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and in violation of Georgia law.

According to the Georgia Court of Appeals, Steel was right on target.

The little used statute of requiring a resolution by the County Commissioner before a portion of Superior Court can be moved to another venue pertains to counties with populations less than 50,000. Towns County had a population of approximately 9,319 at the time of the Osborn trial in June 2008.

"Right now we're in the posture of possibly having to retry this case," Langley said. "The ruling is a very narrow ruling on a legal technicality. There is a rather obscure statute on the books that requires the county commissioner's prior approval to move a court proceeding out of the courthouse."

"The judge in this case, due to a bomb threat on the courthouse, moved the proceeding outside of the courthouse in violation of that statute," Langley said. "The Court of Appeals decision has nothing to do with the strength of the evidence against Mr. Osborn or the guilt or innocence of Mr. Osborn."

"It is a decision based solely on a procedural error made by the court," Langley said. "It's a prime example of how the legal system frustrates the public; it's form over substance."

The case began on July 9, 2007 when allegedly Osborn and Deputy Jessie

Gibson drove by the home of Gary Dean. Georgia Bureau of Investigation agents say Osborn fired about 10 shots at the home, pelting it with .40 caliber bullets.

A GBI affidavit states that Dean was "involved in an ongoing intimate relationship" with Osborn's wife.

GBI agents say that Osborn told then Towns County Sheriff Rudy Eller what happened and asked him to help him. Agents testified that Osborn gave Eller the gun for safe keeping.

The affidavit says Eller originally told investigators that he had been keeping the semi-automatic weapon for Osborn for several weeks. He said he had cleaned the handgun and tried to replace a missing screw.

When agents told him they believed the gun was used to fire about 10 shots into Dean's home, Eller "changed his story and admitted to the agents that he had not been truthful with them earlier in the interview," according to the affidavit.

The affidavit also says that Eller told GBI agents that Osborn gave him the gun the morning after the shooting and admitted firing shots into Dean's home. GBI agents also said that Eller told them Osborn asked him to tell investigators he'd had the gun for "a couple of months."

The affidavit also shows that Eller admitted that when he requested a GBI probe into the July 9

shooting that he already knew that Osborn had fired the shots into Dean's home.

Eller was convicted of violation of oath of office of a public official or officer and sentenced to serve five years in prison. He's back home and free on parole.

GBI agents said that when they interviewed Osborn he denied any knowledge of the shooting, but acknowledged that he had driven by Dean's home at least twice on the day before the shooting hoping to fight him if he was alone.

Dean and a roommate were at home at the time of the shooting. Neither was injured during the shooting.

Eventually, a Towns County jury convicted Osborn of making false statements, tampering with evidence, possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony, aggravated assault and violation of oath of office of a public official or officer.

He was sentenced on Sept. 17, 2008 to 45 years with 20 years to serve in state prison.

Gibson took his own life on Aug. 8, 2007. Osborn's attorney says that a tape left behind by Gibson prior to his committing suicide would exonerate his client completely.

Today, Osborn is back to square one, still only alleged to have committed the crimes he's charged with from July 9, 2007.

Open House...continued from page 1

Principal Roy Perren said.

"We welcome approximately 100 new students to our high school, most of whom will be rising freshmen coming in from Towns County Middle School," Perren said.

On Aug. 3, Towns County Schools will host open houses for students at Towns County Elementary School, Towns County Middle School and Towns County High School.

At Towns County Elementary, parents and children are welcomed to enjoy a hot dog social as they get acquainted with the campus. Aloha Open House is scheduled from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Principal Dr. Sandra Page said.

"We get all excited about the end of the school year, throwing parties and having a good time," Dr. Page said. "Why can't we do that at the start of the school year. I guess we can."

Funworld's Henry the Hound will be on hand, and of course, he'll be there wearing his grass skirt in honor of Aloha Open House.

Actually, open house is at all three schools on Aug. 3rd from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Williams said.

"This will be my first chance to make an impression with the parents and the

children," she said.

Williams, who arrives in Towns County having served as superintendent at Jenkins County Schools, knows all too well that there will be traffic considerations in the first few days of school.

"We urge folks to be patient with us; there will be some traffic considerations to deal with. There will be a lot of people coming in and out of the schools," she said. "We'll do our best to keep the lines to a minimum. There will be delays; please be patient."

Bottom line: Towns County students and teachers will return to the classroom on Aug. 4th with high expectations of another exciting school year, Williams said.

"It's a new year," she said. "We can't wait until everybody gets back in and cranked up."

The student numbers won't be in right off the bat, but Williams expects those numbers to be about the same as last year.

"We'll have solid numbers at the high school, but our elementary school numbers are dropping a bit," she said. "We don't know how much that's going to be for a while, but hopefully we'll know those figures in the

few weeks after school starts."

When the dust settles, the numbers of students in local classrooms should settle somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,150 or so students.

The signs of a new school year were evident last week as one delivery after another was made to the Board of Education Office on Lakeview.

"There's a lot of activity going on," Williams said. "I'm excited about this year, the prospects of new kids and the challenges getting acquainted with a new school system."

Early on the challenges many will face will be traffic jams as young parents look to make sure their little ones get settled in the classroom as the first couple of days of school get underway.

"The parents of the young students want to make sure their children are safe, so, they'll bring them into the school," Williams said. "It takes a little extra time for the younger ones to get acclimated."

"Getting through the rush of the first two or three days is probably the biggest challenge," she said. "After that, we all fall into a pattern and we will do well."

Fair...continued from page 1

Hundreds were thrilled by the Bengal Tiger show, featuring well-trained big cats, and depending on how you look at it, little cats. Romeo, a youthful Bengal Tiger cub was the darling of those attending the Tiger Show.

Inside the Pioneer Village, the annual cooking contest lured young and old alike to try their hand at picking up some extra cash for the best tasting treats.

Marilyn Clark, Pecan Surprise Bars took first place in the Adult Division of the Ingles Supermarket Cooking Contest. In the Youth Division, Morgan Blommel's Apple Pear Turnovers were too much to overcome as the judges chose them to repre-

sent first place.

In the Gluten-Free Adult Division, there wasn't enough of Rita Casey's Gluten Free Lemon Chiffon Cake to go around. It was gobbled up by the judges as their choice Casey's dish as a first prize treat.

There are more cooking contests available on Wednesday as the Savory Family Favorites Contest touts its adult and youth divisions. No desserts allowed in this competition. Entries are accepted between 4 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Fairgrounds Office on Wednesday.

At the Music Hall, Joe Diffie comes to town Wednesday; on Thursday, Little Roy Lewis and Eliza-

beth Lizzy Long arrive for two shows. On Friday, Mel Tillis gets ready for two shows, while Jim Wood and the Georgia Mountain Fair Band put on a couple of shows of their own.

On Saturday, the featured entertainment is the legendary Pam Tillis, who has the most beautiful blue eyes in the Country Music Industry, will be here for shows at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Jim Woods and the GMFB also play two shows on Saturday.

Don't forget the Tampa Bay Water Ski Shows on Friday and Saturday. And of course, remember the Bengal Tiger Encounters as they continue throughout the remainder of the fair.



The Georgia Mountain Fair continues through Saturday evening. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

Miss GMF...continued from page 1

Hiawassee for her performance as a ballerina.

Carballo takes control of the crown as Miss Georgia Mountain Fair as 21-year-old Victoria Neisler, a student at Young Harris College, completes her one-year reign.

In 2009, Carballo's sister Miranda Carballo was crowned Miss Georgia Mountain Fair.

Neisler said the past

year representing the Georgia Mountain Fair has been more than she could have imagined.

"It has been so wonderful," she said, referring to her year as Miss Georgia Mountain Fair. "I'm so thankful for everyone who has helped me through this year and this community has given so much to me."

Neisler, who graduates from Young Harris

College in December, will always remember her family at the Georgia Mountain Fair. The people at the Georgia Mountain Fair are like a second family to her and she will never forget them as long as she lives.

Over the next year, Jessie Carballo is sure to capture the same warm feelings about being 2011's Miss Georgia Mountain Fair as she experiences the thrill of the title.



Jessie Carballo takes a victory walk along the stage at Anderson Music Hall on Monday night after she was crowned Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2011. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Upon This Ridge...continued from page 1

"We'll have music all day, and we're excited about that," Hooper said.

The entertainment will include Christian recording sensation *Since Then* as well as *The Overflow Band* and *The Traveling Mercies*. Several local artists also will be on hand.

"It's going to be an event based around Jesus," Hooper said. "We want to show the community what we are and that we're a Rock for the community and also a Rock for God."

Hooper said the new owners are grounded in

Christianity with a solid Christian base. They wanted to do something to bring the community together to grow in fellowship.

"They wanted to do something with a Christian-based atmosphere and that's what struck *Upon This Ridge*," Hooper said.

Already, church groups are excited and anxious to attend the event.

"The owners want to give back to the community and they thought this was a good way to give back to the community and give local churches and our Christian

community and chance to get deeply involved in day of Christian fellowship.

"Folks can come listen to good music, enjoy a day of fellowship, whether you want to get out on a kayak, a float or a tube or just kick back and listen to music," Hooper said. "It's something that we want to build as an annual event for our community."

The day also includes an opportunity to wakeboard, fish and participate in all sorts of lawn games.

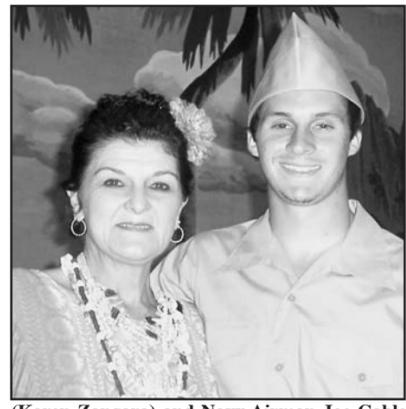
"And we'll have plenty of homemade barbeque on hand," Hooper said.

Optimist awash in the tropics in South Pacific

In America, the age of "cockeyed optimism" might be long gone, but onstage it lives again in the person of Ensign Nellie Forbush and the buoyant drama and matchless music of *South Pacific*. Because optimism of any sort is in short supply these days, we probably should be grateful for any reminder we get of what a pleasant sensation it is. As it happens the Licklog Players production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's classic docking at the Peacock Playhouse is so exhilarating, why settle for optimism when you can have a little piece of heaven in the bargain? To be blunt, this is about as good as it gets.

Get your tickets now, before they are gone! General admission tickets are \$15 for

adults and \$10 for students. Tickets are available at the Peacock Playhouse box office Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and one hour prior to the performance. There will be a Hors d'Oeuvres contest opening night at the reception. So bring your favorite with your name on it. After the performance a panel of judges will award the winner with two complementary tickets to Licklog's next production, *Wait Until Dark*. For more information



(Karen Zangara) and Navy Airman Joe Cable (Sam Lusty)

call 828-389-8632 or visit us at www.licklogplayers.org. NT00127/21/CA