

Promoter Mike Blackwell wasn't concerned about weak ticket sales with Three Dog Night and Willie Nelson playing in back-to-back in successive weeks.

"Percy Sledge and Josh Turner played back-to-back and they were two of the most successful concerts this season," Blackwell said. "We're really excited to have Three Dog Night and Willie Nelson back-to-back on Oct. 24th and Oct. 31st."

The announcement related to Willie Nelson's concert at Anderson Music Hall also was made to the more than 1,100 Randy Owen fans attending last week's concert at the Music Hall. A rousing applause in support of Nelson's visit made its way throughout the crowd.

Nelson, best known for his Outlaw Country Music style and his long-time association with Waylon Jennings, Johnny Cash, Merle Haggard and Kris Kristofferson, has been a member of the Grand Ole Opry since 1965.

A favorite son of Abbott, Texas, Nelson has long been associated with the music scene in Nashville, Tenn. Early in his career, Nelson was better known as a songwriter by producing hits like "Night Life," "Funny How Time Slips Away," "Hello Walls," "Pretty

Paper" and of course, Cline's passionate hit "Crazy."

Despite his personal success as a songwriter, the former disc jockey didn't score a No. 1 hit until 1975 when "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain," a song written in 1945 by Fred Rose, topped the record charts off his "Red-Headed Stranger" album.

Nelson teamed with Waylon Jennings to change the music industry. Together they formed a brand new genre in music known as Outlaw Country. Teamed with Waylon's better half, Jessi Colter, they recorded "Wanted: The Outlaws," which became Country Music's first platinum album.

Nelson later released two more platinum albums, which included "Waylon and Willie." That album included the smash hit "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys."

For more details about Nelson's visit to Hiawassee, visit Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on the Web at www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com or call (706) 896-4191. Tickets may be purchased online or in person at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds box office. Concessions, both food and drink, will be available for purchase at both the Three Dog Night and Willie Nelson concerts.

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the Hiawassee River area, Macedonia, Lower Hightower and Fodder Creek.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said it was priceless to be able to bring an important part of everyday history back to life with-in proximity of the Downtown Square.

"Any time you have a chance to preserve history, you do it," Kendall said. "It's important to remember our past to keep us grounded as we progress into the future."

Floy Presley Wood, who lived near the site for 88 years, offers this description of the history behind the historic post office.

"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 Hiawassee 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. Jule 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," Mrs. Wood wrote.

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all the right things that we're supposed to do to get us in the end zone.

"There is really no rhyme or reason of who will be at quarterback," he said. "We'll put them in and do what we do best."

The Indians' faithful got a glimpse of the 2009 squad on Friday night in Blairsville. Langford was pleased with most of what he saw.

"It went pretty well, we competed well and that's what we were looking to get out of it," Langford said. "We competed, we played fast and I thought we did a little of both."

The Indians, who put a few impressive scores up on the Class AA Union County Panthers, didn't walk away unscathed from the controlled scrimmage. Sophomore Linebacker Austin Green suffered a broken arm in the second half and likely is done for the year.

"Unfortunately, it looks like he's through for the year," Langford said.

The Indians showed just a glimpse of their playbook, saving the bulk of their offense for the season.

"To be honest, we didn't want to show a whole lot on film," Langford said. "Union County is pretty doggone good. They throw the ball 100 times a game and they probably ran four plays to our one in the first quarter."

"The Panthers live and die by the spread offense," Langford said. "They do a pretty good job when they've got the ball in their hands."

The scrimmage with the Panthers allowed Langford and his coaching staff to get

a better perspective of what to expect on Friday nights this fall.

Junior Devin Henderson, a first-year football player, caught the coach's eye against the Panthers.

"Devin Henderson is a good athlete and he does what we ask him to do," Langford said. "He's one of those guys that you learn something new about them every day. He's just a junior and we're excited to see him in a football uniform. He can be something special as he continues to learn the game."

Langford was a bit disappointed that the Indians didn't have a chance to showcase Matt Beni from the backfield.

"Matt is going to get a lot of work this year," Langford said. "We throw quite a bit, but I love to run the football. Matt Beni will get ample opportunity to run the football this fall."

Langford was excited about the play of junior Billy Meier on both sides of the football.

"I wish I had 10 more just like him," Langford said. "He loves to hit and that's something that we're looking for, people who love to hit."

The Indians hit the road Friday night headed for Tiger to take on the Rabun County Wildcats.

"It's going to be a big game for us," Langford said. "This group has really got a chance to be special. We're still a little rough around the edges, but we'll iron all of that out."

"We're excited about taking the field on Friday night," he said.

"It was a great event," Champlain said. "We got to talk with a lot of folks. All it takes is for one person to spread the word. Word of mouth is still one of the best forms of advertising out there."

"Word of mouth is one of the greatest advertising campaigns known to man," Champlain said.

Mike Clark looks forward to the next year's event.

"I think it's important to have this as an annual event," he said. "We're an up-and-coming business and every opportunity we get to meet the community is a must event for us. We're kind of a hidden secret at the location of the green house."

"We use events like this to let people know where we are," Mike Clark said.

Larry Culpepper, operations director for North Georgia Technical College Blairsville Campus, said it's exciting that the event continues to grow.

"It's great to get out to these events and really meet

people," he said. "We live in a really busy world. It's a great feeling to get out and meet and appreciate the folks that help make our communities such a unique experience in our daily lives."

Long was ecstatic about the day and the future of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce. She feels fortunate to have the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds as a calling card to show off to tourists.

"The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds obviously is a great attraction," she said. "Historically, it's been a draw throughout the Southeast. With the car show we just had, it's proved that it's not just limited to the Southeast region. There were folks as far away as Nebraska came to the car show."

Tourism, Long said, continues to be the economic engine for the community.

"As a Chamber of Commerce, you focus on the businesses in your community," Long said. "Our main business in this community is tourism."

Chamber Message from Angel

On Thursday, Sept. 20th, we held our Annual Member Appreciation Day on the Square in downtown Hiawassee. The weather may not have been perfect, but we had a great time anyway. We had at least 85 people at the event throughout the course of the evening. We served 75 hot dogs and lots of iced tea, lemonade and soft drinks.

WNGM was there broadcasting live and the Towns County Herald was there to cover the entire event. Most of our guests who came out to exhibit also were able to promote their business on the radio airwaves as well.

It was wonderful not only to have the chance to serve our members, but it was just fabulous to have so much help and support from volunteers, board members and chamber members as well.

I would like to thank Mayor Barbara Mathis for allowing us to use the Square for our event. English Country Gardens, Cold Nose College, Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital,

Southern Directory Publishing, Mountain Parties and Deb Collins Signature Gallery & Tangerine Frog all brought fun and unusual exhibits.

I would also like to thank Green to Bean Coffee Roasters for donating the delicious Iced Tea, Community Bank & Trust for loaning us their canopy and to Fun World for donating the popcorn.

I also would like to express a special thank you to the team at The Ridges Resort at Fieldstone. When we realized the weather was not going to cooperate, they brought their large canopy tent out for us. They absolutely saved our event and we are so grateful!

Dian Woodruff, Don Woodruff, Bitsy Weber and Tracy Smith all volunteered their time setting up, serving and packing up in the rain. Jane Holland, Joyce Frick and I are all so grateful to you all for your support.

Thank you so much. Angel Long, President, Towns County Chamber of Commerce



Angel Long on the back deck of the Chamber office
Photo/Lowell Nicholson

to death at first to put this event on because of the economy. We were looking at everything internally wondering if we could pull this event off.

"We did and we're already looking to improve on the experience for next year," Hooper said.

Katie Polstra, general manager of Ramada Inn of Hiawassee, said the event was a boon to the local economy.

"It was a big help for us. We were booked solid for the entire three days," she said. "It was great."

The Cruise-In was by all accounts a huge success, Towns County Chamber President Angel Long said.

"They had classic cars for the show, they also brought in hundreds of spectators to the area as well," she said. "The hotels and restaurants were packed all weekend and traffic through town was bustling. We couldn't have asked for more."

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton and Hiawassee Police Chief Jimmy Wright said from a law enforcement perspective, the Cruise-In is good, clean fun.

"You would have expected to hear somebody burning off some tires," Wright said. "But we didn't issue one citation for that because it just didn't happen. It was a very pleasant experience."

Clinton said his troops worked tirelessly to help make the Cruise-In weekend a success. All Towns County sheriff's deputies and detention officers were called in to work many extra hours, whether in Towns County for the extra crowds or in Union County helping search for former Towns County detention officer Kristi Cornwell.

"They performed their duties in an excellent manner," Sheriff Clinton said. "We're proud to be able to help any time we're called on."

Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said that almost \$5,500, mostly in overtime pay for county employees, was spent during the Cruise-In event.

"But those dollars were wisely spent," he said. "I'm told that local businesses more than doubled their business from this time a year ago. That's important with our economy in the shape it's in."

Mayor Barbara Mathis said that the event was exactly what the local economy needed.

"It was a financial shot in the arm," she said. "It was exactly what we had hoped it would be when we were first approached by Rakes Parrish."

Parrish, an old pro at pulling off events like this, said he's hoping to build something substantial that will be a financial staple for the Towns County community for years to come.

"We're trying to do something special," Parrish said. "This is as good a clean fun as it gets."

Hooper said the Tourism Association will explore similar event opportunities to help local business beleaguered by the recession pull in future business.

"We've got one of the most attractive venues in the world," Hooper said. "Towns County, Hiawassee and Young Harris have so much to offer. Our goal is to work together as a community to bring good clean tourism events here. We want everyone to prosper and get a piece of the pie."

All Star...from page 1

Thomas is considered one of the Rays' top minor league prospects noted primarily for his strong catching, throwing and defensive skills.

In 2007, Thomas played for the Princeton Devil Rays of the Appalachian League (Advanced Rookie League), where he appeared in 33 games and had a .276 batting average, along with a team-leading 5 home runs.

In 2008, Thomas was promoted to the Hudson Valley Renegades of the New York-Penn League where he hit .234 with 3 homers and 12 RBIs in 52 games.

In 47 games with the Renegades this season, Thomas is hitting .256, including 12 extra base hits, with 4 homers and 20 RBIs in 172 at bats. Thomas also hit .375 with a pair of doubles and 1 RBI in a cup of coffee earlier this season with the Charlotte Stone Crabs, the Rays' affiliate in the Florida State League.

Festival...from page 1

(706) 896-0007.

In October, the annual Fall Festival comes back to town. This year's event, which kicks off Oct. 9, has possibly one of the greatest star-studded musical lineups in the history of the Fairgrounds.

Crystal Gayle, Aaron Tippin, the Isaacs, the Diplomats and the Chuck Wagon Gang headline the first three days of the festival, said Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason.

The lineup gets better as the festival heats up throughout the week. Neal McCoy and Sessions Band return to the Fairgrounds as well as Marty Stuart and Gold Wing Express. Patty Loveless and Trees Leave headline on Oct. 14 followed the next day by Earl Thomas Conley, Steven Phillips and Midnight Express.

LeRoy Troy headlines Oct. 16 as the Georgia Fiddlers' Convention begins. The convention concludes Oct. 17, the last day of the festival. Visit the Web at www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com for more details about the festival.