

Fairs...from page 1

special booths set up for people to get help with creating a résumé or getting a G.E.D. "We knew there was a need for jobs," said Reynolds. "Hopefully, people will be able to get a job. If we can help a few families with a job, it will be a blessing."

Georgia Department of Labor employer marketing representative Fran Reilly said they have had people from the construction field, real estate market, and bank employees coming to them looking for work. However, she said the small mom and pop businesses have been doing well. "I think things are going to pick up," said Reilly, who added that she is looking forward to the opening of Wal-mart in Blairsville this summer.

At lunch time, Aquinnah Place Condominiums held an Appreciation Day for the people who volunteered with the Towns County Food Pantry. Developer Kevin Green made a \$1000 donation to the

pantry and said that Aquinnah Place will donate an additional \$1000 for every condominium unit sold through June 10.

The new condominium development, located on Big Sky Drive in Hiawassee, will include 13 units to be completed by January 2010. Green said the project will bring \$3 million of revenue in the county, as well as putting 200 people to work. He said the majority of the workers will come from Towns, Union, and Clay counties.

James Goodwin and the Pickup Band played for the BBQ, which was prepared by Cottage Deli of Hayesville, N.C.

Churches that have been regularly involved with the food pantry include McConnell Baptist, Sharp Memorial UMC, and Mt. Zion Church of God.

Civic organizations also involved include the Towns County's Democratic and Republican Parties, as well as the Board of Realtors.

Stimulus...from page 1

While this will benefit the Towns County School system \$81,444 a year for the next two years, it comes with strings attached, said School Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens. "We can not apply this money to anything in our current budget or anything we have had to drop to meet the current budget," he said.

Due to the land value in Towns County being so high, the state allocation revenues to the school system in the last five years has steadily decreased. The local five mil share to the county has increased from \$2,320,008 in 2006-07 to \$4,102,457 in 2009-10. In that same time, the net state funds to the county has dropped from \$3,356,810 to

\$2,895,404.

"We lost \$433,000 this year in state funds and expect another \$100,000 plus still to be cut," said Behrens. "This year we have trimmed everything we can. We have all the teachers' positions filled, but many of the support positions are not as full as we would like them." Behrens said that maintenance positions in transportation, food service and janitorial has been trimmed due to the cuts in state funds. "It is very hard on us but we will not cut the service we give the students," said Behrens.

Dr. Behrens said he will go to the school board at this month's meeting with a plan on how to use the stimulus money for the next two years.

Rally...from page 1

Members of the promotion committee attended the rally, including Clay Dotson, Katie Polstra, and Hayley Burch.

Polstra, who works as the general manager at the Ramada Inn, said the hotel is glad to build connections with other businesses.

"We benefit so much by everything that goes on at the fairgrounds," said Polstra. "What benefits one can benefit everybody."

There was a feeling of cooperation in the air, with so many groups helping to make the rally a success.

In addition to the Towns County Lions Club, who cooked the hamburgers and hot dogs, sponsors for the event included Crossroads, Mary Ann's Country Kitchen, Towns County Tourism Association, Bank of Hiawassee, United Community Bank, Brenda Swanson, Holiday Inn, Ramada Inn / Lake Chatuge Lodge, The Ridges Resort, Ingles, Milton Food Service, Flowers Bread Company, Brasstown Valley Resort, Heavenly Bakery Shop, McDonald's, Hardees, Georgia Mountain Restaurant, and Coca Cola.



Developer Kevin Green donates \$1000 to Teresa Stephens and Glen Eller, representatives of the Towns County Food Pantry.



Primerica Financial Services regional VP Susanne Johnson, Strategic Vision cofounder Laura Ward Johnson, and Mountain Education Center High School career counselor George Counter attended the job fair. Photos by David Seckinger