

## Strengthening Global Economy

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:51 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

Signs of a strengthening global recovery emerged today, with consumers boosting retail sales, companies restoring stockpiles and Chinese exports mounting a comeback. The reports heightened hopes that consumers are starting to feel more comfortable about opening their wallets after months of building savings and reducing debt. Consumer spending, which drives most U.S. economic activity, is vital to a sustained rebound. The encouraging retail sales report for November was a surprise. U.S. retailers have been reporting generally lackluster results for the start of the holiday shopping season. But sales rose 1.3 percent last month, after a 1.1 percent October gain. The Commerce Department said it was the healthiest advance since August and it was more than double the increase economists had expected. This is very encouraging now, especially under the weight of 10 percent unemployment rates.



## Rainbow Center- Children & Family Services

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:50 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

Christmas is a time of year that typically brings family gatherings, retail blitzes and special memories. However, at-risk children and families served by Rainbow Center - Children & Family Services often depict a different image of the Christmas season to include family disputes, no presents and the overwhelming pressure to make everything "okay" until after the holiday. Rainbow Center is caring for approximately 62 children this holiday season through Residential Care group homes and Bridges Foster Care homes. Sponsorships are especially needed to provide gifts for them. Rainbow Center asks that willing sponsors contact April Nichols or Koren Huskins at 336-667-3333. The agency has a wish list for each child and requests that each sponsor spend approximately \$50 to \$100 on a girl or boy served by the nonprofit. Rainbow Center - Children & Family Services provides a full spectrum of human services to include group homes and foster care to at-risk children and families in Ashe, Watauga, Wilkes and other counties throughout Northwestern North Carolina. For more information, call 336-667-3333.



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## [Harlem Globetrotters Come to Boone!](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:48 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

Coming off the most successful year in the franchise's history, with a record-breaking 62 box office records and more than two million smiling fans, the iconic Harlem Globetrotters bring their eye-popping 2010 "Magical Memories" World Tour to Boone on Tuesday, March 16, 2010, at ASU's Holmes Convocation Center. Sponsored by Campbell Soup Company, Spalding and America's Best Contacts and Eyeglasses, the Harlem Globetrotters will take the court at 7:00 p.m. Tickets start at \$16 and are available by going to [theholmescenter.com](http://theholmescenter.com). The Globetrotters' wholesome family entertainment is known worldwide for thrilling fans young and old and making cherished family memories. Now in their 84th consecutive season of touring the world, the Globetrotters' high-flying show features some of the most extraordinary athletes and entertainers on the planet. For more information on them, you can check out their website at [harlemglobetrotters.com](http://harlemglobetrotters.com). This is a show you definitely don't want to miss!



## [Solar Tree Lighting at Jones House December 16th](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:47 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

The ASU Sustainable Energy Society (ASUSES) presents the 14th annual Solar Tree Lighting at the Jones House in Boone on Wednesday, December 16. The tree lighting ceremony is a traditional event which brings the community together to celebrate the holidays. It is also a great form of celebration for the education and support of renewable energy in Boone. The evening's activities begin with a reception at 5:00 p.m. at Galileo's Bar & Café, where attendees are invited to enjoy dinner and drinks with family and friends along with live acoustic music from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. At 6:30 p.m., bagpiper Casey Smith will lead a procession to the Jones House for the tree lighting ceremony. The tree, located on the Jones House lawn, features 300 feet of LED energy-efficient lights powered by a solar panel system constructed by the club members. It is tradition for the Boone mayor to flip the switch. The lighting will take place rain or shine.

## [High Country Association of Realtors Give Back](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:46 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

More than 220 members of the High Country Association of Realtors recently met with giving back to the community on their minds. At the December 3 general membership meeting, board member Patrick Morgan presented a check for \$6,000 to Watauga Habitat for Humanity President and Realtor Alex Hooker. The check represented \$4,000 from the Association and a \$2,000 matching grant from Homes4NC. The charitable organization was created by the North Carolina Association of Realtors to help more North Carolinians get into homes. Morgan said the local association hopes to do the same for Avery's Habitat chapter. The group is also taking part in the annual holiday effort for Sloop Care Assisted Living in Avery County and Mountain Care in Watauga County. The program is in its 13th year and members participate by donating funds and taking filled stockings to both facilities. Group members are also helping with the Adopt-A-Family program that will help 45 children and their families in Avery County this holiday season. More information about the High Country Association of Realtors may be found at [highcountryrealtors.org](http://highcountryrealtors.org). The association is composed of members in Watauga and Avery counties and the surrounding area.



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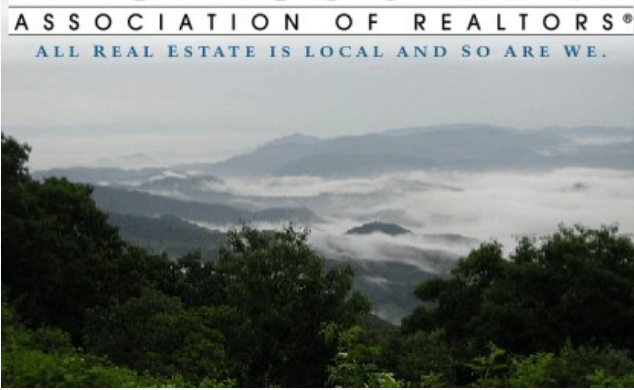
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## [Boone Christmas Parade on Saturday](#)

By Christina Cindrach on December 11, 2009 2:44 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

The Boone Christmas Parade will begin tomorrow at 10:00 am and is themed "Celebration of Christmas," An estimated 40 floats, plus plenty of groups on foot are sure to bring the holiday spirit into town. Parade participants start at Horn in the West, but the general public should watch from somewhere along West King Street. The Friends of the Watauga County Public Library will host a post-parade reception, featuring live music, immediately after the parade at the library. Hot chocolate and other hot drinks, along with "lots of cookies," will be provided, and "kids can sit on Santa's lap and have their picture taken"--all for free. I will be there with MTN at the parade and hope to see you all there!



## [Obama Accepts Nobel Peace Prize](#)

By Christina Cindrach on December 11, 2009 2:42 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

President Barack Obama on Thursday accepted the Nobel Peace Prize, uncomfortably acknowledging his role as a leader at war while insisting that conflict can be morally justified. Obama's elevation to a variety of winners alongside the likes of Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King before he has even spent a year in office has sparked international debate. Obama said he received the award with "great humility" and said compared to some of the giants of history who have received this prize, his accomplishments are slight. The US president, who like other winners received a diploma, a medal and 1.4 million dollars, dwelled at length on his responsibility fighting conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, where he has just sent 30,000 extra troops. He said War is sometimes necessary, and war is at some level an expression of human feelings.





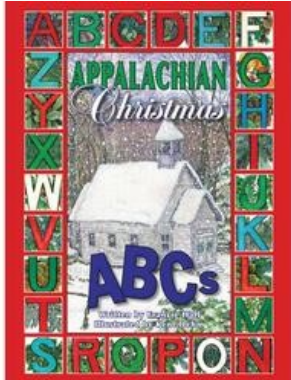


## [Appalachian Christmas ABCs](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:41 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

A retired local teacher has spun her talents into a new children's book, and she will be holding a signing event to celebrate it.

Francie Hall, who lives in Valle Crucis, and has spent 30 years in the area, collaborated with another local art teacher for "Appalachian Christmas ABCs." The picture book features rhymes on various aspects of traditional Appalachian culture and was inspired by her first children's book, "Appalachian ABCs. She said the new text gives you a taste of the Appalachians and the mountain way of life. Hall will be signing the book at Black Bear Books in Boone from 4 to 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 14.



## [R.I.P. Andy Reese](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:37 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

Andy Reese, a long standing Watauga County Board of Education member and educator, passed away Tuesday night. A celebration of life for Andy Reese will be conducted Monday evening at 7pm at Austin & Barnes Funeral Home Chapel. Flowers are accepted or memorials may be made to the Watauga Education Foundation for the Kate Swift Reese Scholarship Fund, PO Box 2658, Boone, NC 28607



## [Council Member Rennie Brantz Sworn In](#)

By Christina Cindrich on December 11, 2009 2:36 PM | [No Comments](#) | [No TrackBacks](#)

Boone council member Rennie Brantz was sworn in for his second term in office Tuesday morning by mayor Loretta Clawson. Clawson, council member Jamie Leigh and newcomer Andy Ball will take the oath of office at the regular meeting on Dec. 17. Brantz took the oath early due to a planned visit to Israel from Dec. 16 to Dec. 27. Brantz is a professor of history at Appalachian State University and co-director of the ASU office of Judaic, Holocaust and peace studies. Brantz also serves on the town of Boone historic preservation commission. The Boone town council meets the third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. in council chambers located on Blowing Rock Road.



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