

Subject: Pride in Highlands  
December 7, 2022

It's a shame that Highlands . . . . I'm ashamed that Highlands. . . . I get emails with these kinds of salutations on a routine basis. Just this past week I received an email with the "shame" opening remark. Although I could not disagree more in their thoughts on their choice of words, I give them equal weight with all concerned citizens inquiries; I read them and ascertain if the town can take action to correct the problems expressed in these types of emails. In regards this particular email, I talked with the town manager, and we believe corrective action can be taken to address the issue cited in the email. My hope is the author of the email takes a more positive view on Highlands and our system of serving the community.

And in terms of serving, I was again honored to participate in the Highlands Christmas Parade. Ashamed of Highlands? Absolutely not! As I walked down Main Street on Saturday morning I was filled with pride and joy for our community. Highlands as a town has dealt with a fair share of controversy and dissension this year, but I am still optimistic and humbly honored to be your mayor.

As I walked in the parade, I again had a sense of affirmation that this is the great place to live, a town where everyone can experience "a wonderful life" as that classic Christmas movie portrayed.

I was pulling my candy wagon loaded with about 20 pounds of candy. Our grandkids were running on both sides of the streets passing out the candy to children. I saw little children with their parents and grandparents standing on the parade route with their bags open hoping to be given a piece of candy. They all had angelic expressions on their faces. I urged Henry and Eliza, our grandchildren, not to miss or overlook any child. They did their job and at the end of the parade route, we had no candy remaining. We all had a great feeling of satisfaction as parade participants, and hopefully, everyone participating in the parade felt the same.

The parade is a microcosm of what makes Highlands a special place. Over 60 groups including businesses, faith-based groups, nonprofit organizations, and clubs were in the parade. So, let's all be proud of this mountain community here on the plateau. Given all of our commitment, concern and support, Highlands is special, if you will, an exceptional place.

I want to give a special thanks to the marching bands in the parade, the Franklin and Rosman High School bands and the Pride of the Mountains Western Carolina Band. I am posting on my AskmayorPat.com website the mailing addresses of these bands for those who would like to send a contribution to their music programs.

Thursday, December 8, is the final town board meeting of the year. It will begin at 7 pm at the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field. The town board will hear a report concerning the recently completed annual town audit. We have a new auditor this year. The board will hear a proposal by representatives of the Highlands ABC Board. If you cannot come to the meeting it can also be accessed through YouTube on a link at the town website.