

# Highlands Newspaper

Spring ahead Sunday, March 10

FREE Every Thursday

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## Town is applying for matching grant to help fund playground at the Rec Park

The new and expanded playground destined for the Rec Park is on the way to becoming a reality.

The Town Board has sanctioned the project and a Playground Committee which includes Commissioners Brian Stiehler and

Jeff Weller have been meeting to discuss fundraising for the estimated \$1.65 million project.

• See **PLAYGROUND** page 8

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## Super Tuesday Results: Macon County Board of Commissioners & more

By Brittney Lofthouse

The Macon County Board of Commissioners election on Super Tuesday resulted in significant changes in District III, while District II saw a continuation of the incumbent's tenure.

In District III, challenger Barry Breeden defeated incumbent Commissioner Paul Higdon. The race was closely watched, and Breeden's victory marks a change in leadership for the district. Higdon, who has served on the board for the last 10 years, recently serving as Chairman, will end his tenure this December after Tuesday's loss. Breeden was elected after receiving 3,319 votes to Higdon's 3,091.

"Thank you, Macon County, for the amazing support shown over the last two weeks," Breeden said Tuesday night. "I appreciate all the Board of Elections workers who managed the early voting polls, all the workers today to



Barry Breeden



Josh Young

make this a successful election, and most of all, all who came out to vote for me today ... I am thankful and look forward to the opportunity to pour into the future of Macon County."

In District II, incumbent Josh Young decisively won re-election, defeating challenger Chris Browning with 3,935 votes to Browning's 2,511. Young, who currently serves as Vice-Chair of the board will continue serving for another four-

year term.

"I want to give a sincere Thank You to Macon County," Josh Young said Wednesday morning. "I'm so excited to have the opportunity to keep working for our small community. All the love, support, and trust shown over the past few weeks have been so humbling to see. Thank you!"

With no Democrats on the primary ballot, Breeden and Young, the winners of Tuesday's Republican Primary, are expected to be sworn in this December to serve their terms on the Macon County Board of Commissioners.

Just shy of 30 percent of registered voters in Macon County showed up at the polls for Super Tuesday, with 8,415 ballots cast out of the 28,362 registered voters in Macon County.

Federally, President Joe Biden

• See **SUPER TUESDAY** page 14

## CMS lifts Mission's immediate jeopardy

*Inspectors to return in three months*

By Andrew R. Jones  
Asheville Watchdog

Mission Hospital is no longer in immediate jeopardy, but inspectors will return to the hospital for another survey in three months, according to a U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services statement and letter obtained by Asheville Watchdog on Wednesday.

The finding, based on a visit to the hospital last week by state and federal inspectors, means that CMS has determined that the hospital's conditions no longer threaten patients' safety and lives, and that for now, Mission no longer faces the possibility of losing its Medicare and Medicaid funding, which would have threatened its financial viability.

"Our office notified you on February 1, 2024, of your hospital's violations at 42 CFR Part 482 and our intent to terminate Memorial Mission Hospital and Asheville Surgery Center's par-

ticipation in the Medicare program on February 24, 2024, if the immediate jeopardy was not removed," the letter to Mission CEO Chad Patrick stated. "We are suspending this termination action pending our review of the February 23, 2024, follow-up revisit survey."

Mission is responsible for enacting a plan of correction to address numerous deficiencies in patient care outlined in a 384-page CMS report obtained by The Watchdog on Feb. 15. The hospital will have 90 days to complete actions in the plan and achieve compliance with federal regulations, according to a CMS spokesperson.

"We are pleased that the State surveyors found Mission Health to be in compliance with the corrective action plan previously accepted by CMS, and who are recommending removal of the immediate jeopardy," Mis-

• See **MISSION** page 14



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# • THE PLATEAU'S POSITION •

## • MAYOR ON DUTY •

### Items on today's 'retreat' agenda

As a university professor and administrator, I've been on a number of "working" retreats. It usually meant checking into a very nice resort followed by an afternoon cocktail party with colleagues, aka rivals. After cocktails, we would have a kickoff rubber chicken and green pea banquet. A keynote expert speaker would always remind us in some way to work smarter, not harder. The next morning, we would have breakout sessions where reams of flip chart paper would be generated. After lunch, everyone would hit the golf course, trails, or pool, endeavoring to again reconnect and understand their crazy colleagues. In the evening, after another "scrumptious" dinner, our leader would make a speech that would be a valiant, albeit long, effort to bring meaning to all those flip chart notes and set the vision for the new academic year. Oh, how I miss the intellectually exhilarating retreats.

So, I've always thought the Highlands Town Retreat is a misnomer; we don't re-



Highlands Mayor  
Patrick Taylor

eat anywhere. And the board and staff only get drinks with one free lunch. This year, the choices are tea, cokes, water, and pizza or sandwiches. Our retreat enclave will be the Highlands Recreation Center. It begins at 9 am, Thursday, March 7, and ends by around 4 pm. It's not really a retreat but rather an all-day budget workshop. Let me highlight some things to be reviewed.

In the morning, the board and staff will hear a report from the consultant who has completed a comprehensive study of our electric grid. He will tell us we need to upgrade the grid to the tune of about 4 million dollars. Since the pandemic, there has been a big increase in electricity demand — more and more people are staying longer in Highlands. We must address this demand increase with a grid upgrade or eventually face California-style blackouts. The good news is that we can make these upgrades using electric fund reserves, thereby avoiding an electric rate increase.

We will also hear a report concerning replacing our pre-clarifier tank and adding a filter train at the water plant. Last year, Highlands received 5 million dollars for upgrading the water plant, but these upgrades will cost even more. Our auditors and the NC Local Government Commission will expect the town to raise water and sewer rates to cover these increases. These improvements are essential to future water and sewer operations.

After lunch there will be a report by the architectural firm that did a conditions study of the Highlands Playhouse building. The study covers all components of the building. Estimated costs to bring the facility up to current codes will be included.

Normally, final action on any issue is not taken at the retreat, but this year, there will be a few budget amendments requested. The big one will be the contract for rebuilding and stabilizing part of Little Bear Pen Road. I predict the board will get a case of sticker shock when they hear the budget amendment, but that repair cannot be delayed. We will have to use reserve funds to get the contractor on-site without delay.





The public is invited to attend any part or all of the retreat.

## • HIC'S VIEW •



"We're safe, he went for a ride With any luck, a one way to the Vet."

## • WEATHER •

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# • INVESTING AT 4,118 FT •

## Weighing the benefits of moving vs. remodeling

In the realm of home-ownership, time changes things, whether it is kids getting married, the addition of grandchildren, friends and family moving away, or simply design choices being outdated. The home you purchased a few years ago or many years ago may no longer fit your current lifestyle needs. The age-old dilemma often arises: Should one renovate their current house or embark on the adventure of finding a new home? While remodeling holds its allure, an increasing number of homeowners are discovering the myriad of benefits of moving to a new or remodeled home instead. From cost-effectiveness to lifestyle enhancement, the advantages are compelling.

One of the primary motivations for opting to move rather than remodel is the financial aspect. While renovations can be budgeted for both cost and timing, in reality, there are often unforeseen complications and/or design changes that impact both the cost and the timing of completion. Moving can allow homeowners to start fresh without the inconvenience and disruption of living through a renovation, or the burden of renovation expenses that run higher than budgeted. Furthermore, with current real estate market trends, selling a property can often yield a considerable return on your original investment, providing additional financial flexibility for purchasing a new or fully renovated home.

Beyond the financial realm, moving offers the opportunity for a lifestyle change. Many homeowners find that their current space no longer meets their evolving needs and preferences. Whether it's seeking more space for a growing family, desiring a change of scenery, or craving proximity to specific amenities and attractions, moving presents



the chance to tailor one's living situation to align more closely with their desired lifestyle.

In the search for a new home, one often-overlooked benefit is the opportunity to match your new lifestyle needs with a new neighborhood. This could be a house in the woods with trails or a community with club memberships that can provide access to a range of amenities such as pools, tennis, golf, fitness centers, and social events, enhancing your overall quality of life.

Leveraging the services of a knowledgeable Realtor can make all the difference in finding the perfect home. Not only can they streamline the search process by matching buyers with properties that meet their criteria and help identify properties that offer coveted club memberships, but they can also provide invaluable insights into local market dynamics for their clients.

In conclusion, while the decision to move or remodel ultimately hinges on individual circumstances and preferences, the benefits of moving are increasingly apparent to many homeowners. From financial prudence to lifestyle enrichment, the allure of starting anew may outweigh the allure of renovation. With the guidance of a trusted Realtor, embarking on the journey of finding the perfect home becomes a rewarding and fulfilling endeavor.

Note: This column was collaborated on by the staff of Mountain Life Properties.

• *Mountain Life Properties serves the luxury real estate sales market and is located in Highlands within its log cabin office at 134 Maple Street. The Mountain Life Properties team welcomes all to stop by to say hello or visit their website [MountainLife-RE.com](http://MountainLife-RE.com) or reach them at 828-239-8814.*

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# • LETTERS •

## Thanks, Mayor Taylor

Dear Editor,

Thank you, Mayor Taylor for your Mayor on Duty column (Feb. 22). I agree that it is easy to compare Highlands to other towns and cities for the purpose of gathering ideas.

You closed with “make changes deliberately in the spirit of preserving this unique environment and community.” That should be the standard that all projects are measured against.

Highlands is a special place - often referred to as a “rainforest” with unique geography, plants, and animals. And for many, this has always been a “retreat” community. Comparisons can often lead decision makers down the wrong path.

My ears cringe when I hear folks say “Highlands is the Aspen of the East.” Lord help us if that is how we are going to define ourselves. If Highlands continues to pursue its excellence by preserving its unique assets, perhaps Asheville and Aspen will instead be asking the question “how can we be more disciplined like Highlands?”

**Glenn Bosio  
Highlands, NC**

## Observations of the Cashiers Marketplace proposed development

Dear Editor,

I have been following the recent developments of the Cashiers Marketplace, from its size and proposed site features, and its water resource issues. As a concerned local/part-time resident (generally April/May through November), I have been enjoying the peacefulness of the Cashiers area for over 15 years. First, as a tourist, and then five years ago, with retirement plans we purchased a home in Sapphire, in Eagle Ridge.

I heard of the development plans percolating about 4-5 years ago, and I started following the local news, and Jackson County Planning Commission news. While I am not against land development, I am concerned about aspects of the latest plans for the Cashiers Marketplace (CM). I am very acute to the local roadway network, the intersections, traffic signal operation, etc., since I have been in the transportation engineering field for nearly 50-years as a consultant, and informing clients, and state and local agencies, on responsible developments.

Based on the latest plans for the CM, and knowing how the roadway network and traffic flows in the area during the seasonal months, I can see some fatal flaws, on how the development will operate/function following full build-out.

I know there was a professional hired to evaluate the land development regulations, but I am not certain that the evaluation provided substantive changes that would produce results to alter how development can improve in the area.

I have been involved in my businesses with land developments from Maine to Florida, from a design perspective and from a review perspective for various governmental agencies that provide approvals for land developments.

This scale of development will definitely have an area-wide impact, from boundaries that extend from the west, at Route 64/Frank Allen Rd, and extend east beyond the Monte Vista Rd/Route 64 intersection; and from the north at Slabtown Rd/Route 107, extending south to Route 107/Cashiers School Rd.

A major concern is the localized access to the CM along Route 107. Taking a step back, and considering area-wide traffic/network flows, coming from Route 107/Frank Allen Rd area, this roadway could be treated as a local by-pass, to avoid having traffic go through the main “intersection” (Routes 64/107), and with proper destination signing to access the CM.

At the point of the intersection of Frank Allen Rd/Route 107, by the present design, traffic would need to turn right (south), and in approximately 400-feet, turn left (north) into the CM, main roadway/access. There are no additional turn lanes being provided at the aforementioned intersection, except a right-turn deceleration lane along Route 107 (and from the site a right-in/right-out maneuver), which provides no benefit for access, since the main site access is 400-feet to the south, if traffic were traveling north along Route 107.

The existing signalized intersection presently experiences severe backups during peak travel/seasonal periods, and would only be exacerbated more, with these proposed traffic maneuvers.

Over time, and mainly during peak traffic periods, motorists will begin to find their “path of least resistance,” such as possibly using the reverse frontage road behind the shops on the west side of Route 107 (between Route 64 & Frank Allen Rd), and will pose more safety issues.

I am sure from a development standpoint no one wants a cut-thru roadway of a presumed heavily used retail/hotel site, going right through the middle of a development, as it would only propose more safety issues, but the area traffic flows will need some relief, and a preferred straight-on access to the CM, from Frank Allen Rd could minimize these traffic flows on Route 107, by making a more direct access to the development.

Again, looking at the proposed development, from an area-wide perspective, the northern most access point to Monte Vista Rd, and eventually onto Route 64, has its own challenges. No additional turn lanes are being provided along Route 64 at Monte Vista Rd (as this location with properly designed destination signing, could serve to navigate access to the CM, from its northern point, and therefore, would minimize additional traffic/turning movements at the major intersection of Routes 64/107), and the location is such, that sight distance is compromised for safe turning movements. This location could see more frequent rear-end accidents in the future, following full site build-out.

Often times being a consultant in this industry, means telling the client the hard things they need to hear, and sometimes, it means additional investment (for offsite roadway/intersection improvements) that are required in the development, to look beyond just the property being developed, but the area-wide impacts of what a proposed development site of this size can have on the local roadway network and the environment. It could also have lasting benefits in being a good neighbor for Cashiers.

**John DePalma  
Sapphire, NC**

## 2024 MC Academic Foundation fundraising is now on Facebook

Dear Editor,

The Macon County Academic Foundation is an all volunteer group of public-school teachers and administrators, and members of the private sector that raises money for classroom projects and field trips. All Macon County Public School teachers can apply for funding through an easy grant process. So far this school year the Foundation has granted over \$5000 for a wide variety of projects and field trip experiences for our public school students.

Instead of the usual “Academic Auction”, this year we have decided to pivot to a different fundraising approach. Most of our fundraising will be done through the Foundation’s Facebook page. Currently we are conducting a fundraiser raffle for a 3-night stay (Oct 3-6) at the

• See LETTERS page 8

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## ...LETTERS continued from page 7

beautiful Holiday Pavilion resort in Myrtle Beach, with the winner drawn on March 17th.

Search and join our page on Facebook, Macon County Academic Foundation, to stay informed about all of the fun raffles and events we have to offer, and to see all of the wonderful teacher-led projects that are funded with the donations that are received.

**Brian Aulisio**  
2023-2024 MCAF President  
Highlands

## ...PLAYGROUND continued from page 1



At the February Town Board meeting, Recreation Director Lester Norris told the board about a funding opportunity from the NC Division of Parks & Recreation through the Accessible Parks (AP) Grant Program.

The Accessible Parks Grant Program provides \$12.5 million in matching grants for parks & recreation for the construction of special facilities or adaptation of existing facilities that meet the unique needs of persons living with disabilities or that enable them to participate in recreational and

sporting activities, regardless of their abilities. This program is administered through the Division and the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF).

The purpose of the Accessible Parks Grant is to maximize access to recreation in NC counties, municipalities, and public authorities.

Eligible projects include projects that meet the unique needs of persons living with disabilities or that enable them to participate in recreational and sporting activities, the construction of special facilities, and the adaptation of existing facilities.

PARTF grants were used to develop the Rec Park years ago but Highlands can still apply for the Accessible Parks Grant Program for the new playground especially if the playground renovation will create a facility that maximizes accessibility to all children up to age 12.

If Highlands qualifies for the state's matching grant that is handled through PARTF a maximum of \$500,000 is available. For every \$1 Highlands gives, the state gives \$5. If awarded the grant, Highlands will have three years to use the funds.

According to Norris the Southwestern Commission staff has seen the playground rendering and is preparing the documentation that will be submitted by Highlands.

The Southwestern Commission is a regional council of government that serves as a technical, economic, and planning resource to towns and counties in the western region

of North Carolina.

Officially known as the Southwestern North Carolina Planning and Economic Development Commission, it covers the counties of Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, and Swain, the 17 municipalities therein, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The Playground Committee enlisted the help of Carolina Parks and Play who drew the rendering being considered by PARTF.

Norris said earlier this week, staff from the Southwestern Commission visited Rec Park.

"We have sent them the rendering that we have and their staff came to look at the site. That is as far as we have gone as far as planning goes thus far," said Norris.

Once funding is acquired either by grants or through Rec Committee fundraising, Carolina Parks and Play will ultimately design the space with a general contractor hired and sub-contractors used to pour and construct the groundwork and footprint on which components will be affixed.

The grant application is due by May 1.

If funding comes through, the hope is to have the playground operational in 2025.

Anyone interested in donating to the Playground fundraising campaign is encouraged to contact Commissioners Stiehler or Weller.

- Kim Lewicki

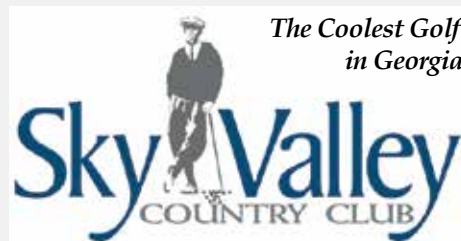
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# • HOSPITAL NEWS •

## The state of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital is healthy and framed for growth in 2024 Part II

As I have said in the past, HCA Healthcare's continuing significant investment in healthcare for the Plateau sets us up for future success, which means ever-improving care for our community. I talked about innovative new imaging technology we are looking forward to using in patient care, infrastructure improvements, the expansion of our services, and the recruitment and training of the most important resource we have — our people.



**Tom Neal CEO, CNO  
Highlands-Cashiers  
Hospital**

This month, I want to stress how important maintaining and continuing to strengthen the connection between HCH and ELC and our community is. This requires a dual investment — ours in the community and the community in us.

HCH's investment in our community connects us to our neighbors, who are the people we care for. We donate to multiple local nonprofit organizations and participate in community events like our Teddy Bear Hospitals. They aim to soothe children's fears about going to the doctor or visiting the hospital and may also pique their interest in pursuing a career in healthcare in the future. I appreciate the special opportunity I have to meet with all of the nursing students who come to our hospital to learn through programs at Southwestern Community College or Western Carolina University. I take each group to lunch and ask one question: "Why did you choose to become a nurse?" You would be amazed how many chose their career path as children. Having participated in the Teddy Bear Hospital event, I have noted many children's eyes sparkle with special interest. I am hopeful that through this program, we have ignited a spark for some of our future healthcare providers.

Speaking of our Teddy Bear Hospital, we took part in a food drive sponsored by HCA Healthcare's Healthy Food for Healthier Tomorrows, a national initiative focused on helping communities experiencing food insecurity. The drive provides nutritious meals to individuals and families in need, and the HCA Healthcare Foundation contributes support to nonprofits engaged in combating hunger and increasing accessibility to healthy foods. The icing

on the cake? Our canned goods teddy bear sculpture not only won \$10,000 as the top entry in our division, we also came in at #1 throughout all divisions — earning us an additional \$25,000 grant to give to food banks and pantries in Highlands and Cashiers. We also donated the 435 pounds of canned food that formed our sculpture.

You also may have seen us distributing hot cocoa, apple cider, and popcorn at Highlands' Halloween on Main event. We gave out more than 2,000 hot drinks, and I could not keep up

with the popcorn, but can tell you the popcorn maker truly got a workout. We've also collaborated with local artists to create our Whoville-themed float, inspired by Dr. Seuss' "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," for the annual Olde Mountain Christmas Parade in Highlands, and the Cashiers Annual Christmas Parade.

As we move through 2024, it's also important for us to reflect on the fact that our commitment to the community and our growth contribute to achievements that not only make us proud, but more importantly, mean better care for our patients. These milestones include earning the Acute Stroke Ready Hospital accreditation from The Joint Commission. This recognition is a gold seal of approval that means we are providing the highest standard of care for stroke patients in a community hospital. As we have pursued this accreditation, our processes have improved, and I have had the opportunity to witness lives saved by our emergency department providing life-changing care for stroke victims within minutes of their arrival. This timeliness with care is absolutely critical in the case of a stroke. It is amazing and heartening to watch.

I must also report, with a great deal of pride, that our ER was recognized as the #1 Emergency Department for hospitals with less than 40,000 visits per year in HCA Healthcare for sustaining the highest level of patient experience over a year. One of our ER doctors, Dr. John Worthington, was recognized with the APEX (Achieving Peak Performance in Patient Experience) Award as the top performing ER doctor.

This is no surprise to anyone who has used our ER, but it was profoundly rewarding to receive the recognition. We took the

opportunity to celebrate them with a barbecue dinner at the Bascom. I have to devote a few lines to recognize the Bascom as well, who provided the venue, Doc Wilson, who provided a large blast heater when the forecast turned cool, and Mayor Taylor, who issued a proclamation recognizing our team.

I am inspired and energized about our special community's support of and involvement in our growth. This partnership is essential for ensuring a bright future for healthcare on the Plateau, I am grateful for it, and anticipate that it will continue to evolve to benefit all of us.



HC Hospital's canned goods teddy bear sculpture not only won \$10,000 as the top entry in its division, HCH also came in at #1 throughout all divisions — earning an additional \$25,000 grant to give to food banks and pantries in Highlands and Cashiers.

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with  
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Thursday, April 18

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# • POLICE & FIRE REPORTS •

**Highlands Police entries from Feb. 20. Only the names of persons arrested, issued a summons/citation, issued a Class-3 misdemeanor or those of public officials have been used.**

## Feb. 20

• At 1:20 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident at Highlands School.

## March 2

• At 4:15 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Main Street.

• At 11:30 p.m., officers responded to a 2-vehicle accident on Spring Street.

**The Highlands Fire & Rescue log from Feb. 27.**

## Feb. 27

• At 1:36 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a location on W. Church Street.

## Feb. 28

• At 5:05 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on US 64 west.

• At 7:05 p.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on View Point Road.

## Feb. 29

• At 7:47 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Clear Creek Road.

• At 10:07 p.m., the dept. provided public assistance at a residence on Cullasaja Drive.

## March 1

• At 3:07 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at the hospital.

• At 2:12 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Horse Cove Road.

## March 2

• At 7:58 a.m., the dept. responded to a motor ve-

hicle accident on US 64 west.

• At 9:05 a.m., the dept. responded to a call of a gas leak at a residence on Highgate Road.

• At 4:14 p.m., the dept. responded to a motor vehicle accident on Main Street.

## March 4

• At 10:37 p.m., the dept. responded to a fire alarm at a residence on Shortoff Road.

## March 5

• At 7:47 a.m., the dept. was first-responders to a residence on Mirrormont Road.

## 2024 Good Neighbor Clinic

Sat. & Sun., April 13-14

9 AM - 3 PM

Robert C. Carpenter Community Building  
Franklin

**T**he 2024 Good Neighbor Clinic is a non-profit organization which meets the needs of the underserved and uninsured individuals in Macon and surrounding counties demonstrating God's love for our neighbors.

The 2024 Good Neighbor Clinic is expected to meet the needs of upwards of 400 people and will provide FREE Health Screening, Dental Care, Groceries, Haircuts and other Human Services.

The event will take place on Saturday and Sunday, April 13-14, 9 AM - 3 PM at the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building located at 1288 Georgia Rd. in Franklin, NC.

Corporate grants and donations were secured to assist financially and multiple professional co-partners have come together to provide FREE resources and services for the Good Neighbor Clinic.

A dentist will be on hand to provide assessment exam, basic treatment and to alleviate immediate suffering as well as. These services will be provided for those without dental Insurance.

Health care services including Health Care Screening, Hearing Testing, Health Care Information, Pregnancy Care Ultra Sounds and Tobacco Prevention, will also be available.

Other Human Services will be provided including Pay for Giving Blood, Food Pantry, Hair Cutting and Veteran Services.

The Good Neighbor Clinic will provide free resources to aid people in breaking the poverty cycle through spiritual, emotional and tangible means including a Jobs Booth, Home Repair, Rent and Utility Assistance, Prayer and Emotional Support, Substance Use Disorder Support and Recovery, Eradicate Domestic Violence, Sexual Abuse and Human Trafficking.

*The Good Neighbor Clinic is a Christian Ministry by the Seventh Day Adventist Church – Franklin and the Seventh Day Adventist Carolina Conference. For more information, visit: [www.goodneighborclinics.org](http://www.goodneighborclinics.org)*

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#### TINY HOME LOTS FOR SALE. \$30k-

\$45k/ea. Each lot comes with water, power, and sewer run to each lot. www.TinyMountainEstates.com for more info. (st. 11/22)

#### RV SITE - class A only - in Wildflower Creek

RV Resort. Just minutes from Highlands and Sky Valley. Full hook-up, concrete pad, landscaped and storage shed. Reduced \$192,500. For more info call 828-421-1709 or email bobnancync@gmail.com. (st. 1/25)

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• See CLASSIFIEDS page 14

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**...CLASSIFIED continued from page 13**

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**• BIZ/ORG NEWS •**

Dave O'Harra, President, Rotary Club of Highlands, Asst Principal Mrs. Alyssa Debois, Brenda Mendoza (7th) Ella Lovelady (1st), Caitlin Tingen (senior), and Mrs. Nicole Lui (Guidance Counselor).

**...MISSION continued from page 1**

sion Health spokesperson Nancy Lindell said in a statement sent to media Feb. 23.

While the CMS letter confirmed the immediate jeopardy had been removed, it said nothing about Mission's compliance with its corrective plan.

A coalition of physicians, patients advocates, and elected officials has roundly criticized the plan, issued after CMS found an array of failures in hospital leadership and procedures that had contributed to the deaths of four patients and injured others. The coalition has demanded to know why the plan doesn't mandate the hiring of more staff, among other issues.

"These solutions are also more focused on individuals being the problem rather than the systemic lack of staff and resources," stated a letter from the coalition to Mark Benton, NCDHHS chief

deputy secretary for health.

"The POC (plan of correction) does not address what we believe to be the primary driver in each of the Immediate Jeopardy situations (and many of the other cases discussed in the CMS report): the lack of adequate, experienced staffing," the coalition's letter stated.

In the email sent Wednesday, a CMS spokesperson revisited the timeline that led to the immediate jeopardy finding:

- From Nov. 13, 2023, through Dec. 9, 2023, the North Carolina State Survey Agency (in this case, the NCDHHS Division of Health Service Regulation) conducted a complaint survey at Mission and Asheville Surgery Center.

- The survey found that the hospital was out of compliance with the Medicare Conditions of Participation, and that

the noncompliance posed immediate jeopardy to patients' health and safety.

- The North Carolina State Survey Agency recommended a 23-day termination due to the deficiencies.

- The hospital had until Feb. 6, 2024, to submit a written plan of correction, describing in detail the specific measures taken to resolve the deficiencies.

- The plan of correction was submitted and accepted, according to a Feb.15 letter to Patrick.

*Asheville Watchdog is a non-profit news team producing stories that matter to Asheville and Buncombe County. Andrew R. Jones is a Watchdog investigative reporter. Email [arjones@anvwatchdog.org](mailto:arjones@anvwatchdog.org). The Watchdog's reporting is made possible by donations from the community. To show your support for this vital public service go to [anvwatchdog.org](http://anvwatchdog.org) donate.*

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**...SUPER TUESDAY from page 1**

received the Democratic vote for President and former President Donald Trump secured 73.86 percent of the Republican vote, winning the Republican nominee for the state.

Incumbent District 11 US

House of Representative Chuck Edwards won his primary election, beating fellow Republican Christian Regan with 66,475 votes to Regan's 29,982. Rep. Edwards will face Democratic challenger Caleb Rudow on the November ballot.

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