

Osborn...from Page 1A

Highway/Ga. 11, according to GSP.

GSP responded to the crash at 7:25 a.m. on Cleveland Highway, south of Walden Pond Road. Simmemon was traveling northbound on Cleveland Highway in a Mitsubishi Gallant in a right-hand curve as Dwayne Osborn was headed southbound in a Ford Escape.

"Vehicle 1 (Simmemon) failed to maintain his lane of travel and traveled into the southbound lane into the path of the (Ford Escape)," according to state patrol.

Dwayne Osborn was a lifelong resident of Towns County and worked for and retired from the Georgia Department of Transportation. He was a member of Macedonia

Baptist Church where he served as a Deacon.

He is survived by his loving wife Vivian Adams Osborn of Hiawassee, mother Veta Mae Osborn of Hiawassee, two sons and one daughter-in-law, Jeffrey and Stephanie Osborn of Young Harris and Ryan Osborn of Hiawassee, grandchildren Alexis Nicole, Allison Kate, Emalyn Faith, and John Henry Isaiah, sister and brother-in-law Shirley and Robert Hunter of Hiawassee, and brother and sister-in-law Daren and Missy Osborn of Hiawassee, nephews Kevin and Ken Hunter, Tyler Osborn and niece Kayla Osborn all of Hiawassee, other family members and friends also survive.

Funeral services were

held at at Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery, with the Rev. Harold Ledford and the Rev. Bradley Thomas officiating. Music was provided by Matt Griffin, Bobby Taylor, Eddie Bradley and Rita Bradshaw.

The following gentlemen served as pallbearers: Kevin Holcomb, Edwin Adams, Kevin Hunter, Ken Hunter, Brent Osborn and Kevin Thomas. Honorary Pallbearers were Garry Holcomb, Bert Rogers, Doug Rogers, Alden Hunter, Frankie Burden, Bryan Osborn, Eddie Osborn, Tyler Osborn and the deacons of Macedonia Baptist Church.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Macedonia Cemetery Fund in memory of Dwayne and Walter Osborn. Banister Funeral Home in Hiawassee had charge of all arrangements.

4-H...from Page 1A

least 15 to 20 people. We want to keep it as local as possible."

While this is a 4-H project, Smith has a larger vision for the program, one that involves the community. McConnell Memorial Baptist Church is already offering support to Smith and the

4-H'ers through donations and supplying information on deployed local troops.

"I want to make this a community event," said Smith. "We want to ask those in the community to help with donating supplies and letting us know of anyone locally that is deployed."

The project is going to last two months, resulting in the students sending the packages out right before the holidays. Smith is hoping to fill the packages with toiletry items, razors, pens, pencils, travel-size items, playing cards, balls, nonperishable goods and, most importantly, beef jerky.

"I've actually told all of my students about the two dollar store here in Hiawassee," said Smith. "Basically anything that can be found there is a great item for care packages. Any small items that can be sent to a soldier are welcomed."

"Like I told my students, put yourself in their shoes. You're away from home and you can't take your entire life with you, so just think, on a daily basis, what you would need to get through the day."

The care packages are going to be a standard priority mail box and will cost between \$10 and \$12 to ship, depending on where in the world the soldier is located.

"For our students to give back to those who are giving their lives, especially for locals, it's very important," said Smith. "A lot of times when you do care packages for organizations, you send it to a group that will then send it to random people, but we want to create a connection."

"We want to send local newspaper articles and such so that these

men and women can know what's going on back home and feel connected to home."

4-H'ers are relying solely on donations to accomplish this project. Donation boxes have been set up at Towns County Elementary School, and those wishing to help can take supplies there or to the Towns County Extension Office, located next to the Towns County Board of Education Office.

Monetary donations can be brought in to the extension office or mailed to: 67 Lakeview Circle, Hiawassee, Georgia 30546.

"I think it's important for our kids to know that this world isn't all about yourself, but it's more about serving others," said Smith. "The more you serve others, the better you feel about yourself, especially when you're serving people that, while you may not know them, someone you know does."

"It just means a lot, and that kid will always remember that they helped someone else, which is so important."

Swanson...from Page 1A

was made, and on Oct. 21, 1836, the agents responsible for performing the task, George Kellogg and Josiah Shaw, began their work in the Brasstown Valley.

In their journal they made the following entry while standing very near the spot the Swanson Mountain sign was erected:

"Here is perhaps the most splendidly striking mountain scenery upon the face of the Globe. An amphitheater of probably 50 miles in circuit is formed by the Brasstown Mountains encircling a beautiful and fertile valley about 4 miles across, interspersed with limpid streams, and making upon the whole a picture unsurpassed and rarely to be equaled for the wildness and grandeur of its scenery."

The mountain would later be named after Rev. Wm. Alpheus "Alf" Swanson, who moved to Brasstown Valley from North Carolina in the late 1840s.

Herman Swanson – a descendent of Alf Swanson – and Tommy Flanagan, along with Taylor, were responsible for the research, and they approached Commissioner Kendall about placing a sign on the mountain.

"I want to thank Commissioner Kendall for all of the work he has done (on the sign project), and to Jerry Taylor and Tommy Flanagan for helping me do the research," Herman Swanson said. "Jerry is the one who first told me about it, so I started digging."

During the sign unveiling on Saturday, Flanagan was on hand to provide a history of the Swanson family.

According to Flanagan,



Commissioner Kendall says a few words next to Herman Swanson, who was a driving force behind getting the sign placed

Alf Swanson spent most of his childhood living on Crooked Creek, and at the age of 18 he enlisted in the Union Army's 5th Tennessee Mounted Infantry in 1864, after Tennessee was seized from the Confederacy by Union forces.

On Feb. 19, 1934, he would be the last Union Veteran to die in Towns County.

Alf Swanson joined Old Union Baptist Church (at the time it was known as Union Baptist Church) on Aug. 3, 1866, and was baptized on Aug. 25, 1866. He became superintendent of the Sunday School in May 1883, and was licensed to preach at Old Union in July 1883.

On Oct. 5, 1883, he was ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry at Old Union and was made associate pastor along with Rev. Alfred E. Corn.

Alf Swanson joined Brasstown Baptist Church by letter on Oct. 13, 1889. He was elected pastor at Brasstown on

Nov. 23, 1889.

In December of 1892 he was elected pastor at Old Union. In 1901 he was instrumental in the founding of West Union Baptist Church in Young Harris.

From 1904 to 1907, Swanson pastored First Baptist Church of Blairsville. He was later elected the first pastor of Woods Grove Baptist Church.

Alf Swanson married Mary E. Logan in 1869, and they lived at the Logan Old Home Place. Mary died suddenly on March 25, 1898, leaving nine children. She was buried in the Logan Family Cemetery not far from their home.

On Aug. 14, 1898, Alf Swanson was married to Georgia Ann Erwin Kelley.

He and Georgia are both buried in Brasstown Cemetery in the shadow of the church where he preached so many sermons.

Art Fest...from Page 1A



Amy Gibby Rosser, right, buys some tasty Mediterranean treats from Olive Affairs at the Art Fest on Saturday, Aug. 27

gorgeous today," said Cindy Brockway, Robin Roberts Promotions Social Media Representative. "People are very friendly and the crowd is wonderful, and everyone seems to really be having a good time – I know I am."

In line with the rise of the buy local and organic movements, Whatever's Fresh was a huge hit at this year's festival.

Greg and Terri Goodwin, owners of Whatever's Fresh out of Euharlee, started out simply wanting to pursue a healthier lifestyle following both clocking in years of service with the U.S. Navy. With Terri's herbal background via her grandmother, the two soon became practicing herbalists and began selling their product at a local general store in Euharlee.

Soon, the pair found themselves wanting to share their goods more widespread, so they dove headfirst into the festival world a year ago.

"We grow herbs and flowers to use in everything that we make here," said Terri Goodwin. "We make soaps, lotions, pet toys with organic catnip, hot/cold packs for sore muscles, and we just added the dream catchers that I crochet."

"Our main thing is the herbs and the infused oils that we make. We make all of our infused oils. We do solar infusion, not heat infusion. It's kind of a big difference because we use the sun and the power of the moon."

"All of our stuff is petroleum free and animal product free, except for our pet shampoo bars, which have duck eggs in it."

"We do use some essential oils but we primarily use our infused oils because we're herbalists. "We like to see it from beginning to end. Everything that we make here, we started making for ourselves and sharing with our friends and family several years ago."

The arts and crafts festival was the couple's second time in Young Harris, their first being back in July at the Highlands Seafood Festival. The Goodwins are eager to return to Young Harris next year, both for the Arts and Crafts Festival and the Highlands Seafood Festival.

Keeping with the theme of locally sourced and organic, Sheryl Osborn, owner of Soaps by Sheryl out of Blue Ridge, offered festivalgoers a unique



Lance Zeigler pounds some metal in a blacksmithing demonstration at the Young Harris Arts and Crafts Festival on Saturday, Aug. 27



Rick Rivera of Andrews, North Carolina, shows off his hand-carving skills at the 2016 Young Harris Arts Fest

twist on handmade soaps with her alpaca-felted handmade soap bars, one of Osborne's many products.

"I started making soups about six years ago," said Osborne. "It started as a hobby and just kind of exploded from there. I make 40 different varieties of soaps, lip balms and body butters."

"I make the soap out of high quality natural oils like castor oil, palm oil and beeswax."

"Then I have the alpaca soap. Actually, I get the alpaca fibers from local farmers here in Blairsville. I recently went and bought some from Lasso the Moon."

"What's great about felting a soap with alpaca fibers is that the fibers act as a washcloth or sponge but they're naturally antibacterial. So, there's no mold or bacteria that will grow on the soap as you're using it."

"And, the fibers will absorb the excess suds and water so the soap is dryer and lasts longer. Plus, they're just really pretty."

Craftsmen were not the only ones making an appearance at this year's festival. The Save Georgia's Hemlocks campaign set up shop in Mayor's Park, eager to inform and educate patrons of a disease currently plaguing hemlock trees along the East Coast. According to volunteers, the disease known as Woolly Adelgid is lethal to the trees; however, it is treatable using the right chemical compound.

More information on the Save Georgia's Hemlocks can be found at their website, www.savegeorgiahemlocks.org.

All in all, it was yet another successful year at the Young Harris Arts and Crafts Festival, with vendors and patrons alike enjoying a weekend of fun for the whole family.

EMC...from Page 1A

Board of Directors. Directors, after all, make up the governing body of the EMC, deciding everything from who will run the EMC to which direction the EMC will go in the coming years.

This year marks the first time in three elections that the BRMEMC has named all of its candidates out of the Nominating Committee. Thanks to the work of the people elected during the last two election cycles, there was no need for any potential candidate to raise petitions to become nominated this go round.

The membership will be electing the following candidates, one from each county, to serve three-year terms on the board of directors: Ray Cook of Cherokee County, NC; Cory Payne and Gary Reffitt of Clay County, NC; and Patrick Malone, Gene Mason and Andrew Smith of Union County.

Members may vote in each county race, regardless of where they live, and there is still time to vote.

Voting can be done three ways: by mail, online, or in person at the Annual Meeting.

Paper ballots were mailed to members on Aug. 10, and if voting by mail, must be mailed back and received no later than Sept. 8 in order to be counted ahead of the Sept. 10 Annual Meeting. The ballots themselves contain instructions on where to mail,

which is to Survey & Ballot Systems, and not to Blue Ridge Mountain EMC.

To vote online, visit the website directvote.net/brmemc/, and use the information from the paper ballot to log in and vote. Online voting ends at 4 p.m. on Sept. 8.

In-person voting can be done the day of the Annual Meeting, and registration begins at 8 a.m. that day, on Sept. 10., and will end promptly at 11 a.m.

The actual meeting will begin at 10 a.m., and the emcee this year will not be the EMC lawyer, as in years past. This year, the EMC emcee will be none other than BRMEMC Board Chair Steven Phillips.

"People can expect the chairman of the board, which is going to be me, to run the meeting – like it should be done – and the board members being involved with the meeting, like it should be done," said Phillips. "It should be a completely different board meeting than they've ever had."

Jeremy Nelms, the new permanent general manager hire for BRMEMC, will also be in attendance.

"We're very lucky to have gotten Jeremy," said Phillips. "He's up and coming in the EMC (world), he's the one that everybody's got their eye on, and we ended up with him."

"And the reason we did

is because he and his wife both used to vacation here in the North Georgia Mountains at Vogel every year, and he wanted to come home."

Board Vice-Chair Mickey Cummings, who is over the Policy Committee, will be going over the many policy changes made in the last year or so, most geared toward transparency and fairness.

"We're going to try to share with everybody what the board has done," said Cummings. "Chairman Phillips has asked different ones of us to give some reports, so there will be some different reports from the board. He asked me to talk about some of the policy updates."

Roy Perren will also be talking about the process the board went through when searching for the new general manager, and Chris Logan, head of the Finance Committee, will go over the EMC's financials and figures.

Anyone who has attended one of the several BRMEMC Town Hall Meetings since the beginning of the year will likely recognize the same meeting style in the Annual Meeting, and the board will take any and all questions from the floor.

The 2016 Annual Report can be found in the latest edition of the "Georgia EMC" magazine, and will be discussed in the annual meeting, and the big forensic audit, which was just recently completed, will be discussed in the annual meeting as well.

Senior...from Page 1A

rehab and you have Medicare, they will pay for your stay if you have had three midnights in the hospital.

"If that is not the case, then your Medicare will not pay for your stay at the facility."

"If you fall under the specifications and Medicare does pay, then it will only do so for you to stay in the facility for 20 days. After those 20 days, you will be held liable for the remainder of the cost, which can be very expensive."

Peters went on to explain that unless an individual's insurance plan has a long-term nursing facility policy, most people must either take out a private loan for the care or obtain Medicaid. However, if Medicaid is involved, an individual must release ownership of all assets if admitted into a nursing facility. This must transpire five years prior to admission or else the individual will not qualify for Medicaid benefits.

"I want people to know this because I see people devastated because they didn't know ahead of time and couldn't prepare," said Peters. "When we reach a certain age, and have family members, there are things we can do to protect our assets. It's important to know."

Following Peters, Parker shared the latest news on the Towns County Senior Center and how it can help prevent senior citizens from having to



Georgia Peters of the Clay County Care Center also made an appearance Friday.

be admitted to a nursing home, or at least prolong admission.

"One of our major goals is to keep the senior citizens of our county more active, which keeps them out of rehab and out of the nursing home," said Parker. "Everything we do is free or donation-based."

"We don't charge anything except for when someone hosts a class at the center. If you're 60 or older, you qualify to be members of the center, which includes fitness classes three days a week."

Towns County Senior Center offers many activities and services for not only seniors in the community, but all residents who wish to either participate in what the center

has to offer or volunteer with the different programs.

One of the biggest programs provided by the senior center is the Meals On Wheels, which offers hot meals to senior citizens. Through this program, the center delivers over 36 hot meals a day to members of the community.

"Sometimes these are the only visitors that these folks get," said Parker. "It's not just about the meal, it's about making sure these people are still okay. It's about the hugs."

As of right now, there are five full-time employees at the senior center. Those who wish to volunteer may visit the center for more information.