

Cruise In provides a big boost...continued from page 1

swap meet, a Mountain Moonshine Run for cold, hard cash, a folk arts show and exhibit and mountain crafts in the Pioneer Village more than came to fruition.

"Folks enjoyed the pioneer setting, with live mountain music, folk exhibits, local crafts, and of course hundreds of hot classic cars," Parrish said.

"There were plenty of automotive vendors on display to help folks with a hard to find part for their classic car or street rod. It was a chance to sit back and enjoy the shade trees, lakeside views, and relax the easy chair beside your hotrod with a cold glass of lemonade."

It also was a chance to

bring in some much needed cash as restaurants and local businesses bustled with trade activity.

The overall economic impact of the Moonshine Cruise In is likely to exceed \$1 million to local businesses and hotels.

"I know one thing is certain, it was a big time event," Hooper said.

Long agreed. "As a community with a tourist based economy, the activity brought in much needed revenue to our restaurants, shops and hotel," she said. "Since Georgia schools have already gone back in session, we would not have had a fraction of the business without it."

Bo Lewis still on the loose...continued from page 1

smaller, more medium build than any thing else.

He's of course a male dog, he's neutered and he's smart. His owner emphasizes that Bo Lewis is a survivalist in the woods.

"He won't go hungry," she said.

There have been reported sightings of Bo Lewis, within a five-mile radius of Davidson's home near the Trout Lodge.

"I can't tell you how many trips I've made looking

for Bo," she said. "I really miss that dog."

Davidson says that she misses Bo Lewis and can only hope and pray to find him safe and sound and bring him back home.

"Bo Lewis doesn't know it, but the other dog is gone," she said. "I wish he knew that fact so he would just come back home."

Anyone with information about Bo Lewis' whereabouts, please call (706) 896-8901.

Little River Band...continued from page 1

Nelson once lived in Flat Rock, NC. The group arrived by tour bus on Saturday afternoon, traveling the mountainous highways and byways.

"It (the bus ride) was an adventure," Nelson joked.

The band is promoting its latest compact disc, "We Call It Christmas," which covers contemporary holiday songs written and performed by artists such as Keb Mo and Mariah Carey.

After the concert, the band was scheduled to fly to Minnesota to share a dual headliner with Three Dog Night, who will play Anderson Music Hall on Oct. 24.

The recent concert series at Anderson Music Hall are due to Columbus promoter Mike

Blackwell, who is responsible for bringing Merle Haggard and Percy Sledge to Towns County in recent months. Both performers played before a packed house.

Georgia Mountains Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said that the Little River Band sold 1,484 tickets - about half the capacity for Anderson Music Hall. She said that Blackwell was fine with the turnout because he was able to break even, and suffering no financial loss on the show.

Upcoming events at Anderson Music Hall include Sandi Patty on Nov. 28 and the voice behind the music of super group Alabama, Randy Owen, this Friday night. Tickets are still available.

Chamber Message from Angel

Dear Members:
Last week I attended the Northeast Georgia Mountain Tourism Association Meeting at The Smith House in Dahlonega. I had the opportunity to hear Judy Randall of Randall Travel speak at this meeting. She had some very interesting information to share. There was a great deal of discussion on "The new Normal". She had a lot of insight on the latest trends in the travel industry. Here are some of the highlights:

If you are a pet friendly establishment, be sure your web site showcases that. More and more people are traveling with their pets and will only stay with pet friendly hotels.

Travelers are not spending as much money on souvenirs, but some items are still popular, such as handmade regional items, homemade edibles and snacks.

Family Reunions & Weddings are still doing well even in this challenged economy, so marketing to those groups is a good investment of time and money.

People are looking for help with travel plans when they get to their destination. Having sample itineraries that appeal to different groups of people published on your website will help you sell your establishment.

Having a page on your website dedicated to social event planning is very helpful to prospective clients interested in weddings and reunions.

Social & sporting clubs are also still traveling and may be a good market to reach. Just keep in mind, you may have to relax length of stay requirements and contractual

agreements. Facebook, MySpace and Twitter are all the rage right now. Be sure your business is on it.

I hope you find Judy's insight as interesting and informative as I did. If you have anything to add, please let me know.

**Angel Long, President,
Towns County Chamber
of Commerce**

Chamber Appreciation Day

We will be hosting our Annual Appreciation Day on the Square in Hiwassee on Thursday, Aug. 20th from 3:30 p.m.-7 p.m.

We will have music, food and fun activities for the kids. Towns County Chamber of Commerce members are welcome to set up a display to promote their business. This also will be a great opportunity to promote your business to the community.

We are inviting the entire community to come out and enjoy the fun. We hope to see you there!

Membership Benefit Update

We are starting a new program here at the Chamber. It is called the "Member to Member Discount." Chamber members can extend discounts exclusively to Chamber members. If you are a Towns County Chamber of Commerce member and would like to extend discounts to the membership, please let us know and we will post it on our Web site. We will be issuing I.D. cards to members to help identify themselves when visiting the establishments that are offering the discounts.

Cornwell abduction remains unsolved...continued from page 1

was abducted Tuesday night, Aug. 11, near her family's home on Jones Creek Road in rural Union County.

More than 100 searchers and K-9s from state and local law enforcement agencies, including five Towns County sheriff's deputies, have combed the rural countryside along Nottely Dam Road and Jones Creek Road searching throughout the weekend for clues that may lead authorities to Cornwell.

On Saturday, members of the Hall County Dive Team searched an area off Pat Colwell Road for clues that could lead authorities to Kristi Cornwell.

Witnesses have told Union County sheriff's investigators and GBI special agents that a white SUV, possibly a Chevrolet Suburban, and a tan or gold import, possibly a Toyota or Nissan, were seen in the area around the time Kristi Cornwell was abducted, Bureau spokesman John Bankhead said.

On late Saturday afternoon, a vehicle loosely fitting the description of one of the

vehicles involved in the Union County search was spotted in Towns County, with the driver reportedly acting in a suspicious manner, according to Chief Deputy Jeff Edge.

A description of the vehicle was given to all nearby counties and deputies searched for the vehicle and the area in which it had been located, Edge said.

"The GBI was notified and stated that if contact was made, the driver was to be held for questioning," Edge said. "Deputies looked for the vehicle until after dark on Saturday. On Sunday, deputies were again dispatched to Union County to aid in the search."

A man mowing his grass along Georgia 325 found Kristi Cornwell's cell phone on Friday evening almost four miles from where she was abducted, said Georgia Bureau of Investigation Director Vernon Keenan.

The GBI became involved in the search for Kristi Cornwell in the early morning hours of Aug. 12. That's when the Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens requested the assis-

tance of the GBI in the investigation of a missing person, according to Bankhead.

"At this time authorities believe that Ms. Cornwell was abducted by vehicle while walking on Jones Creek Road, and she is believed to be in extreme danger," Bankhead said.

Kristi Cornwell, who has a criminal justice degree and is trained in self defense, is approximately 5-foot-5 inches tall and weighing 150 pounds with dark shoulder length hair. She was last heard from at approximately 9 p.m. Aug. 11 while walking on Jones Creek Road in Union County.

Kristi Cornwell was last seen wearing a white tee shirt and tan shorts, Bankhead said.

Authorities from the Union County Sheriff's Office, the GBI, Georgia State Patrol, state Department of Natural Resources, state Department of Corrections and additional officers from neighboring sheriff's departments combined to conduct an extensive search of the Jones Creek Road area, Bankhead said.

"A command post has

been established at the New Union Baptist Church," Bankhead said.

New Union Baptist Church is where Kristi Cornwell attended church with her 15-year-old son Brody.

Kristi Cornwell's abduction was first reported by Douglas Davis, who was talking with Cornwell as she went on an evening walk in her Jones Creek Road neighborhood.

GI special agents say Davis, who told authorities that he was Cornwell's fiancé, was in Atlanta when he made a call to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Authorities are seeking information from anyone who was traveling on Jones Creek Road between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 11.

Family members continue to hold onto hope that Kristi Cornwell is still out there and alive.

Anyone with information regarding Kristi Cornwell's whereabouts contact the Union County Sheriff's Office at (706) 439-6038 or the GBI Tip Line at (800) 597-8477.

Cornwell: a lifetime of public service

By Norman Cooper
North Georgia News

Thirty-eight-year-old Kristi Cornwell has spent most of her life in Blairsville. She graduated from Union County High School in 1989.

"She was an excellent student, top notch, a very bright student," recalled Union County Schools Superintendent Dr. Lewis McAfee, "She was a great kid, a great student."

Kristi graduated from North Georgia College and State University with a degree in criminal justice.

Kristi continues her father's legacy of public service. She serves on the board of Wilderness Scouts, an or-

ganization her father, Harold Cornwell, founded, which provides activities and helps children in Union County.

Over the years Kristi took firearms classes, taught self-defense and rode a motorcycle.

She worked at the Carlton H. Colwell Detention Center in Blairsville, the Towns County Sheriff's Office and the state probation office.

Kristi's mom and brother were on national morning news shows on Monday, along with Bankhead of the GBI.

Jo Ann Cornwell, Kristi's mother, told one show that she was terrified when she got the call that Kristi may have been abducted.

"I couldn't believe what

he was saying. So I called 911," Jo Ann said.

On another show Richard Cornwell was asked to comment about the boyfriend. He responded, "We're just going to withhold any comments about (him) right now."

Jo Ann Cornwell asked for compassion for her daughter.

"Whoever took her... please have mercy on her, and know that she has a 15-year-old son who needs his mother. And we need her back," Jo Ann Cornwell said.

Kristi's mother described the situation as the worst nightmare of her family's lives.

She had a message for Kristi - that hundreds of people are looking for her.

Blairsville woman found murdered

By Norman Cooper
North Georgia News

Gwen Nutt was murdered on Aug. 12 shortly after midnight. Richard Charles Bishop, 76, Blairsville, has been arrested for the murder.

"Our officers were called to respond to a possible murder on Hwy. 325 off of the Old Blue Ridge Highway," Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens said at about 5:50 a.m. the morning of the murder.

The call came into E-911 at 12:22 a.m. Union County Sheriff's Office Cpl. Bo Stover and others arrived at the scene at 12:37 a.m.

"When we pulled up in the yard, Ms. Nutt was laying on the porch bleeding from what appeared to be her head and her back."

After calling for a medical unit, deputies attempted to make entry into the house. A person inside the house asked who was at the door. When deputies identified themselves, the person opened the door.

"He was hiding in the house because he thought the person doing the shooting was trying to get in," Stover said. "He advised us who did the shooting."

Nutt was occupying the house owned by Bishop. There were four bullet holes, two in the window and two beside the door.

Information on how Bishop arrived at the house and then left the house is not be-

ing released at this time.

"Based on statements at the crime scene, Bishop was the aggressor and fired the shots," Sheriff Stephens said.

Sheriff Stephens, Sheriff's Office personnel and the GBI went to Mr. Bishop's property. After Bishop was interviewed by GBI agents, he was arrested and taken to the Union County Jail.

A search warrant was executed on Bishop's residence, where several weapons were found.

During his first appearance hearing in court, Bishop admitted to the shooting.

Union County Coroner Benny Erwin received a call at 1:08 a.m.

"I received a call that we had a death," Erwin said. "There was one white female found at the scene who appeared to have been shot. The sheriff's deputies were here and we kept the scene secure and turned it over to the GBI."

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation was contacted by the Union County Sheriff's Office about 1:30 a.m. on Aug. 12. The GBI was brought in to conduct the investigation.

"For us to become involved in a local situation, like this homicide investigation, we are involved at the request of the sheriff," said GBI Special Agent in Charge Mike Ayers.

Those able to ask the GBI for assistance are sheriffs, police chiefs, fire chiefs and coroners. Ayers explained why the

GBI works with local law enforcement at major crime scenes.

The GBI brings in a crime scene unit at the site of the crime, one of 15 the agency has in the state of Georgia.

All the operators for the units are graduates from the National Forensic Academy in Tennessee. There is a 10-week extensive training program in addition to a host of other training the operators have had.

Jeff Branyon, the specialist for the Cleveland office for eight years, was in Union County as part of the investigation.

The unit has chemicals that enhance finger prints and body fluids.

There are gun shot trajectory kits, blood pattern interpretation instruments, trace evidence collection used to process a crime scene.

It is a labor intensive task. The units are purchased through a combination of grants and seized funds.

The GBI usually takes original jurisdiction in narcotic cases.

"We seldom exercise that," said Ayers, "because we value our relationship with our local chiefs and sheriffs and work together in a partnership as much as possible."

No additional information about the case was available at press time. Visit townscountyherald.net for more details.

Presley...from page 1

Hiwassee River area, Macedonia, Lower Hightower and Fodder Creek.

This description of the history behind the post office is offered by Floy Presley Wood, who lived near the site for 88 years.

"My grandparents, Julius William Presley and Frankie Presley lived on Cynth Creek where they reared 11 children. My Daddy, Tom Presley was the youngest. He was born Jan. 27, 1897. When he was 2 or 3 years old, his parents bought some property near the Hiwassee Bridge and Cynth Creek Road.

"This property is now owned by the Paul Dyer family. At this time, I don't know if there was a mail carrier, but Julius was contacted to establish a post office known as Presley, GA Post Office. He was the first post master where he served in one room of his house for many years."

"This Post Office served a large area and many families."

The move is being coordinated by Blue Ridge Mountain EMC and the Georgia Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Towns County Historical Society.



GBI Director Vernon Keenan, Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens, GBI Director of Public Affairs John Bankhead and GBI Special Agent in Charge Mike Ayers speaks with media during an impromptu press conference early Wednesday morning. Photo/Norman Cooper