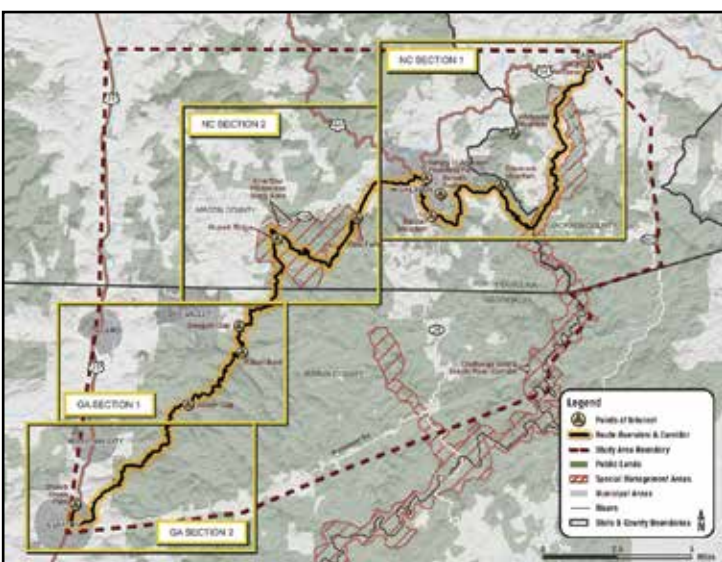
By Brittney Lofthouse

Last week, the Macon County Board of Commission-

ers unanimously voted to cancel a contract with LS3P Architect for the design concept work to reno-

vate an existing space at Highlands School to add two preschool, the

• See PRE-K page 7



The sectional overview of the proposed BRCC trail route that will stretch from Cashiers to Clayton.

Community connector trail plan is unveiled

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

The public had a chance to view the proposed plans for the Blue Ridge Community Connector (BRCC) on Tuesday during a

presentation at the Highlands Rec Center by the project's planning firm, Destination by Design.

The BRCC is a hiking route designed to connect the commu-

• See TRAIL page 16

Planning B. OKs outdoor seating for 2 restaurants

Monday night, the Planning Board gave the OK to Special Use Permits requested by two restaurants in town that want to expand for outdoor seating.

Prior to going to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for required SUPs, the Planning Board must give its recommendation.

Bryan Lewis with the Highlands Smokehouse on US 64 west currently has 31 on-site parking spaces. Of the 31 spots, four are dedicated to eight employees, therefore, the restaurant has 27 parking spaces which serve 81 seats.

The Smokehouse proposes adding 23 parking spaces on their adjacent lot to serve the 28 additional seats they are requesting for an additional outside deck.

Planning Director Michael

• See SEATING page 11

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Last Friday, Fonziba Koster taught Highlands School students K-8 the basics of African drumming in the music room using her 30 drums.

- Photos by Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News

HS students learn while jamming out on drums

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Elementary and Middle School students at Highlands School learned about West African culture when they were paid a visit by Music Educator Fonziba

Koster, a teacher and performer of jembe hand drums.

Before Koster's visit, students watched a documentary video about the time she lived with a traditional family of drum-

• See DRUMMING page 10

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• THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

• MAYOR ON DUTY •

About our trip to Raleigh

On the morning of February 22, I rendezvoused with Town Manager Josh Ward at the Ingles parking lot in Franklin. He pulled up, and I put my suit bag in his car. We began the five-hour drive to Raleigh to attend the North Carolina League of Municipalities 2023 Town and State Dinner.



Highlands Mayor
Patrick Taylor

The reception and dinner provides municipal officials the opportunity to meet with their legislative delegations to discuss local needs and requests. The event is always scheduled at the start of the legislative session.

The dinner is a multifold event in that elected officials, such as mayors and town managers, have the opportunity to get together to discuss common interests and concerns. Municipal officials also talk with the North Carolina League of Municipalities staff in an attempt to get the "low down" on what the legislature will do in this long session. During the reception before the dinner questions abound about the budget and potential laws that will impact municipalities.

At the reception and at the formal

dinner we all get a chance to converse with our representatives and senators about more specific local needs. Over a nice banquet dinner we express our hopes and concerns.

I appreciate the legislators who attend and are willing to listen to constituents. While I sat at the table with Senator Corbin communicating Highlands' needs, the mayors from Murphy and Andrews were also at the table expressing their needs. That's the way the system works.

Those other mayors made compelling cases in support for their communities. Hopefully, I did the same for Highlands. Let me share some of the requests I made.

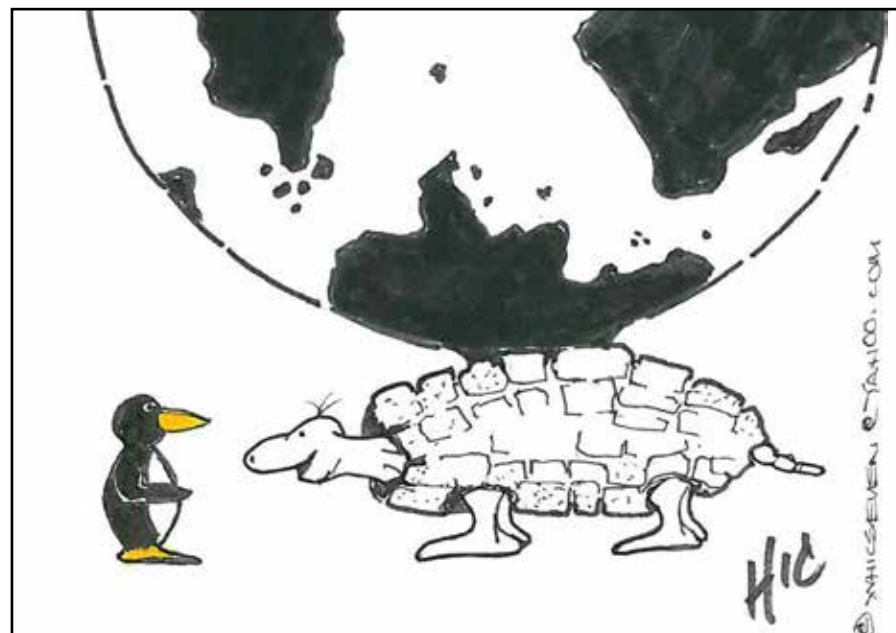
First, I put in a good word for some level of state funding for the Mirror Lake restoration project. I am optimistic that request will happen.

Second, I reported to Senator Corbin that the state did not award Highlands the water plant pre-clarififier tank grant. Both Senator Corbin and Representative Gillespie have been helpful in our grant submittal. Unfortunately, Representative Gillespie had a death in his family and was not at the dinner, but I will keep him posted on our requests. I asked Senator Corbin to keep us informed about other potential state funding in this session for the pre-clarififier project. I emphasized that any level of support will be helpful. I also asked about any impending STR or zoning legislation. Senator Corbin told me he would keep us posted on all these issues.

After the dinner several town officials gathered at local watering hole and met with a veteran legislative staff member. He informed the group that there will be a lot of money available for statewide, regional, county, and municipal projects in this long legislative session. The challenge for legislators will be to track down funds for their constituents. He likened it to a mad scramble to find funding that matches the needs of a particular community. Our representatives in remote and lightly populated Western Carolina face huge, competitive challenges in securing state funding. As always, large population areas have the advantage.

On Thursday morning Josh and I departed Raleigh for that long ride back home. Our favorite part of the trip is eating lunch at Chick fil A!

• HIC'S VIEW •



"Well yes. at one time it was turtles all the way down. but then top management started cost cutting, eons ago. I don't look down anymore."

• WEATHER •

Thu, 2-Mar	Fri, 3-Mar	Sat, 4-Mar	Sun, 5-Mar
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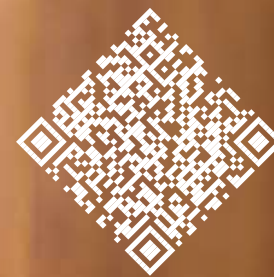
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• INVESTING AT 4,118 Ft •

What is a 'Legacy Home?'

The definition of a legacy home is a place of refuge and solitude, a haven shared with family and friends and a cherished place for creating memories. In this post-Covid era of urbanites looking for restful escapes, our beloved Highlands/Cashiers Plateau is brimming with extraordinary residences that qualify for this category of estates. If you seek a legacy home, perhaps the following features will guide your search.

A legacy home is a home large enough to accommodate extended family and guests, with features, furnishings, and décor reflecting the taste and ambitions of the owner. Some retreats are just large enough to accommodate the owners on personal getaways. But legacy homes serve as private retreats prepared to pamper and entertain.

Different factors to consider when dreaming about your legacy home are climate, terrain, lifestyle and the relative prox-



Jody Lovell
Highlands and Cashiers
Sotheby's International Realty
828.526.4104

imity to big city amenities. Most vacation home buyers choose locations within two hundred miles of their principal residence. But it is actually time rather than distance that allows homeowners to venture further with access to airports. This area enjoys access to many different airports within a two-hour drive.

A legacy home is a reward and a refuge for many families and a diversion from their hectic routines to pursue constructive hobbies, enjoy nature and spend quality time together.

Many families that we sell homes to bring their children on weekends to remove them from some of the harmful temptations in today's world. The home itself becomes a family member: a silent guardian of treasures, secrets and memories. As Mr. Carson said on Downton Abbey: "The business of life is the acquisition of memories. In the end, that is all there is." Thus, the goal is to make as many happy memories as possible. With a legacy home in the right area with an array of surrounding recreational pursuits, it will provide a lifestyle similar to a five-star resort with the security of ownership and belonging.

Congratulations to those of you who have found your legacy home!! To those of you who are still searching, enjoy the journey, for your legacy home awaits you as a resting place for all of your striving and hard work. As the recent tax revaluations proved, a legacy home can also be an enduring lifestyle investment that can be enjoyed more than a bank account. My prediction is that the local market will have more inventory this coming season than over the last two years. Buyers, be prepared to step up when your search results in finding a home with a personality match to protect and nurture your family for years to come.

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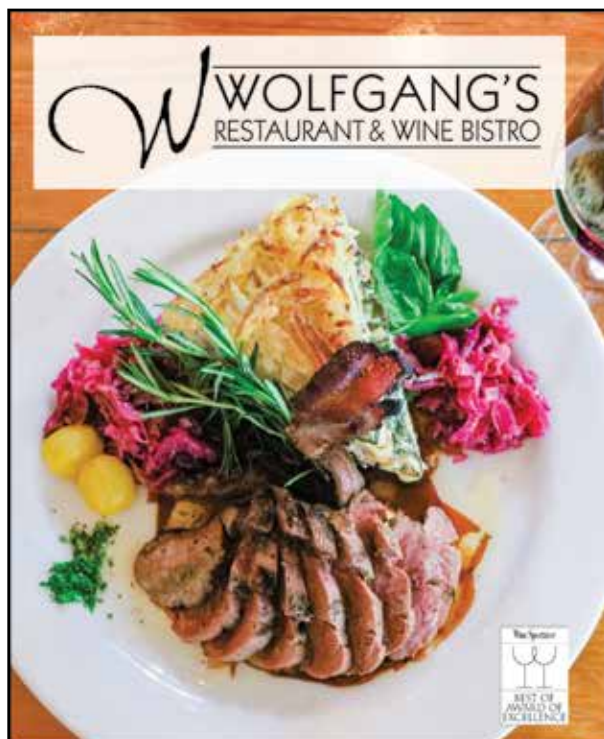
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• OBITUARY •

William Soloman Palmer

William Soloman Palmer of Cashiers, N.C., husband and father, passed at age 73.

William was an avid hunter and fisherman who never missed a chance to spend time with his family, especially his grandchildren. He will always be remembered for his admirable work ethic, his determination to ensure the success of his children, and his undying love for his wife. He was a provider but also a man who made certain that his family could withstand any challenge with or without him. From teaching mechanic skills to the art of hunting and the merit of a days hard work, William modeled what it means to be a parent and a husband. He taught resilience and how to rise above poverty and illiteracy by providing opportunities that were never afforded him.

He is preceded in death by his parents Leslie and Pearl Palmer and his brother Phillip Palmer. He is survived by his wife Patricia Stewart Palmer, his eldest daughter and her husband Ginger and Jerry Whitman, and youngest daughter



ter and husband April and Nathan DeBeve. He leaves behind 4 sisters and a brother. His grandkids Alex Mabry, Addison and Zoey Whitman, and Anna Debeve will miss him dearly. His nieces and nephews will never forget how much he loved them.

In the end, William enjoyed that helicopter ride he swore to never take and was reunited with his brother to leisurely hunt squirrels and deer to their hearts' content.

William was deeply loved and shared what he enjoyed, thus his life has become a part of us. He will be missed! He was loved!

William's immediate family will celebrate his life, returning his ashes to the beautiful mountains he so loved.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

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...PRE-K continued from page 1

renovation of the Media Center, the renovation of existing STEM/Project-based learning spaces and the new addition of four classrooms. The Highlands Preschool project was prioritized and identified as a need by the Macon County Board of Education and garnered significant community support and funding. Despite approving the contract with LS3P for the design work on November, 8, 2022 in the amount of \$329,255 and allocating funding for the work, last week the Macon County Board of Commissioners cancelled the contract, costing taxpayers \$35,262.40.

The Macon County Board of Commissioners asked the Macon County Board of Education to take a vote during their regularly scheduled meeting, which was held Monday night, to accept commissioner's decision to cancel the

contract and reallocate the funds elsewhere.

On a motion made by Board of Education member Melissa Evans and seconded by Diedre Breeden, the board voted 3-2 in favor of accepting the commissioner's actions. Chairman Breedlove voted in favor of the motion with board members Hilary Wilkes and Stephanie Laseter voting against the measure.

In a prepared statement, Wilkes expressed her opposition Monday night.

"Last fall, the county commissioners approved approximately \$329,000 for LS3P to begin the design process for the Highlands School Project," said Wilkes. "In December, during the joint meeting with the school board and the county commissioners, a motion to 'pause' the contract with LS3P did not carry after there was no second. It was at that joint meeting, the commissioners requested that the school board present a list of the capital improvement priorities for the upcoming budget year. We met as a board in early January and unanimously approved a list which included the Highlands School project ranked as #2, following the Franklin High School project and two emergency items at Nantahala and Macon Middle School. During this time, LS3P continued their work on the Highlands School Project."

According to Wilkes, the liaison committee, comprised of members of the board of education, central office staff, county staff and members of the board of commissioners, met and at no time was the list of capital improvement priorities amended by the school board representatives during this meeting, nor in any school board meeting since.

Despite the board of education's continued identification of the Prek project being a priority for the school system, the county framed the conversation as if it was not an identified priority.

• See PRE-K page 8



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...PRE-K continued from page 1

“This [the school board’s identification of the project being a priority] was made clear last week by Chairman Breedlove to the commissioners, who went on to vote unanimously to terminate the LS3P contract for the Highlands School Project,” said Wilkes. “After the vote, they immediately began discussing how to reappropriate these funds to other projects. The commissioners have repeatedly used language in their meetings and to constituents to suggest that this project was taken off the table or reprioritized by the school board – which is false.”

Wilkes noted that while funding for the entire Highlands Prek renovation project had not yet been identified, funding for the design concept was already appropriated and the work LS3P would have submitted to Macon County would have beneficial if/when the entire project was funded.

“The commissioner’s action to terminate the work of LS3P is unnecessary and egregious,” said Wilkes. “This expense was already in the budget and the work was in process. The idea that there is no need to complete this work without a funding strategy for this project in place is false as we are following a typical timeline for capital projects. The firm is near completion with phase one, and there are two more phases before bids or additional funds are needed to continue. Furthermore, the work for these three total phases is relevant to the project and, with the exception of the cost-estimations and minor code changes, remains viable for future use in bidding.”

Now that the county has cancelled the contract with LS3P for the design work, if the district were to revisit the renovation project in the future, they would have to start over, adding extra time and expense in the long run.

“Choosing to stop at this point only serves to significantly lengthen the timeline for the project and raise the cost in the long run,” said Wilkes. “The reality is that this contract, while signed by both boards,



is the financial responsibility of the county commissioners. They control the purse strings, and their actions last week were intended to de-fund and indefinitely delay this project. I expressed my disappointment to the commissioners and will express it again here tonight. There is no good reason to take away funds that are already committed to Highlands School.”

Wilkes said the county’s actions sets a precedent that devalues the work of the school board

and calls into question the commissioner’s commitment to the Highlands community.

“Not only is this bad business where LS3P is concerned, but it sends the message that the prioritized needs of Macon County Schools do not matter,” said Wilkes. “And, finally, it sends the message that the urgent needs of Highlands School, our students and our community are so unimportant to the commissioners – including to the representative of our own district – that they’ll go in the extreme direction of divesting previously appropriated funds for this project and suspending any progress for this critical work. It has always been my hope that our board and the county commissioners will come together with a joint commitment to properly meet the needs of our students, staff and schools. This is a step in the opposite direction, but I remain hopeful that we will eventually be able to work together for all of Macon County Schools.”

According to Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin, despite commissioner’s withdrawing their support of the project by ending the contract with LS3P, it remains a priority.

“Macon County Schools will continue to pursue opportunities for the expansion of Pre-K throughout the district, including Highlands,” said Dr. Baldwin. “The Highlands School renovation project will remain one of the school system’s priorities.”

At the meeting, Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin announced his retirement effective September 1, 2023.

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...DRUMMING continued from page 1

mers in Africa.

As part of her class/culture workshop she exhibits traditional implements used in daily life in an African village including household items, and cooking and decorative items which the students are encouraged to interact with.

"They get to see what life is like in a poor African home with no plumbing or electricity, cooking on a fire, sleeping on mats on the ground," said Koster. "I hope this gives kids an appreciation for an entirely different culture and way of life and experience the power of drumming in a group."

Students in the classes took turns spending time with Koster learning about repetition, using different tempos, and at times were instructed to cut loose and play what came naturally.

Highlands School Music and Drama

Teacher Joi Chapman joined in and said the students enjoyed her visit.

Drumming as a group is not only for kids, Koster said, "There are a number of benefits to anyone who gives it a try."

She said drumming can help relieve stress, frustration, and pent-up energy, stimulate creativity and self-expression, build teamwork and a sense of community, and enhance coherent brain wave patterns for a greater sense of wellbeing.

She has taught musical workshops for over 25 years and for the past three weeks has taught in several schools in Macon and Jackson counties, worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters and given a class/culture workshop at the Albert Carlton-Cashiers Community Library.

She will be giving another drumming and culture workshop beginning at 3:30

p.m. at the Hudson Library on Thursday, March 2 sponsored by the Arts Council of Macon County.



Photos by Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News



Students got into the groove quick enough - following directions and enjoyed breaking off on their own.



Students learned how to elicit different sounds from the drums and drum a "round" of rhythms.



Highlands School music teacher Joi Chapman (left) drummed right along with the students and Fonziba.

English Ivy named "Invasive Plant of the Month" for February

Following a very successful work day to remove Chinese Privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) from a portion of the Highlands Plateau Greenway in February, the Coalition for Nonnative Invasive Plant Management (CNIPM) has named English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) the March the "Invasive Plant of the Month."

This continuing program is an effort to mitigate the detrimental effects of invasive plants on the environment and ecology of the Highlands Plateau by the partners of the coalition, the Town of Highlands, Highlands Biological Station, Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust, Highlands Historical Society, Highlands Plateau Audubon Society, Highlands Plateau Greenway, and the Land Stewards, a conservation arm of the Laurel Garden Club.

Jason Love, Associate Director of the Highlands Biological Station (HBS) and leader-of-the-day, states that an English Ivy Pull will be held on March 8, from 9 a.m. until 12:00 noon at HBS. Members of CNIPM and volunteers will meet at the Workshop/Aquatics Lab which is located in the first building on the left after the Sixth Street entrance to HBS. Gloves, clippers and loppers will be provided, but all participants are welcome to bring their own, if they prefer. Participants are encouraged to bring their own water, and lunch will be provided, thanks to the generosity of the International Friendship Center's Women's Group.

According to Love, the concentration will on a patch of English Ivy that is growing at the corner of Sixth Street and Lower Lake road and is making its way into the Research Zone for HBS. English Ivy is an



English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)

evergreen woody vine that grows very aggressively, rooting at nodes to form a dense ground cover which prevents other plants from growing in that area. Aerial rootlets enable it to climb ninety feet into tree canopies, killing trees slowly by depriving them of light. The dense vines also make the tree more susceptible to being blown over during high winds. Vines in sunlight may

flower and fruit. Seed dispersal by birds forms distant colonies. The plant is shade tolerant and thrives in open forests where it smothers understory plants including many of our beautiful wildflowers and beneficial plants that support insects, birds, and wildlife.

To rid areas of English Ivy is a year-round endeavor. Pull small vines. Cut large vines and paint the grounded end with glyphosate (RoundUp or a generic equivalent). Cut vines growing up trees, pull the stump away from the tree and paint with the herbicide. For young infestations mow or weed-whack repeatedly to kill. Spraying entire colonies with glyphosate is effective, but there is a risk of killing nearby plants.

Homeowners wishing to add vines to their gardens should consider native ones. Among the native vines offered at nearby plant nurseries include Coral Honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*), Trumpet Vine (*Campsis radicans*), Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*), Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), American Wisteria (*Wisteria frutescens*), and/or Dutchman's Pipe (*Aristolochia macrophylla*).



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...SEATING continued from page 1

Mathis said the proposal will more than satisfy the one space per three-seats requirement.

The current property is zoned B-3 commercial and is located within the Critical Area of Watershed 3 (WS III – CA).

The adjoining vacant .72-acre lot is zoned B-4 commercial and is located within the Balanced Area of Watershed 3 (WS III – BW). The maximum amount of impervious surface allowed by the ordinance is 70% of the lot.

In addition, since all off-street parking spaces required must be on the same parcel of land, once the parking project is completed, both properties will be combined into 1.62-acre parcel to satisfy the on-site parking

requirement and they will have split-zoning and split watershed districts, which is allowed.

With the SUP that was granted for the property development in 2008 changing, the SUP will have to be amended to be granted for the project.

The board voted unanimously to accept the SUP proposal with the following stipulations: though the proposal has more space than allowed for the requested 141 seats, the board wanted the number of lost spaces for the driveway to the new parking area be stipulated, that ground coverage be planted on the critical area side of the property and confirm that it offsets the parking and the lots be combined as a single parcel with the

• See SEATING page 15

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• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

LAST WEEKEND for ICE RINK (Through March 5)

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

THE POOL IS OPEN

Rec Pool Hours EXTENDED

• Public Swim: Mon.-Wed. 3:30-7p; Sat. 11a-6p; Sun. 1-6p. Adult Swim: Mon.-Wed. 11a-3:30p and Thurs. and Fri., 11a-2p. Lap Swim: Mon-Fri 6a-9:45a and Sat. 10-11a. Water Aerobics: Mon.-Fri. 10-11a. 828-526-1595.

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 budandlynn@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 Methodist 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

First Wednesdays

Hudson Library, in partnership with VAYA Health, is hosting an educational series on adult mental health, at 11:00 AM. This series is aimed particularly at older adults and will focus on mental health issues of particular interest to them. The February 1 program is PTSD: Healing the Emotional Wound.

Wednesdays

• 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

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.

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.

• 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.

Through May 31

• The Fontana Regional Library sys-

tem, including Hudson Library in Highlands, is starting an Active Audio Challenge that will run from March 1st through May 31st. Participants who listen to 25 hours of audiobooks, while being active, will receive a prize. Some examples of activity include walking, running, gardening, cooking, cleaning, and much more. Participants will be feeding both the body and mind with this Challenge. To register for the Challenge, come by Hudson Library and pick up the logbook used to record entries. 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 10:00am-4:00pm on Saturday.

Thurs., March 2

• Join us for a very special Kids Zone at Hudson Library. It's open to the public and adults are welcome. Music educator Fonzi Koster, who has presented drumming and culture workshops to thousands over the last 25 years, brings 30 authentic West African Jembe drums to Hudson Library on Thursday, March 2 at 3:30 PM for a hands-on drumming experience. Attendees will learn about West African home life, view a video including a West African drum circle, and participate in a drum circle. The program is open to everyone, but is especially geared towards children 5 and up. Hudson Library is grateful to the Arts Council of Macon County for co-sponsoring this special free event. For more information or to request an accommodation, please call the library at 828-526-3031.

Sat., March 4

• Girl Scout cookies are available for sale at 4118 Kitchen in Highlands Plaza from 12-4p.

Sun., March 5

• At CBC, Prayer, Praise and Healing service at 6 p.m. 3645 Cashiers Road, Highlands

Wed., March 8

• There will be an English Ivy Pull will be held on Wednesday, from 9 a.m. until 12:00 noon at HBS. Members of CNIPM and volunteers will meet at the Workshop/Aquatics Lab which is located in the first building on the left after the Sixth Street entrance to HBS. Gloves, clippers and loppers will be provided, but all participants are welcome to bring their own, if they prefer. Participants are encouraged to bring their own water, and lunch will be provided, thanks to the generosity of the International Friendship Center's Women's Group.

Thurs., March 9

• Chamber Chats at the Highlands Community Building on Poplar Street from



This year's PAC's Youth Theatre's performance is March 14 & 15

Last Fall's middle school production of Fame Jr. was a tremendous success and paved the way for the elementary school students to get excited about being in Madagascar Jr. A Musical Adventure.

Going through a bit of a mid-life crisis, Marty, the zebra, wishes that he could be out in the wild. After meeting a bunch of crazy penguins who also want to escape from the zoo, Marty follows them and breaks free. Discovering that their friend has gone, Alex the lion, Melman the "hypocon-giraffe" and Gloria the hippo, go on a mission to find him and bring him back to the zoo.

March 14 and 15, at 7 PM

Both show are in Highlands Performing Arts Center on Chestnut Street.

Tickets are FREE, but please "purchase" them so we know the count.

• HIGHLANDS AREA EVENTS •

8:30-9:30 a.m. Light breakfast with coffee and tea. To RSVP contact Colleen Kerrigan at businessservices@highlandschamber.org or call 828-526-5841.

Sun. March 12

• David LaMotte at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, at 2:30 at 89 Sierra Drive, Franklin. Suggested donation \$20, \$15 with advance reservation at robby.concerts@gmail.com. Pay at the door. Coffee and snacks sold during the break. Vaccination & masks required.

• USAF Heritage of America Band Performs in Franklin, on Sunday, stand up and cheer! The US Air Force Heritage of America Band will perform a free concert on Sunday at 3 pm, in the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. The 40+ member concert band of professional Airman-musicians from Langley Air Force Base, VA, plays great orchestral classics, marches, Broadway hits, jazz standards, movie music, and patriotic favorites. At every performance, the Band honors our American military veterans.

Tues. & Wed., March 14 & 15

• At PAC, Youth Theatre presents Madagascar Jr. A Musical Adventure at 7 p.m. It's FREE but please "purchase" tickets so we know how many people are coming.

Wed. March 15

• 30th Anniversary Celebration of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, 2-5 p.m. with the ceremony in the cafeteria at 4p. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP by Wednesday, March 8 to Jean.MacLeod@HCAHealthcare.com. Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is at 190 Hospital Drive in Highlands.

Fri., March 17

• The 2023 Macon County Republican Party Convention and Precinct Meetings will be held Friday, at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts in Franklin. All Macon County voters registered Republican as of January 31, 2023, are invited to participate. There will be a reception for Century Club members at 5:00 p.m., delegate registration opens at 5:30 and closes at 6:30 when the convention opens. The business of the convention includes the election of officers for precincts and for the county GOP, and voting for the Plan of Organization, which is posted on maconcop.com. There will be a merchandise clearance sale and opportunity to meet candidates who will be on the 2024 ballot. maconrepublicans@gmail.com.

Sat.-Sun., March 18-19

Julia Tatum Banner of Delta Grind Grits and Half-Mile Farm Chef Jason Tardo will present a Shrimp & Grits experience with a special tasting and hosted So-

cial Hour including complimentary hors d'oeuvres. Breakfast each day will feature Delta Grind's delicious products. Hosted events are for Half-Mile Farm guests only. Social Hour Saturday from 5 - 6 pm featuring grits from Julia's Delta Grind, in Water Valley, Mississippi, with complimentary hors d'oeuvres and live music from 5 - 8 pm. Craft beverages available from the J. Henry Farmhouse Tavern. Breakfast Saturday & Sunday from 8 - 10:30 am prepared by Half-Mile Farm Chef Jason Tardo, featuring Delta Grind's delicious, 100% natural, stone ground grits with Julia on hand to mingle. Grits Tasting and Presentation Saturday from 4 - 5 pm Julia's famous Shrimp & Grits in the Woodland View Room. Vegetarian options are available. Hosted events are for Half-Mile Farm guests only. Book your stay at <https://www.oldedwardshospitality.com/half-mile-farm/#/booking/step-1>

Fri., March 24

• At PAC, Rhythm of the Dance. For tickets, email highlandspacnc@gmail.com

Wed., March 29

• To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war the local American Legion Post will hold an event recognizing this milestone on March 29 in Highlands. Details will be published in the local newspapers, the Post 370 Facebook and webpage <http://www.amerlegionpost370nc.org/>. Area Vietnam veterans and veteran's families interested in adding their names to the list of other local Vietnam veterans can email their service information to nc-post370@gmail.com or mail that information to American Legion Post 370, PO Box 406, Highlands, NC 28741

Fri.-Sun., April 7-9

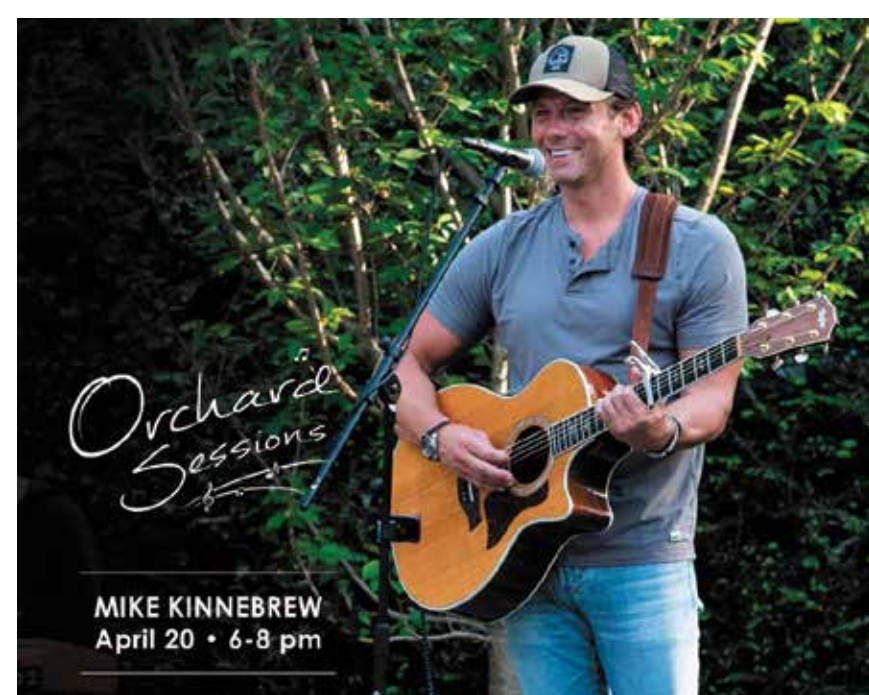
• At Half-Mile Farm an Easter Celebration and Hosted Weekend at Half-Mile Farm with Chef Craig Richards at Half-Mile Farm Stay at Half-Mile Farm for a grown-up Easter weekend featuring Executive Chef Craig Richards of Lyla Lila in Atlanta! Easter is the perfect time to leave routine behind and celebrate Spring in the splendor of Mother Nature surrounded by the pastoral grounds of Half-Mile Farm. The Weekends Events: Friday, Fresh Pasta demo and tasting with Executive Chef Craig Richards in the Woodland View Room from 5 - 6 pm during Social Hour with additional complimentary hors d'oeuvres and live music until 8 pm. Craft beverages are available from the J. Henry Farmhouse Tavern. Saturday, Special Breakfast Creations from 8 - 10:30 am. Social Hour from 5 - 6 pm will feature complimentary hors d'oeuvres, and live music from 5 - 8 pm. Craft beverages are available from the J. Henry Farmhouse

Tavern. Grown-up Easter Egg Hunt (outside weather permitting) from 4 - 6 pm with prizes including J. Henry Farmhouse Tavern cocktails Half-Mile Farm merchandise, an overnight stay, and more! Dinner with Executive Chef Craig Richards at The Farm at Old Edwards from 6 pm. Open to the public. Transportation to The Farm provided. <https://www.simpletix.com/e/chef-craig-richards-dinner-tickets-123305> Sunday, Enjoy a three-course Easter Sunday Brunch from 8:30 - 11 am. Included in your room rate. No reservations are required. Sip and mingle with a complimentary Mimosa & Champagne served tableside starting at 10 am. Limit of one per guest. Hosted events are for Half-Mile Farm guests only. To book your stay <https://www.oldedwardshospitality.com/half-mile-farm/#/booking/step-1>

Thurs., April 20

• OEI's Orchard Serioes. 6 - 8 pm

Celebrate the beauty of springtime in Highlands with the return of the live concert series - Orchard Sessions. Settle into comfortable seating and relax under heirloom apple trees as a stellar lineup of musicians fill the mountain air. In the magical surroundings of The Orchard, enjoy light bites, a cash bar, and an enchanting evening. The sessions kick off Thursday, April 20 with the return of Atlanta native Mike Kinnebrew. Mike's music can best be described as Indie folk fueled by soulful inspiration. The singer-songwriter will serenade you with new songs and old favorites. The Orchard Sessions are held at The Farm at Old Edwards - located at 336 Arnold Road in Highlands. To book online and for more information about the concert services visit oldedwardshospitality.com/orchard-sessions. \$40. Book Online: <https://www.simpletix.com/e/mike-kinnebrew-orchard-sessions-at-the-far-tickets-124433>



• OEI's Orchard Serioes. 6 - 8 pm Celebrate the beauty of springtime in Highlands with the return of the live concert series - Orchard Sessions. Settle into comfortable seating and relax under heirloom apple trees as a stellar lineup of musicians fill the mountain air. In the magical surroundings of The Orchard, enjoy light bites, a cash bar, and an enchanting evening. The sessions kick off Thursday, April 20 with the return of Atlanta native Mike Kinnebrew. Mike's music can best be described as Indie folk fueled by soulful inspiration. The singer-songwriter will serenade you with new songs and old favorites. The Orchard Sessions are held at The Farm at Old Edwards - located at 336 Arnold Road in Highlands. To book online and for more information about the concert services visit oldedwardshospitality.com/orchard-sessions. \$40. Book Online: <https://www.simpletix.com/e/mike-kinnebrew-orchard-sessions-at-the-far-tickets-124433>



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• THEN AND NOW •

When they came for the librarians

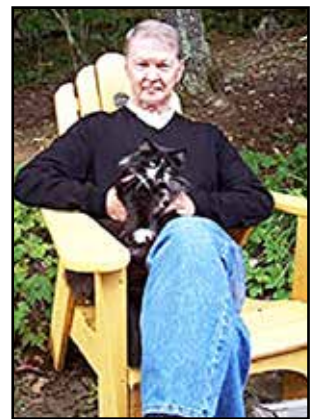
As Americans we're banning a lot of books these days, perhaps 1,650 in the past year, censoring others, and coming after librarians. Frankly, the arguments for banning books are as old as the printing press and as flimsy as electronic tweets. Whether in Macon County or McMinn County, TN, most are not only unsuccessful but counterproductive.

It's called the Streisand effect after the singer/actress Barbara Streisand, and, in the case of McMinn County, the novel Maus about a Holocaust family shot to the top of Amazon's best-seller list after attempts by the local school board to suppress it.

It's far too convenient to blame banning books on right-wing extremists when, historically, the left has also attempted to censor the likes of Huckleberry Finn for "racist content."

At the root of all these arguments is the dystopian belief that books should represent some sort of ideal world, either a radically inclusive, impossibly egalitarian progressive one or a pre-civil rights era where Father Knows Best and we all lived in a professionally happy Mayberry-like world layered over by sacred texts like the Bible and Constitution, one that never existed except on TV. Both ignore conflicting, controversial points of view and exclude many Americans, mostly minorities.

Implicit in both worlds is the belief that there is an All-American attitude children should embrace even as adults don't, an understood if seldom followed Winnie-the-Pooh list of things you shouldn't oughta do along with a set of societal or moral commandments you should, things like pledging allegiance to symbols of American patriotism, going to church, not making fun or bullying others, cursing, eating junk food, ingesting drugs, watching pornography, or thinking of



Milton Ready

but certainly not discussing or having recreational sex -- all standards parents inconsistently follow but forever proclaim.

So, do books really influence behaviors, especially in the young? Especially if you read about "the others," those of a different religion like Islam, of a race that isn't yours, or sexual preferences you find abhorrent? Can reading about gays or Muslims "groom" you to become one? What if it makes you more understanding and tolerant of "the others?" Wouldn't that be the ultimate "grooming?"

Research strongly and empirically suggests that, while behaviors such as teen drinking, smoking, and sexual activity are influenced by many factors, books are not on the list. What is? Parental behavior, the home environment, social media platforms, mass media advertising, and, not surprisingly, peer influence. Yet those who attack school boards and librarians are right to fear the power of reading a book. Why? Whether fictional or otherwise, reading itself ultimately makes us more open and accepting. Thus, the ideology, the "agenda" behind libricide, the killing of or censoring books, is that of killing reading itself.

We live in a time when we wring our hands, fuss, and fret about the declining state of America when it isn't about what our children read and are being taught outside the home but inside

-- about the dissolution of the family and morality in general, the languishing state of Christianity, and about what kind of future awaits us all. It's as if we've all become the character Btfspk from the comic strip, Li'l Abner, seriously well-intentioned but our own worst enemy, going about our lives with a dark, even nuclear cloud perpetually hovering over us. Our lives become a growing list of grievances.

Who is to blame for our misery? Anybody but ourselves. In our perpetual, acrimonious culture wars, why not librarians? Recently the heroes of the Covid lockdown for distributing books and curriculum materials to home bound students, they now have become society's villains, accused of embracing the mysterious American Library Association's "agenda" of reading works with "bad words" and "inappropriate behavior" in them like Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, All's Well That Ends Well, and Henry IV. That same lockdown convinced parents that, with all their "rights," they really didn't want much to do with the often tedious familial work of passing on their knowledge, values, behaviors, or spiritual and moral assets to their children. Or monitor and limit their access to social media.

Perhaps Walt Kelly's Pogo had the answer all along, namely "We have met the enemy and it is us!"

Yet the Proud Boys and Moms for Liberty know how to deal with pesky librarians. Like Virginia State Representative Tom Andrews of Virginia Beach -- out them by publishing their identities, addresses, family members, and phone numbers, then harass and intimidate them publicly and privately. You can also check out offensive books and burn them, bring criminal charg-

...SEATING continued from page 11

split flood zone.

Lewis will go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment on March 15 to get the final word on the SUP.

Next up was Paoletti's Restaurant represented by architect Steve Power, which is requesting a SUP to add outdoor seating to the back of the restaurant overlooking K-H Founders Park.

According to the Unified Development Ordinance, restaurants are permitted outdoor seating upon the issuance of a SUP and if they are in the B1 district – whose seating isn't dependent upon parking - they aren't required to get a SUP if expanding seating inside, which is also part of the Paoletti's overall plan.

The building is zoned B-1 commercial and is located within the Balanced Area of Watershed 3 (WS III – BW) and the gross floor space is 5,268 sq. ft.

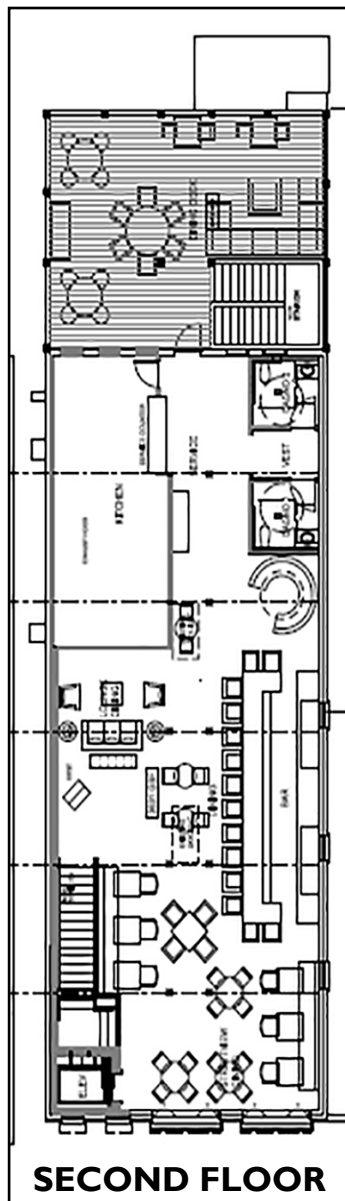
With the deck addition, the gross floor space will be 6,084 sq. ft., with allowed gross floor space for the parcel at 6,886 sq. ft.

As per the UDO, "The size of any new commercial building constructed in the B-1 Business zoning district, and in the case of an addition, the resultant gross floor space of the entire building, shall not exceed a ratio of one and four tenths (1.4) square foot of gross floor space per one (1) square foot of building lot."

According to Power, the new deck will replace the current, narrow deck across the back of the building and will extend out over the existing storage and infrastructure structures on the lot.

Though the Planning Board was not there to OK the interior changes on the first floor or the top floor which currently houses apartments, it did see the proposed changes.

Those changes include deleting the apartments and changing the upper floor into a dining, lounge, and bar area accessed by both an interior and exterior staircase and an interior elevator that



can hold up to three people or a wheelchair.

Two ADA compliant bathrooms will be on upper level whose roof line will not exceed its current height of 27 feet.

Architect Power said he didn't know when the work would start.

The board unanimously OK'd the SUP request. The final word will come from the Zoning Board at the March 15 meeting.

- Kim Lewicki

...THEN AND NOW continued from page 14

es against librarians for distributing "pornographic materials," sue them in court for obscenity, and lock them up.

At some point, our librarians, teachers, and school boards deserve not our anger and harassment but our respect and gratitude. We should give them the freedom to obtain and use materials they deem important to the free play of ideas and the fundamental liberty to read. If we can't trust our teachers and librarians, our system fundamentally is broken. Moreover, attempts to cancel the culture of "the others," to manufacture and invent a new, sanitized history, and to write new books and ban others often speaks to the bankruptcy of our own. In other words, we're finished.



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...TRAIL continued from page 1

nities of Cashiers, Highlands, and Clayton, GA, through a regional trail system.

The four planned sections for the trail system are from the Village Green in Cashiers to the Kelsey Hutchinson Founders Park in Highlands; from Kelsey Hutchinson Founders Park to Hale Ridge Road in Georgia; from Hale Ridge Road to Wilson Gap in Georgia; and Wilson Gap to Stekoa Creek Park in Clayton, Georgia.

The plan is to minimize environmental impact by using existing infrastructure like the Greenway, sidewalks, paved roads, gravel roads, dirt roads through USFS gated areas and natural surface trails.

The overall cost of the project is estimated at \$2.5M and involves using approximately 37 miles of existing trails, and 8 miles of proposed trail.

The route from Cashiers to

Highlands stretches approx. 16 miles and begins at The Village Green. It then passes south of Whiteside Mountain along the Chattooga River to the base of Blackrock Mountain, then on to Horse Cove and Rich Gap roads.

The trail moves onward to the summit of Satulah Mountain before descending to KH Founders Park.

Tim Johnson, Director of Outdoor Recreation Planning at Destination by Design said the route was determined by feasibility - factoring heavily on existing trails and land ownership.

By presenting the BRCC to the public, Destination by Design is hoping for feedback to help create a Master Plan, which Johnson said they hope to have prepared by the end of March.

To submit your feedback about the BRCC, email tim@db-dplanning.com.

The Master Plan is then sub-

ject to approval by the Project Oversight Committee (POC), a group made up of representatives from a variety of concerned parties; including conservation groups, local and county governments, and the US Forest Service.

After the Master Plan is approved by the POC, Johnson said it will be presented to local and county governments by a group chosen to spearhead the project.

"There needs to be a champion, a group to take it to local governments and ask for support," said Johnson. "After that, its implementation will be discussed in more detail in the Master Plan."

Johnson said a project of this size could take anywhere from 5-15 years to complete depending on how hard the group pushes for the project and the amount of funding that can be raised.

The BRCC has been in the concept stages for several years but took a big step forward after a significant donation in 2022.

"Last year the Highlands Plateau Greenway secured funding from an anonymous donor and



The public was invited to view the proposed route of the BRCC during a presentation on Tuesday at the Highlands Rec Center.

- Photo by Brian O'Shea, Plateau Daily News

hired Destination by Design to plan the trail system," said Johnson.

Destination by Design is a planning, communications, and engineering firm based in Boone, NC with experience in projects involving regional trail systems and parks.

The premise is that such trails promote connectivity between communities, promote quality of life through exercise and communing with nature, promote economic development with eco-travel, and promotes stewardship of the land.

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• BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NEWS •



Rotary wheelchair delivery to Philippines is discussed at meeting

The Rotary Club of Highlands welcomed Rotarian William Biddle to their meeting on February 21. Biddle discussed his incredible service project, wheelchair distribution in the Philippines. Biddle began his Rotary International journey with his first trip to the Philippines in 2010. Near the end of this trip, he was inspired to begin a wheelchair distribution program. In 2012 this dream became a reality when he and fellow Rotarians were able to deliver their first installment of wheelchairs within the city of Manilla. Biddle continues to visit the Philippines, delivering wheelchairs to those in need.

• HIGHLANDS SCHOOL BBALL •

Lady Highlanders' season ends after loss in 2nd round of state playoffs

By Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Highlands girls varsity basketball team wrapped up a championship season in the 2nd round of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association's Girls Basketball Championship with a loss to North Rowan, 47-38 on Feb. 24.

While the loss on the road hurt, the Lady Highlanders have a lot to be proud of this season, including taking 1st place in the regular season conference, winning the Little Smoky Mountain Conference Tournament, and making it to the 2nd round of the state playoffs.

Highlands finishes with a regular season record of 19-7, and an undefeated conference record, 6-0.

Of their many victories throughout the season, one special night was a win at home against Nantahala on Feb. 9 that was dedicated to area law enforcement with officers from a number of agencies who were present showing their support. Highlands beat Nantahala 45-29.

All photos are from Highlands versus Nantahala on Feb. 9 at home.

- Photos by Brian O'Shea
Plateau Daily News

Left: Highlands Heidi Doerter keeps her cool under pressure from Nantahala.

Right: Highlands Mac Woods waits for a teammate to cut under the hoop.



Highlands Cayden Pierson scores 2 points on a fast break against Nantahala.



Highlands Hunter Conner makes her move and cuts to the basket along the baseline.



Highlands Ezra Branham drives through the paint to score against Nantahala.



Highlands AE Woods sizes up Nantahala's defense before driving into the paint.



• SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING •



Are you a person who struggles with control?

Brent Metcalf
Mission and Direction
Pastor
Christ Church of the Valley,
Cashiers

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

Proverbs 3:5 NIV

If we are honest, most of us have control issues. It is why many of us would prefer to drive versus being a passenger or to have a remote control versus allowing someone else to have control.

Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt out of control?

Years ago, in high school, we had a blizzard. One evening, several friends came over to sled down a steep road near my house. We had an idea midway through the evening that we would use my truck to give rides back to the top of the hill so we wouldn't have to walk back up the mountain. The truck would follow closely behind us, so we could shine the bright lights and see where we were going.

My friend Mike decided to drive my truck and pick us up at the bottom. I rode the sled down as he followed me in my truck — off I went; it was a pure adrenaline rush for several minutes. Midway down the mountain, I go from extreme joy to absolute fear. My sled hit a patch of the road where the ice had melted entirely, and the sled abruptly stopped. I could hear my truck bearing down on me and screeching and sliding toward me. Time seemed to stop momentarily, and I knew the truck was out of control. I knew the truck was going to hit me. There was nothing I could do.

When life is out of control, we want to grab the reins and pull them back to order.

You probably won't have a truck sliding into you while you lay on the road, but you will face uncontrollable circumstances. So, when the chaos of life hits, how do we react when the odds don't seem to be in our favor?

In these moments of uncertainty, fear, or tragedy, we see where we have placed our trust. These circumstances expose our weaknesses and lack of real control. No matter how big, strong, or successful we are, there will be things that happen in life that we cannot control. I could not stop the truck from hitting me; I was helpless.

There are daily circumstances where I have a choice to trust my own understanding or trust God's. Typically, we go through life trusting our own understanding versus seeking God. Whatever is being hurled at you today, know that God can be trusted, and that God's wisdom is always better than our limited understanding and need to control.

Proverbs 3:5

• PLACES TO WORSHIP •

John 3:16

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CASHIERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Sundays: School at 9:30 Worship 10:30

Wednesday night Dinner and Service 5:30

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Sundays: 10 a.m. Worship; Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays

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www.christanglicancashiers.com

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

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Pastor Brent Metcalf • 743-5470

www.cashiers.church

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.

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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

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

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5th and Main streets • www.incarnationwnc.org

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

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HIGHLANDS

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

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

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

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828-526-3175 • fpchighlands.org

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Tues: Men's Group 10 a.m. Wed: Bell Choir 4 p.m. Choir: 6p

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

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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

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Pastor Dan Robinson • 11339 Buck Creek Road

The Highlands Central Baptist Church is temporarily

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

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Pastor Zane Talley

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

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

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

4224 Big Ridge Road (4.5 miles from NC 107)

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

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Rev. Marty Kilby

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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.

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

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

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Sat. 5:30p; Sun. 9a

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WHITESIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Sunday School: 10 am. Worship Service: 11 am

• POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

Highlands Police entries from Feb. 10. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.

Feb. 10

• At 12:54 p.m., officers received a call for service at the Emergency Center on Poplar Street when someone took items belonging to others.

Feb. 19

• At 2:01 a.m., Colton Avery Lee Sloope, 21, of Highlands was arrested for driving under the influence a NC 28 & Shelby road. He was issued a \$800 unsecured bond. His trial date is March 22.

Feb. 23

• At 7:59 p.m., Rina Maria Meinders, 29, of Otto, NC, was arrested for speeding and driving under the influence when stopped on Hicks Road. She was released on a written

promise. Her trial date is April 5/

• At 8:20 p.m., Elijah Michael Stack, 30, of Hendersonville, NC, was arrested for driving under the influence and other offenses when he was stopped on Hicks Road. He was released on a written promise. His trial date is April 5.

The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Feb. 27

Feb. 27

• At 10:01 a.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Spring Street.

• At 11:26 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Buck Creek Road.

• At 11:40 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Blue Valley Road.

• At 7:02 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on Main Street.

Vietnam Era Veterans Roll Call

On March 29, our nation will commemorate National Vietnam Veterans Day on its 50th anniversary.

The Highlands American Legion Post 370 in cooperation with the Highlands Historical Society is calling on plateau Vietnam era veterans and the families of deceased veterans to update their service information with the local American Legion Post who will share that data with the Highlands Historical Society. The military service of area veterans is an important part of the history of our plateau and Post 370 and the Historical Society are honored to maintain a list of local veterans representing the various services as far back as the Civil War.

The Highlands American Legion Post 370 publishes a list of veterans on Veterans Day and Memorial Day as part of our ongoing effort to recognize the service of all local veterans.

This year is particularly noteworthy as it is the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Statistics by the Department of Veterans Affairs published last year indicate that the number of Vietnam veterans who served on active duty from November 1, 1955 – May 15, 1975 is actually larger

than previously thought. It has been confirmed that this number is in fact closer to 7 million, representing more than 6.7 million men and nearly 300,000 women veterans living in America and abroad.

To commemorate The 50th anniversary of the Vietnam war the local American Legion Post will hold an event recognizing this milestone on March 29 in Highlands. Details will be published in the local newspapers, the Post 370 Facebook and webpage <http://www.amerlegionpost370nc.org/>.

Area Vietnam veterans and veteran's families interested in adding their names to the list of other local Vietnam veterans can email their service information to nc-post370@gmail.com or mail that information to American Legion Post 370, PO Box 406, Highlands, NC 28741.

The Highlands Historical Society has an interesting military uniform display of uniforms from all services with one dating back to the civil war era. The Historical Society is located at 524 N. 4th St., Highlands and is open Thursday through Saturday from 10 till 4.

Chip Snyder

Public Information Officer

• BIZ/ORG NEWS •

Bingo returns to Rotary



From left: Bingo Chair Bob Baxter, Bingo Caller and Interact Club Sponsor Tracy Franklin, Super Bingo winner Mark Squillante, and TLLC Executive Director Bonnie Potts.

After a three-year hiatus, Rotary Club of Highlands once again hosted monthly Bingo, partnering with The Literacy & Learning Center and Highlands School Interact Club to conduct the event, which drew a roomful of Bingo players at the Community Center. Net proceeds from the evening will benefit The Literacy & Learning Center. The next Rotary Club of Highlands Bingo night will on March 17 at 6:30 PM benefitting the Highlands School PTO.



Rabun Gap-Nacoochee Grils win NCISAA State Championship

The Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School girls basketball team celebrates after winning their second-straight NCISAA State Championship on Saturday, Feb. 25. Pictured, front row from left, are Francesca Cergol '23, Tuana CoÅYkun '23, Angelica Vanflorcke '24, Kornelia Ignerska '24, Sofia McNabb '24, Carmen Cabello Rivera '24, and Assistant Coach Morgan Neisweinder; back row, Assistant Coach Weston Willard, Aleksandra Noworol '25, Ece Arabacioglu '23, Jayla Frasz '25, Mia Wilson '23, Monna Julkunen '24, and Coach Dale Earnhardt.

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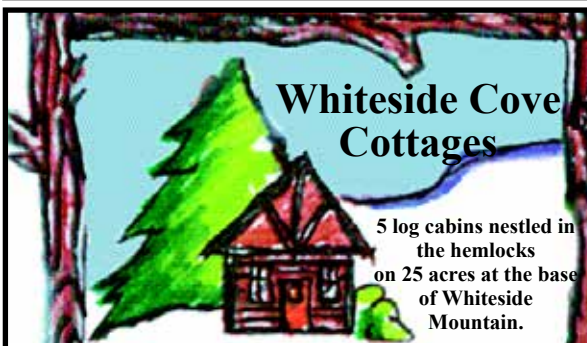


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• BIZ/ORG NEWS •



A view of the foggy valley from North Carolina's Blue Ridge Parkway.

-- Tihomir Trichkov

Local wins National Geographic 'Picture of the Year' contest

Highlands freelance photographer Tihomir Trichkov said he took this shot while headed home from the airport early one morning in October.

It captures fog that had settled over a valley visible from North Carolina's Blue Ridge Parkway.

The scene depicts "the little slice of heaven that I live in," Trichkov said of his home in Highlands, North Carolina. "The Smoky Mountains are simply gorgeous," he said.

Trichkov owns HOP Gallery on Main Street in Highlands. It features many of his photographs.

He is from Bulgaria but has called Highlands home for the last 14 years. His work has been recognized and published by National Geographic, Smithsonian Magazine, the Sony World Photography Organization and other companies.

He says for 17 years, photographing has been his tool to tell a story.

"It is my blood, my passion, my call," he said. "My heart and my head are in constant debate how far should I take it. My heart always wins."

About the National Geographic's 'Pictures of the Year' contest

The contest is Nat Geo's latest effort to highlight photography from contributors.

It launched alongside the magazine's annual "Pictures of the Year" issue, which features the best 49 photos taken by Nat Geo photographers, chosen from more than 2 million submissions.

The goal of the "Picture of the Year" contest is to provide aspiring photographers the "same spotlight," according to Nat Geo.

To see the full gallery of winners, visit natgeo.com/PhotoContestWinner.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Please take notice of a public hearing at the Highlands Community Building (71 Poplar Street) on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 5:30 pm, wherein the Town of Highlands Zoning Board of Adjustment will consider the following case(s):

(1) Special Use

Application #031523A submitted by Franklin Road, LLC. The petitioner is requesting to increase the number of seats at the Smokehouse restaurant.

(2) Special Use Application #031523B submitted by Paoletti, LLC. The petitioner is requesting to add outdoor seating to their restaurant. Any member of the public may attend the hearing, and only those with standing shall be allowed reasonable time to testify to the Board.

Margot Teed, Chairman
Zoning Board of Adjustment
To be published on March 2, 2023

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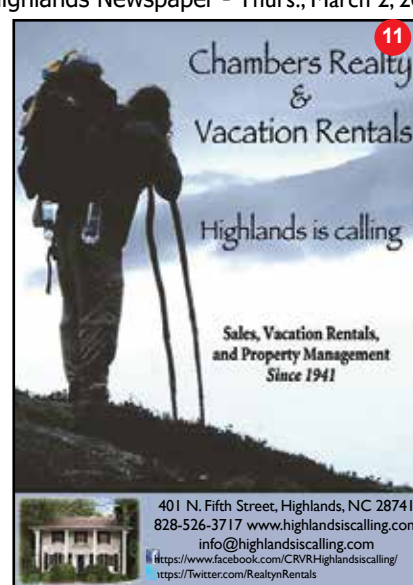
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