

Rodeo...continued from page 1A

up in FFA. Everything I have to do with agriculture, it has been through FFA. "Coming from Commerce, I was very active with the chapter there," he said. "In 1975-76 I was State FFA President. I had a chance to do some things because of FFA; it provided me some opportunities and open many doors in my life."

"I actually majored in Ag Ed in school at (the University of Georgia)," he said. "I had planned to teach, but I had an opportunity to work for Farm Bureau and work for their leadership program. No doubt that the leadership and skill development skills with interaction was built in FFA. I've had so many opportunities provided through FFA."

Saturday night marked the beginning of a potential long standing tradition in Towns County. The response to the First FFA Rodeo at The Stables at Brasstown Valley Resort was astounding. As the stands were filling, the Steve Phillips Band was playing, working the crowd with classic hits. The show was

highlighted by a familiar looking Elvis impersonator (Roy Perren) storming the stage along with Phillips belting out *Little Sister*, *Burning Love* and *Dixie Land*.

Perren, principal at Towns County High School, said Monday night that the event raised \$4,200.

Prior to the action inside the rodeo arena, Black was introduced to the huge capacity crowd.

"I am very glad to be here. Frank (Riley) and I have been friends for a very long time," Commissioner Black said. "He called me in the early stages, so I am absolutely more than happy to be here tonight to help this event."

Black still lives by the FFA Motto:

"It's learning to do, doing to learn, learning to live, living to serve," he said. "That's the FFA motto. It's a pretty good deal."

Afterward, Black said his first tenure as Georgia Agriculture Commissioner was still a learning experience.

"We're really trying to build a team at the depart-

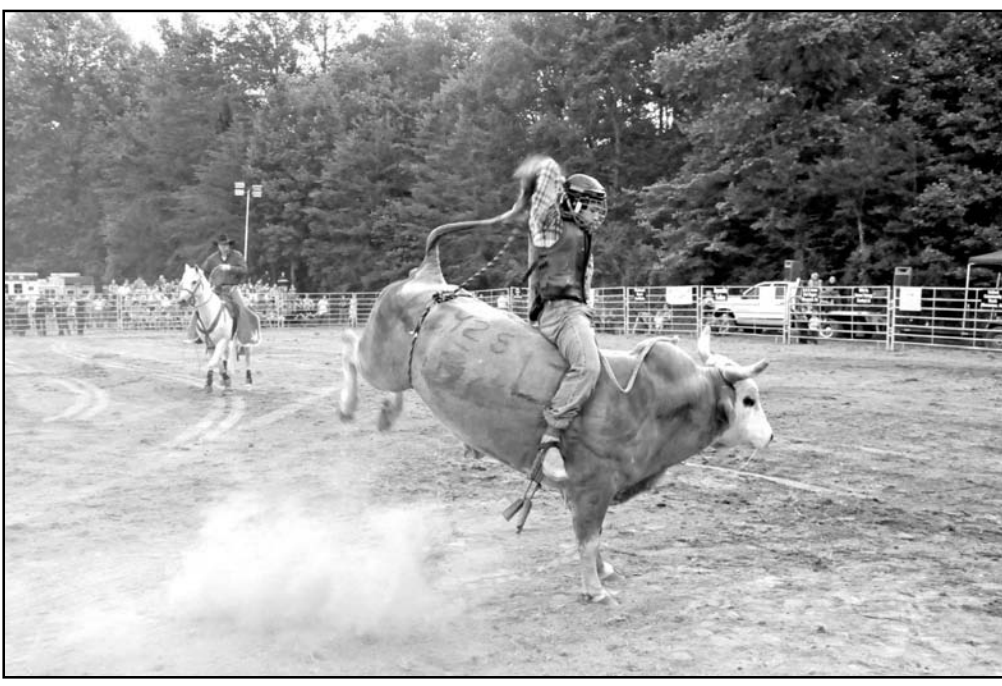
ment," he said. "This department touches every Georgian, every day. Not just folks in and around Atlanta but a lot of people throughout rural Georgia."

Some might lose sight of how important the department is on a day-to-day basis. It covers food safety, animal protection, grocery store inspections.

"We make sure a gallon is a gallon at the gas pumps," he said. "What we're trying to do is bring the department in to the 21st century. Also there are technology issues that we are trying to address. Mainly, we want to make sure that farmers have a strong voice in Atlanta and also that we fulfill our responsibility in protecting consumers."

Black said the state Agriculture Department is going to focus on Georgia's young people.

"4-H and FFA are an integral part of helping building our next generation of citizens," he said. "I think it's important for our constitutional officers to stand up on behalf of our young people. That's why I'm here tonight."



This big bull was a tough ride, but this tough rider rode him for eight seconds. The First Bulls 'N' Barrels Rodeo was well attended and well received on Saturday at the Stables. Photo/James Reese

The Blessed Blend featured in Folk School Concert



The Blessed Blend

The Blessed Blend will be featured in concert at 7 p.m. Friday, June 17 at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown. Weather permitting, the concert will be held in the Festival Barn, but those attending are urged to park near Keith House or the Dining Hall and walk to the Festival Barn where there will be only a limited number of handicapped parking spaces available. In

the barn there is hay bale seating, so audience members may wish to bring a lawn chair for comfort. In the event of threatening weather, the concert will be moved to the Keith House Community Room. Admission is free.

The Blessed Blend composes and performs music, blending Native American and Celtic sounds from these two ancient and still thriving indigenous cultures. Joseph and Laralyn RiverWind comprise The Blessed Blend. Joseph is Arawakan Taino Indian with ancestral roots in Galicia. The Arawaks Nation were the original inhabitants of the Caribbean Islands and Florida. Galicia (translated as Land of the Gaelic People) is the oldest of the seven Celtic Nations and is where Joseph's great grandfather, a gaitero (bagpiper) came from. His father gave him his first flute when he was four and he has been playing music ever since. Joseph sings and plays various First Nations flutes, drums, bagpipes, tin whistle and bodhran.

Laralyn is Muscogee

Creek/Cherokee/Irish/Scottish. Her greatest musical passion is playing the Celtic Harp and keeping alive the traditions that have been handed down in her family. Her father taught her many of the native ways of her people: silversmithing, pottery making, basket making, storytelling and more. Laralyn spent her younger years on the reservation where a love for her First Nations people became an integral part of who she is. Her mother passed along a rich Clan MacDonald heritage as well as roots in County Roscommon Ireland. Laralyn sings and plays the Celtic Harp, bodhran, and Native American flute.

Upcoming Folk School concerts will feature Steve Hickman and John Devine (June 24) and Mountain Fling (July 1). The Folk School concert schedule is available on the world wide web at: <http://www.folkschool.org>. For further information call the Folk School at 1-800-FOLK-SCH or 837-2775. NTJUN15.G3JAC

Warm mix asphalt could be "just right"

How hot is hot enough? A question pondered since Goldilocks wandered into the Three Bears' cottage two centuries ago.

Well, the Georgia Department of Transportation thinks "warm" may be not only the best temperature for serving porridge; it might be "just right" for putting down asphalt too! At least that's what preliminary test results indicate. And the consequences could be a boon to the Department and Georgia's air quality.

"We think warm mix asphalt has the potential to help control a portion of our paving costs; allow us to extend the construction season in North Georgia; and reduce paving-related greenhouse gas emissions at the same time," Georgia DOT Materials and Research Engineer Georgene Geary says.

Traditionally, asphalt used for new road construction or resurfacings is the product of "hot mixing" — a heated blending and application of its various components at temperatures ranging between 300 and 325 degrees, Fahrenheit. (It's long been thought that temperatures of at least 300

degrees were needed to properly bond asphalt components to seal out moisture.) With thousands of tons of asphalt needed for some jobs, burning a great deal of fuel for long periods of time is required to maintain those high temperatures. And once in place, hot asphalt requires hours to cool before it can be used.

More fuel burned equates to greater expense and more carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

In recent years though, technology has advanced to the point that asphalt can now be "warm-mixed" at temperatures 30 to 120 degrees lower than a hot-mix. That equates to less fuel needed and fewer greenhouse gas emissions. And because the mixture doesn't require as much heat, it cools and can be compacted quicker which could extend North Georgia's paving season.

Questions remain about warm mix asphalt's long-term susceptibility to moisture damage. But results so far from a Department test project in Coweta County are encouraging. "We're cautiously optimistic," Geary says.

Benefits could be sub-

stantial considering Georgia DOT places seven million tons of asphalt each year.

Cost savings, an extended construction season and cleaner air; seems like everyone really could live happily ever after?

Independent analysis consistently ranks Georgia's transportation system as being in the best condition of any in the United States, despite the fact that only one state spends less per capita on transportation infrastructure. But our highways and bridges are carrying more vehicles than ever; they are aging; and they are becoming more expensive to maintain. More than \$500 million is needed for basic bridge maintenance over the next decade and \$1.5 billion for routine road repairs over just the next five years.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia's economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our Web site (www.dot.ga.gov). NTJUN15.A2JCA

Traveling con man pleads guilty to two counts of Theft

North Georgia traveling con man pled guilty in Union County to two counts of Theft By Conversion, DA Langley sets up restitution fund for multi-jurisdictional victims

A con man known for selling advertising to small businesses pled guilty today in Union County Superior Court. Robert Bruce Wentz pled guilty to three felony charges, resolving cases in both Union County and Towns County, in front of Senior Judge Larry Salmon.

Wentz pled guilty to two counts of theft by conversion and one count of theft by taking, in two separate indictments. Wentz is currently facing charges in Barrow, Clarke, Fannin, and Fulton counties for similar acts.

In an effort to assist all

of the victims known to District Attorney Langley, a unique plea offer was entered in this case. The defendant is to be placed on probation for twenty years after serving 270 days in jail, pay fines of \$1500, perform 240 hours of community service and pay restitution of \$11,000 from his retirement account into a fund which will provide priority reimbursement to the four known Enotah Judicial Circuit victims, as well as the additional out of county victims who assisted in the prosecution of this case.

District Attorney Langley stated, "of course, we had an obligation foremost to the victims in our jurisdiction, but after hearing the compelling stories and the willingness of

the similar victims to testify on the State's behalf in this case, we continued to negotiate with the defendant until he was willing to make restitution to all the similar transaction victims, so that we will be assisting victims in Barrow, Clarke, Fannin, and Fulton counties."

Assistant District Attorney Ann Pickett prosecuted the case on behalf of the State of Georgia, with the assistance of Dale Dyer, District Attorney's office investigator. District Attorney Jeff Langley would like to commend the efforts of his entire Union County staff, as they assisted in the final preparation of the case for trial as well as Michael Baxter of the Blairsville Police Department, who investigated the case. NTJUN15.A3

Trap Shoot...continued from page 1A

community," Sheriff Clinton said. "Good times, bad times, if these folks know that there are some kids in need, they're right here for them. I can't say enough about the generosity of this community."

All the proceeds from the event go directly to benefit the children of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes and because the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes is a public charity, any donation to the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes qualifies for the highest tax deduction allowed by law, Sheriff Clinton said.

"Things have gone well," Sheriff Clinton said. "We've had a good turnout, a lot of community support. The Chatuge Gun Club folks have been just great as usual. They've really helped us as far as running the event, and obviously, letting us use the range."

Sheriff Clinton said with each year that passes, things get a little easier at this event.

"I think you always learn some things along and along," he said. "It's just like anything else, practice makes perfect. In the beginning, we didn't know how to do this, but we've got the community together and the results have been incredible."

"It's become a big fund raiser for the kids and it's really a testament to the community in which we live," Sheriff Clinton said. "People come out and help each other; they're helping kids in need."

"Next year, we'll figure out how to do some more things a little better than we did

this year," he said. "The big key is getting the community behind you and forging ahead."

Sheriff Clinton praised 2011 sponsor Jacky Jones Automotive Group for their continued support.

"I can't say enough about how I appreciate Jacky Jones," Sheriff Clinton said. "They do a ton for the community. Jacky is always stepping up and helping out in Towns County."

"He supplies the bicycles for Perfect Attendance Day at the schools," he said. "They've always really supported the kids in this community."

One of the big hits this year was the barbeque supplied by Hawg Heaven in Hiwassee.

"I'm here to tell you, that was some good eating," Sheriff Clinton said. "Gail brought us some wonderful barbeque for lunch — it's been a good day."

The shooters included 4-H Club teams, Chatuge Gun Club members and deputies from neighboring counties, as well as Team Alexander's, one of the more popular shooting groups of the day.

Annual support for the trap shoot event is support for at risk children, Sheriff Clinton said.

"The children are our future and all kids are special," he said. "The kids in the Youth Homes, they haven't done anything wrong, these are at risk children. The Sheriff's Association does a great job

mentoring these kids and giving them a chance to be successful adults."

"To me, is there anything more rewarding or important than giving a hand to a child?" he asked. "It's a wonderful feeling to give a child a chance to succeed in life. The kids who go through the youth homes, they turn out great."

Nurtured through the Youth Homes, many of the young people who emerge from the experience become some of our leading citizens, Sheriff Clinton said.

"Doctors, lawyers, you name it," he said. "It's certainly a cause that I believe in."

Sid Roberts, of the Georgia Sheriff's Association, said the newest and smallest Youth Home is in Chatsworth in Murray County. The oldest Youth Home is in Hahira, founded in 1960. Other Youth Homes are located in LaGrange, Nunez and Dalton.

The mission of these homes: "protecting and preserving our future," Roberts said. "I can't say enough about the Chatuge Gun Club."

Ed Jones, president of the Chatuge Gun Club, said the organization works with Scouts, 4-H, and other youth-oriented organizations.

"Really, the Youth Homes are about giving a kid a shot in life," Sheriff Clinton said. "This couldn't happen without the support of the Chatuge Gun Club, which is truly a youth-oriented organization."

Just plain dirt

Elaine K. Delcuze
Preservation Committee

This is the season when we throw open our doors and venture into our garden to dig in the dirt. Dirt, by whatever name you may call it—soil, humus, earth, —or just plain dirt, is one of our most critical natural resources. Though it is a substance we rarely understand, and most of us take for granted, it nevertheless makes up the outer layer of the earth's surface and nourishes the plants we eat.

Only about ten per cent of the world's land area is productive enough to support our food supply. The remaining portions are either covered by water, dry desert, polar ice, mountainous rocky terrain, or are infertile. We often think of soil as one of our renewable natural resources; yet its most productive top layer—topsoil—is the first lost to soil erosion. Centuries of accumulated soil can be washed away by naturally occurring weather acting on exposed rock or soil (20 to 40 per cent) or irresponsible human activity (60 to 80 per cent) and it can take up to 500 years to replace one inch of topsoil.

The Appalachian mountain range is the oldest on earth, where plant life has flourished and diversified because good soil, by whatever name, en-

courages good growth. Forests operate as a soil building-soil stabilizing-water holding device. Anything man does to it or in it requires us to ask the question — are we compromising or damaging our vital life-support functions.

To learn more about soils, plants and diversity of the Appalachians, take advantage of the programs offered by the various committees of the Community Council of UGA's Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. Tour the ethnobotanic, herb, and native fern gardens (Mondays 9 until 1, May through September, except holidays); attend monthly seminars (everything from apiculture to zeriscaping); or set aside a portion of your property as a Native Appalachian Botanical Sanctuary. For more informa-

tion about these programs contact Clare Johnston at the Center (706-745-2655) or visit the website at www.gmrc.uga.edu/commcouncil. NTJUN15.E1CA

New Al-Anon meetings/times

New times and meetings for Al-Anon/Ala Teen Family Group Meetings are as follows: Al-Anon: 7 p.m. Sunday night, Chatuge Regional Hospital, Hiwassee, GA; Al-Anon: 8 p.m. Monday night, "The Mustard Seed", 12 Step and Twelve Tradition Meeting at Mountain Presbyterian Church, Blairsville; new Ala-Teen meeting: 8 p.m. Wednesday night at Mountain Presbyterian Church, Blairsville; Al-Anon: 8 p.m. Wednesday night at Mountain Presbyterian Church, Blairsville; Al-Anon 12 noon Tuesday, Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, Room 105, Young Harris.

Al-Anon is open to anyone who has been affected by another person's drinking. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or a friend.

Call 706-835-5827, 706-897-0628 or 828-389-8981 for more information. NTJUN15.A5JCA

Men's Morning Coffee Group

Regency Hospice Men's Coffee Group has a new meeting place. Grinds-n-Glazes at 233 Hwy. 515 in Blairsville on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month from 10 to 11:30 AM.

For more information please call Jan Deveraux, Chaplain at Regency Hospice in Hiwassee at 800-577-8791 or 706-896-1251. NTJUN15.A5JCA

Blues, brews, cars & BBQ at June 18 Car & Bike Show



Classic cars and bikes lined up for the show

The general public is invited to the show where the owners' pride and joy is reflected in the preserved heritage of the vehicles. There is no general admission fee for the show. The community is invited to participate in the show and enjoy BBQ, and entertainment.

The Lodge at Copper-

head is North Georgia's premier vacation destination and special events venue. A rustic mountain lodge surrounded by cabins nestled in a resort community offering lodging, casual fine dining, weekly entertainment, and special events.

Contact: carolyn@thelodgeatcopperhead.com, 706-835-7433. NTJUN15.Z4JCA