

# Early Voting...continued from page 1A

Austin, of Demorest, is the former state representative from Georgia House District 10. He resigned that post to run for State Senate. Terry Rogers, of Habersham County was elected to fill his unexpired term on Nov. 8.

Austin is a biology professor at Piedmont College

in Demorest and former Habersham County commissioner.

Wilkinson, of Toccoa, is the former director of the Georgia Future Farmers of America.

Austin took the Nov. 8<sup>th</sup> vote in Towns County with 571 votes to Wilkinson's 224 votes.

Overall, Austin finished with 43.3 percent of the vote to Wilkinson's 39.2 percent.

Runoffs are traditionally a low turnout affair. Both candidates have come to town to urge locals to come back out and vote on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>. Whether local voters heed that message remains to be seen.

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this year, along with senior Zach Stroud and juniors Tyler Hoffman and Wesley Bloodworth. The Indians may have their most balanced lineup in years this season.

The event features a strong mix of upper wrestling classifications from Georgia and North Carolina. As usual, there's always a strong field that includes a lot of good wrestlers, Coach Stowers said.

"You can count on seeing some solid wrestling this weekend," he said.

This year's tournament also marks the KOM debuts of first-year wrestling programs from Union and Rabun counties.

The tournament couldn't come at a better time as most of the local area seems dug in for the winter, expecting a long, cold and financially tough few months.

Coach Stowers said that the tournament, along with the Towns-Union basketball games on Saturday at Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium should provide an un-

expected economic boost to the local economy.

"There will be at least 11 of those 19 teams and their fans and family members staying in the hotels, eating in the restaurants and shopping in our stores," Stowers said.

"Each team has 14 wrestlers, they've all got parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins. You never know how many people will be here. We're expecting more than 1,000 people, most of which will be spending the night."

# Children's programs through Community Council

What an eye opener at recent Union County Lions Club meeting! Introduced by Lion President Mildred Thompson, Peg Schnieder, volunteer and head of Education Committee of Children's Programs, was guest speaker. With Peg was Claire Johnson, employee, who also spoke and assisted with a slide presentation.

What is so unique about this program is that it is for the most part, an outdoor classroom with specific age related subjects for kindergarten through eighth graders. Second uniqueness of this program is that it is made possible through the Community Council of the Georgia Mountain Research & Education Center right here in Union County at what was known as the Experiment Station; the name change came in 2000.

Peg's commitment and enthusiasm to children is shown as she shares the looks on the faces of the kindergarten students when the Johnny Appleseed program is presented, complete with 'Johnny Appleseed!'; 'Our Feathered Friends' taught to 729 first graders, and Water Conservation to 185 second grade students! Other age related subjects include All About Trees; Environmental Field Day; Ge-



(L-R): Claire Johnson, Lion President Mildred Thompson and Peg Schnieder

ology instruction was provided to 599 third, sixth, and eighth graders; and so much more! A quote from the brochure, "Who knew learning could be so much fun!"

When Peg Schnieder retired from the Florida education system and moved to this beautiful mountain area, she knew her days of working and sharing with children was not over, hence her involvement with the Community Council. By the way, this Children's Program through the Community Council serves not only Union County, but, Cherokee, Clay, Fannin, and Towns Counties.

Question and answer time followed this great presentation and Union County

Lions do indeed thank Peg for her many volunteer hours of service to children. Thank you too, Claire Johnson, for your assistance. Note of interest: Union County Lions own Lion President, Mildred Thompson, is retired from the Union County School system and when possible has volunteered for this amazing program for children.

Programs are completely funded by donations and staffed by volunteers, so, volunteers are needed as well as funds. Donations are tax deductible. For more information, you may call 706-745-2655. Please remember the Lions Motto: We Serve. (Nov30,2011)CA

# Dick Paris...continued from page 1A

In 1951, Mr. Paris was elected mayor of Hiwassee.

A member of the Towns County Lions Club, Mr. Paris was a driving force behind the Georgia Mountain Fair, serving on the Georgia Mountain Fair Authority. He spent 61 years promoting the Georgia Mountain Fair - the Georgia Mountain Fair is 61 years old.

Mr. Paris also played a pivotal role in the development of Towns County Hospital, serving as a member of the Towns County Hospital Authority for many years. He served as president of the Bank of Hiwassee from 1953 to 1981 and served as a bank board member faithfully for 57 years. An active member of McConnell Memorial Church in Hiwassee, Mr. Paris worked tirelessly to help the church grow along with the community.

"He always supported the church through his attendance and gifts," Commissioner Kendall said.

Mr. Paris played a pivotal role in Towns County Schools, supporting the construction of the Towns County High School football and baseball fields, Commissioner Kendall said.

Last, but not least, Mr. Paris endowed the Ragsdale



H.D. "Dick" Paris

Lecture Series at Young Harris College to honor the journalistic career of family member Warner Ragsdale, a 1917 graduate of Young Harris College. The Ragsdale Series brings prominent speakers of national stature to Young Harris College to speak about government and political affairs.

Mr. Paris also supported many youth groups, including the Boy Scouts and the school programs.

On Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Mr. Paris along side another community icon, Elois Anderson, were honored with a park bearing their name at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Anderson-Paris Park is part of the Pioneer Village, located behind the general store at the Fairgrounds. It's located be-

tween the lower level and the Antique Farm Exhibit.

The park's design, which includes walking trails, a picnic area, an outdoor amphitheater, a gorgeous fountain and panoramic native plant life, was the brainstorm of Catherine Hansen.

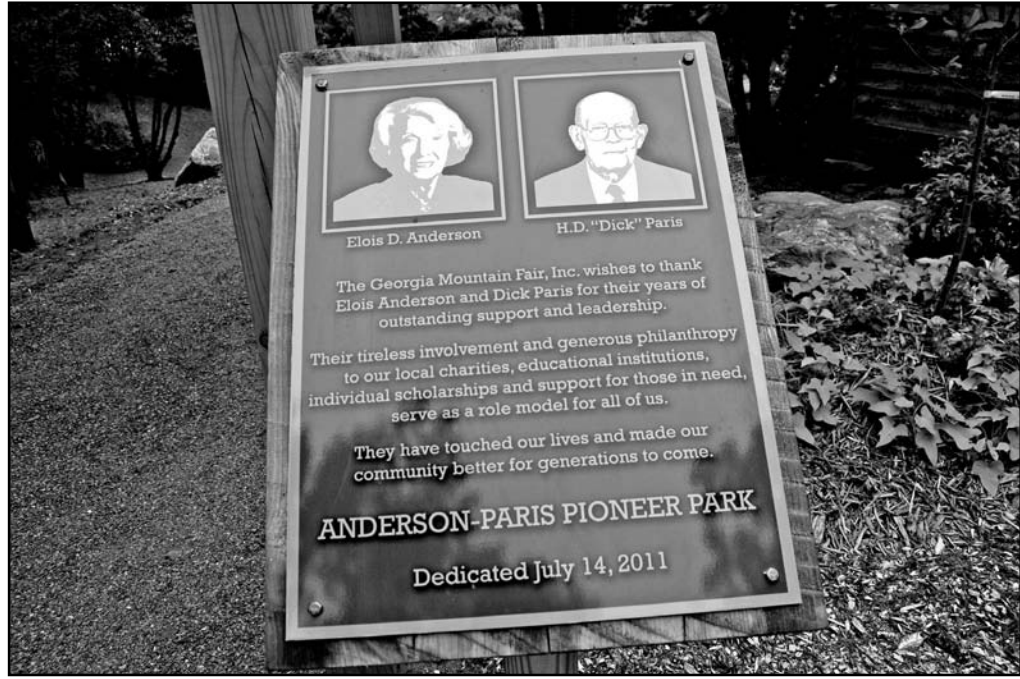
"I think Anderson-Paris Pioneer Park is a place to remember what Elois and Dick have really meant to this community, while at the same time, providing a little enjoyment for folks who come to visit the Fairgrounds," Hansen said.

Mr. Paris was preceded in death by his wife, Reese Ragsdale Paris; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. R.J. Paris; two sisters, Annie Mae Register and Dorothy Lee; and three brothers: Ernest Paris, Paul Paris, and Hubert Paris.

He is survived by his son, Howell Dan Paris, Jr., who continues to operate Hiwassee Hardware Company today.

Funeral services for Mr. Paris were held Wednesday, Nov. 23, at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church in Hiwassee, with Dr. Benny Pate officiating.

Mr. Paris will be greatly missed by all who knew him.



Anderson-Paris Pioneer Park at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is a lasting tribute to two of Towns County's community icons. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

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show around 8:45 p.m. Afterward, Willie meandered through the crowd signing autographs and accepting a bottle of "Rebel Yell" with an appreciative smile.

Willie also broke out in a huge smile as he autographed a copy of a bumper sticker that read:

"Don't blame me, I voted for Willie."

Willie's show consisted of well-known, crowd pleasing melodies. However, the song that got the most cheers was his passionate hit, *Always on My Mind*, accompanied on the piano by his baby sister, Bobbie.

Throughout the 2009 show, Nelson wore his trademark red bandanna, and interchanged them with each song, throwing the previously worn ones to the crowd. He even donned one of his trademark cowboy hats.

This is one show that's surely to sell out in a hurry.

# Patton...continued from page 1A

is where I consider home, was very exciting to me. The reason I chose Point University over the other schools was because of the Christian atmosphere and coaching staff. I felt an immediate bond with Coach (Mandy) Cook, Coach (Sarah) Warren, and Dr. (Holly) Carey. I am very excited about the opportunity to play and learn from them."

Coach Melton said Patton was one of the hardest workers he has ever coached.

"She very knowledgeable, she has game and it's obvious, because she wants to coach someday," Coach Melton said. "I think part of her deal is that she'll stay on and coach as a graduate assistant and work on her Master's Degree there."

Patton is no stranger to hard work and perseverance, as she had a major knee injury in the summer of 2010 that left her down but certainly not out.

Her former travel ball coach, Bruce Kidwell, said he "would go to war with Lindsay."

"It broke my heart when she tore her ACL but I knew that she would approach the comeback just like she approached every possession in a game, with intensity and determination," Kidwell said. "I am so excited for her to have this opportunity at Point Univer-

sity and know she will give them the same leadership and hard work she gave me for 2 years."

Patton said overcoming the knee injury required hard work and dedication. "It definitely was discouraging but I felt like if I worked very hard in rehabilitation I could still accomplish my goal which was to play college basketball," she said. "I figure if I could overcome being an undersized post in high school, I could certainly overcome a torn knee ligament."

Coach Cook said Patton's attitude is an asset to the Point University Ladies' basketball program.

"The thing that I noticed immediately the first time I saw Lindsay play was her desire and determination. I also noticed her great leadership skills as she played with a group of players she had never met before, and rallied them around a common goal of competing and hustling," said Cook, head coach of the Lady Skyhawks. "When I met her for the first time, her personality and genuine love for the game was infectious. She will be a tremendous asset to our team."

It is Patton's goal to coach after her playing days are complete.

"I plan to continue coaching women's basketball when I graduate from col-

lege," she said. "I feel like the obstacles I have had to overcome in my playing career, along with the numerous coaches I have played for and different styles I have learned and my knowledge of the recruiting process will help me in my future endeavor. I plan to major in Business Administration and minor in Biblical Studies and Sports Management."

Her parents, Steve and Paige Patton, could not be more excited for their daughter.

"Lindsay has always been a very mature and dedicated young lady," Steve Patton said. "She has handled this recruiting process with grace and dignity. We could not be more proud of her for pursuing her dream, against a tremendous amount of obstacles, and making it become a reality."

"Lindsay has always put the needs of others above herself, which shows up on and off the basketball court," her father said. "We are very pleased that Lindsay has chosen Point University. It is a fine Christian school and will offer Lindsay opportunities to explore a variety of extracurricular activities, as well as continue her basketball playing career."

Staff Writer James Reese contributed to this news report.