

Tryon Daily Bulletin

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Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Only 50 cents



Here's a list of upcoming meetings and events for area nonprofit community and governmental organizations:

TODAY

Polk County Mobile Recycling Unit, Tuesdays, Ozone Drive and Hwy. 176, Saluda.

Hospice of the Carolina Foothills, "We Care" is a weekly informal social group open to women coping with loss. The group meets at 9 a.m. at TJ's Café in Tryon and is open to newcomers. For more information, contact Shannon Slater at 894-7000 or 800-617-7132 or sslater@hocf.org.

The Meeting Place Senior Center, Tuesday activities include ceramics, 9:30 a.m.; art class, 10 a.m., Bingo or movie, 12:30 p.m. 828-894-0001.

Polk County Historical Association Museum, open Tuesdays, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., 60 Walker St., Columbus, lower level. Free.

Saluda Center, Bridge, Tuesdays, 10 a.m., chair exercise, 2:30 p.m. 828-749-9245. For more activities, e-mail saludacenter@hotmail.com or visit www.saluda.com.

Landrum Library, Book Discussion Group, fourth Tuesday every month, 10:30 a.m. at the library. 864-457-2218.

Polk County Library,

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

An instrumental obsession

by Samantha Hurst

Ben Seymour suffers from "instrument acquisition syndrome."

Hundred-year-old restored guitars hang from his walls. Patterns and stacks of wood lying in wait to create dulcimers and mandolins cover his workshop.

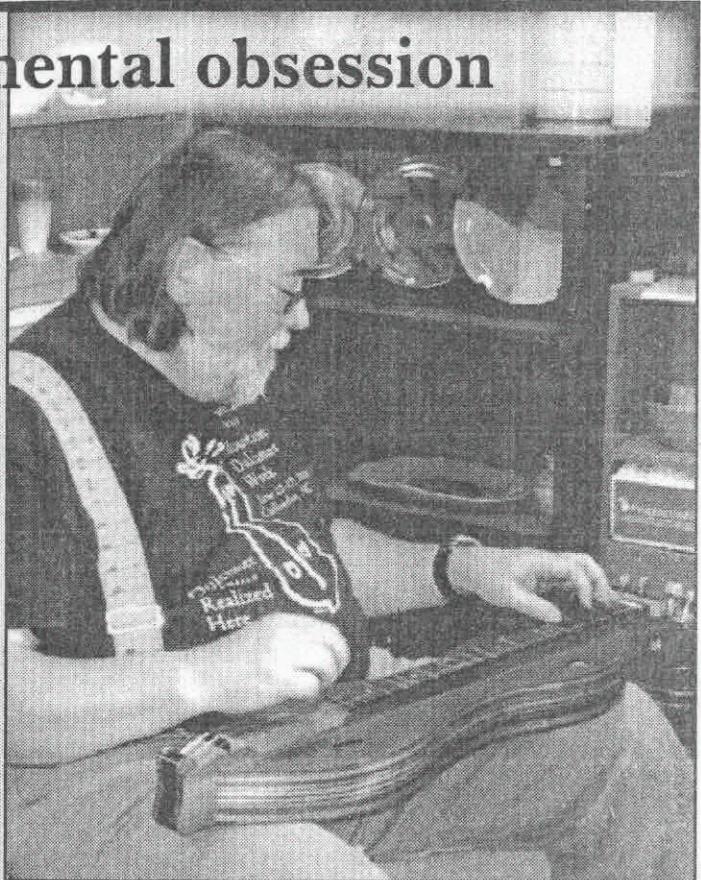
"I don't have a living room, we just have instruments everywhere - they are falling out in the floor," he said.

Seymour's drawn to every detail - the precise shape and curve of the wood, the tension of strings, the historic materials used to craft each piece.

"It's basically just an attraction to music," Seymour said.

Seymour sat down for his first piano lesson when he was 6 years old. He danced his fingers across the piano for 13 years, but said later in his teen years it was hard picking up

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)



Ben Seymour plays a tune on one of the many dulcimers he's constructed in his backyard workshop. (photo by Samantha Hurst)

Columbus seeks \$10k in pledges from community to save Fab 4th fireworks

by Leah Justice

The Town of Columbus is running out of time to decide whether the Fabulous 4th of July celebration will include fireworks this year.

The town has until Jan. 31 to cancel its contract with Zambelli Fireworks if necessary.

Columbus officials were hoping to raise approximately \$10,000 from the community

to keep the fireworks show, since funding for the Fabulous 4th celebration was not included in this year's tight budget.

The town has an existing contract with Zambelli Fireworks, and Zambelli notified the town last year that it could cancel the

"[Fireworks are] a big part of the Fourth of July. I say let's go for it."

- Councilwoman Ernie Kan

2011 contract if it did so by the end of this month.

Columbus Town Council heard at its Jan.

20 meeting from councilwoman Ernie Kan, who said the Fabulous 4th committee has confidence it

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

• Seymour

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

girls playing the piano. Seymour said you could, however, hit on girls with a guitar slung around your back.

At 17, he picked up his first guitar and began what grew to be a lifelong love of music.

After high school, Seymour moved to Knoxville to attend the University of Tennessee. It was there he met the other love of his life, Becky Cleland, in philosophy of esthetics, an art class.

Cleland said his personality was infectious.

"Ben is so gregarious and fun, everybody loves him the moment they meet him and I think that has helped him so much along the way," Cleland said.

Eventually, through his brother Wayne, who is also deeply entwined with the music community, Seymour crossed paths with well-known dulcimer player Lois Hornbostle.



Ben Seymour of Green Creek is well-known in the music world for his recreations of musical artifacts. Many of the pieces he's constructed have histories dating back centuries.

The two enthusiastically traded talents.

Seymour taught her the art of stained glass – his and his wife's profession at the time in Hendersonville – while Hornbostle

taught him to play the dulcimer.

Seymour found himself immediately attracted to the unique drones emitting from the dulcimer. He said it has a particular timbre unlike any other instrument.

Dulcimers have a poor reputation as items sold at craft shows, Seymour said, where many people hear, "Oh, anybody can play

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

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