

Roads...from Page 1

afternoon and evening. The administration had to act and respond they did.

Folks couldn't get out from their homes, some couldn't get home and some were without water because of the high waters experienced in Young Harris on Wednesday evening and on into the night and early morning hours of Thursday.

"The damage was isolated to the Young Harris area," Commissioner Kendall said. "Hiawassee only saw slight damage compared to Young Harris and their road troubles."

"Clyde and the guys responded as soon as they could and starting making the needed repairs, which they finished up on Friday," Kendall said.

"I couldn't be more pleased in the effort to help the folks in those washout areas. We've had nothing but positive calls from everybody and we want to thank the crew for all they did."

"I also want to thank the residents too, for being patient while the repairs took place," said Kendall.

Crisp Road was one of the worst hit areas, being that it was a complete washout.

Residents were stranded and their water supply was interrupted as flash flood waters rose.

Clyde Shook, Road Superintendent, explained why

these roads sustained such damage during the storms.

"The ground was already saturated from all the rain we've had so far this year and then a large amount of rain fell in a short period of time and the creeks just couldn't handle all the water," Shook said. "When the ground is saturated, a big rain can wash out around the pipe."

"These old pipes washing out is better after the repair because we replace them with a pipe that is coated in aluminum and they will last a lot longer without having to be replaced," Shook said.

"Galvanized metal was designed to last a long time but what we are seeing is only about a twenty-thirty year life span before we have to replace them," explained Shook.

Towns County and surrounding areas have seen more than five feet of rain this year and meteorologists are expecting the trend to continue.

Rain damage like was seen in Young Harris this week is a result of a full Tennessee Valley Water Table.

Lake levels are the highest seen in decades, the ground is saturated and if the situation builds itself comparably to this week, flooding conditions could occur as the summer progresses.

Parade...from Page 1

a part of this year's festivities and look forward to seeing all of you on July 20th," Speaker Ralston said. "I know that I join all Georgians in expressing best wishes for another wonderful fair."

Both Gov. Deal and Speaker Ralston look forward to another first in Georgia Mountain Fair parade history. Four-year-old Christian Taylor, who has endured numerous heart procedures in his short lifetime, will be the parade's first Towns County Grand Marshal.

The Grand Marshals will ride in horseless carriages courtesy of the Horseless Carriage Association of America, Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said.

"Without a doubt, this will be one of the most memorable parades in Georgia Mountain Fair history," Thomason said. "We're proud to have the Governor and the Speaker, and we're excited



Hilda Thomason

to celebrate the good health of Christian Taylor."

Christian, the son of Jonathan and Jennifer Taylor, of Hiawassee, and grandson of Danny and Betty Wood Taylor, of Hiawassee, was born on June 9, 2009 with Tetralogy of Fallot with Pulmonary Arteritis (TOF-PA).

He has had three open heart surgeries. His first surgery was at 2 months old, again at 8 months old, and a third at almost 2 years old. He has also

had three heart catheterizations resulting in four stents.

TOF-PA is a rare heart defect that only affects .07 cases per 1,000 live births.

TOF-PA involves four heart defects, a large ventricular defect (VSD); pulmonary Arteritis (born without main pulmonary artery); right ventricular hypertrophy; and an overriding aorta.

The good news is, Christian's heart is repaired and working properly, although he will need several more heart caths and an open heart surgery in the next 10-15 years.

In prior generations this was known as "blue baby" syndrome where babies came home, turned blue, and passed away.

Thanks to pioneering techniques by his surgeon Dr. Charles Fraser the Chief Surgeon at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, Texas, the outlook of these babies born with this defect is great with

them living a full normal life.

"We are so thankful for all of the thought and prayers from so many people," his parents Jonathan and Jennifer Taylor said. "He is doing great, is a very happy little boy who is so energetic with a wonderful zest for life. You would never know of his heart condition if you meet him."

Yes, the 63rd Annual Georgia Mountain Fair Parade looks to be quite an event. To top the day off, Mel Tillis will perform at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. on the day of the parade.

And don't forget the North Carolina Regional Horseless Carriage Group will hold their 62nd Annual Group Tour this year in Hiawassee on July 15-19th.

The group of automobile enthusiasts will be in town to tour over 400 miles of scenic beauty provided by the back roads of Hiawassee, Blairsville, Young Harris, Blue Ridge and Murphy.

doing: being free.

It is what our founding fathers desired.

Our second President John Adams suggested that the Fourth of July, "ought to be celebrated with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations from one end of this great country to the other."

The United States Congress declared the Fourth of July a federal holiday and we have celebrated it ever since with the very things Adams said we should.

Happy Birthday America,

Fireworks ...from Page 1

Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776 and the United States of America was born.

The Fairgrounds honored this great date in history with a spectacular fireworks show that awed fans young and old.

Patrons parked inside the Fairgrounds were treated to an "in your face" fireworks show that spectators could watch from launch to explosion.

The colors were magnificent against a dark and rainy sky that had already postponed the event from the night before and was threatening to again.

"We set up the show this afternoon and kept it dry, Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said. "We were just going to gather at around 9:15 p.m. to see if it was raining or not. We were determined to go if we could because we had to postpone on Thursday and fortunately the weather gave us a break."

"I would like to thank all our sponsors and volunteers for their support," she said. "Our corporate sponsors were Lake Chatuge Lodge, North Georgia News, Towns County Herald, Holiday Inn Express and United Community Bank.

It was a fantastic small town Fourth of July celebration that rocked the valleys around Lake Chatuge.

There were hotdogs, cokes, blankets, fellowship, children playing and old folks "catching up."

It was America coming together and celebrating the right to do just what they were



Commissioner Bill Kendall

Kendall said. "We had some minor increases but overall it is basically the same as last

year. "The Enotah Court System fiscal year is different than

County road crews were busy over the holiday weekend.

Akins to lead North Georgia Network

Clarkesville—The North Georgia Network (NGN) Board of Directors has elected Matthew Akins of Blairsville, as its board chairman of the non-profit organization that constructed a 1,100-mile fiber optic network across North Georgia.

Akins succeeds Todd Pealock, CEO of Habersham Electric Membership Corporation, who chaired NGN's board during the three-year construction of the new communications network.

"I'm honored to lead NGN forward from construction into its operational and expansion phases," said Akins, who has been involved in fiber construction and broadband distribution services for more than a decade at Blue Ridge Mountains EMC. "NGN is preparing rural Georgia communities for the opportunities and demands of the Digital Age."

Akins is general manager and CEO of Blue Ridge Mountain EMC in Young Harris, where he has been employed since 1997.

He is an electrical engineering graduate of Southern Polytechnic State University in Marietta.

The Network's departing chair, Pealock said, "I am proud to have been a part of the start and development of NGN. It will bring a great future to our communities."

The NGN board elected Pealock to serve as Vice Chair for 2013.

Blue Ridge Mountain and Habersham Electric



Matthew Akins

Membership Corporations are among the founding members of the NGN Cooperative, incorporated in 2009 to build a fiber optic network through eight rural counties under the National Broadband Technologies Opportunity Program.

The network, built to support economic development and job creation in the region, serves Dawson, Habersham, Lumpkin, Rabun, Towns, Union and White counties, with Franklin, Hart and Stephens counties soon to be connected.

The North Georgia Network, which was completed in 2012, provides gigabit-level Internet service to businesses, schools, health care and governmental agencies, as well as residents in some areas.

It was funded by the federal government broadband stimulus program, Habersham and Blue Ridge Mountain EMCs, the state of Georgia, the University of North Georgia and local communities in the region.

Veteran Field Offices closed this week

All State Veteran Field Service Offices will be closed this week (July 8-12) for Annual Training. This training is necessary to ensure State Veteran Field Service Officers and State Veteran Claims and Appeals Officers maintain their VA certification and stay up-to-date on the latest changes to VA regulations governing veterans' federal benefits.

Although the Central Office in Atlanta will remain open (from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) for business, starting Monday, July 8, through Friday, July 12, 2013, GDVS ask Georgia veterans to call VA's toll free customer service number, 1-800-827-1000 or go to www.va.gov and click "Contact Us."

All State VFSOs and the department's Claims Division are scheduled to open back for business on Monday, July 15, 2013, at 8 a.m.

The Georgia Department of Veteran Service apologizes for any inconvenience this may cause and ask for Georgia veterans' understanding as GDVS strives to continue to provide the highest level of service to the state's 776,000-plus veterans and their dependents.

For more information regarding GDVS Annual Training please contact Brian Zeringue, GDVS Public Information Officer, at (404) 656-5933.

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