



Carolyn Stoner shows off her many wares at Saturday's Business Expo at North Georgia Technical College in Blairsville. The expo gave local businesses a chance to introduce themselves to the community. Photo/Jessica Keaton

Mountains celebrate business expo

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The rain sprinkled on the heads of those attending the Business Expo at the North Georgia Technical College Saturday. However, this didn't stop spectators and business people alike from coming out. The parking lot was full of cars of those wanting to explore what sort of businesses serve the local community.

Upon entering the facility, Tobie Chandler of Tri-State Granite was prepared to tell the public all about Granite and its place in the homes of locals.

"We do granite and quartz countertop and are located on 129 North on Murphy Highway. We serve the whole tri-state area and fabricate everything here locally. Granite is beautiful, natural, and out of the earth. It is user-friendly, increases the value of your home, and exactly how Mother Nature made it."

Doug and Cindy of jekellyjewelry.com were at

the next table, lined with jewelry of all sorts of shapes and colors. Each glossy stone seemed to have its own personality, begging passersby to stop and take a peek.

"We don't actually have a store location, but we are a new Blairsville Chamber Member. We do jewelry parties at the home or office. So if you want to throw a jewelry party and get some credit to purchase some jewelry or if you want to use the credit for a gift certificate, you can," Doug Kelly said, sitting next to his wife, Cindy.

Down the line of tables, Angel Williams held a black light, beckoning one and all to observe the sun damage on their skin. Her business, which is online, sells products, made by the doctors who created the Proactiv Acne Solution, which will reverse sun damage on skin. Her radiant smile, however, only offered the healthiest of rays as she instructed people to hold a mirror in front of their faces while she ran the black light

behind their heads.

Past Angel's table, an array of colorful jars and liquids sat on the table dedicated to Carolyn Stoner of Blue Ridge Mountain Candles. She quickly pointed out the variety of products she offers, including soy wax candles, hand sanitizing lotion, candle wick dippers, goat's milk soap, and fragrance oils. She currently works out of her home, but . . .

"I'm in a few stores now," she said. "I also have a location in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and I will be up here full time in two years."

These local online businesses are working hard to produce items that have both local flair and affordability for persons in and outside of the community. Whether it was with the sleek shine of a granite countertop, the shiny reflection of light of a semi-precious stone set in sterling silver, the glow of a black light, or the light of a simple candle, the Expo gave a glimmer of hope for the future of the local economy.



Towns County firefighters were quick to respond to a mutual aid call from Hayesville, NC on Friday. Local firefighters seen here, help distribute fire extinguishers to aid in the control of the nominal disturbance at the store. Photo/Jessica Keaton

Smoke cause for alarm in Hayesville

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Fire engines from surrounding counties lined the steamy Ingles parking lot in Hayesville, NC on Friday. However, it wasn't due to the hot prices on food items inside the store.

Smoke began to below in the foyer of the store, leading to the call placed to the Clay County Fire Department.

In a sense of urgency,

calls also went out to surrounding fire departments, including the Towns County Fire Department. That call came in at about 2:45 p.m.

Terry Parker, captain of the Towns County Fire Department, revealed that the fire was caused by "the fan in the air-handler burning up."

The smoke and excitement led to the evacuation of the store.

Customers and employees sat on the hot as-

phalt outside of the store, waiting for some news on the status of the fire.

Fortunately, the local fire departments quickly discovered the heat source and extinguished the flames coming from the broken unit.

Shortly afterward, customers and employees were permitted to re-enter the store once again.

The fire caused very little damage and only seemed to be a little damper on the business of the day.