

R.I.P...from Page 1

mately at 7 p.m. on July 11th. The well was in close proximity to the residence where Adams-Donaldson lived.

Adams-Donaldson was reported missing on June 24th by family members.

Ledford and Stokes have confessed to the crime following extensive interrogations by Towns County sheriff's investigators and GBI agents, according to the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

Ledford and Stokes were already inmates at the Towns County Detention Center at the

time of their confessions, sheriff's reports show.

Prior to the murder charges, Ledford was being held on charges that include first-degree forgery, eight counts of deposit account fraud, and criminal trespass, Towns County arrest warrants show.

Stokes was being held on an obstruction charge, Towns County arrest warrants show.

The case has been handed up to Towns County Superior Court, where a Superior Court judge must decide bail for the two women.

Fair...from Page 1

join to tenderloin, but a three-pig pile up gave Hamika Fatback the inside track as she took advantage of the error and sizzled over the finish line to claim the checkered bib. The excitement was something to squeal about.

The crew ventured into Pioneer Village where they encountered the Creekside Country Strings and they were making some of the "prettiest" mountain music one will hear. Listening to mountain folk make music was an experience some in the group had never experienced - they loved it.

Their next visit carried them to the end of Pioneer Village and to the sawmill manned by Stanley Wood of Hiawassee, who has been running the mill at the Fair for quite a while.

They ventured up the hill to John Ray Parker and he let Westhoven split some old time white oak boards that one would use to shingle a house.

Soaps by Sheryl was another favorite of the crew as the aroma of her soaps caught their attention and some of the crew stopped to look.

Westhoven was a real trooper as she visited each stop and shot her video for a special she is doing on fairs and festivals in Georgia that the family can enjoy.

Thomason is thankful for

the national news team to visit the Fair on opening day.

"We can't purchase this kind of exposure and I am so thankful we could be a part of their presentation," she said. This means a lot to the Fair and to the area as a whole. The network called me and asked if they could come and make some video for a documentary they were doing, and of course I said they could. For them to be here is just great."

The 63rd Georgia Mountain Fair is looking pretty good for the first weekend as far as numbers go, but Thomason is still concerned.

"We really need to get good weather forecasts so folks will come and enjoy the Fair," she said. "We have a lot to offer this year, and it would be a shame to get foul weather all week long. It doesn't look like its going to be a problem, but, we have had a lot of rain this year."

The Fair is rolling and the opening day numbers look pretty good. The interactive gaming area is a big hit, as is the Midway.

There is more food this year and the smoked trout are delicious. Good homemade ice cream is keeping folks cool and old-fashioned lemonade is keeping them hydrated. This year could be the best they have seen in a while. Lets all hope so.

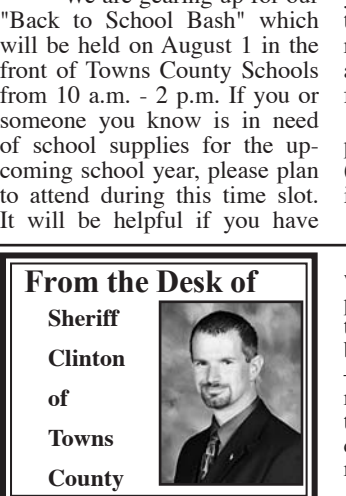
Back to School Bash for students

We are gearing up for our "Back to School Bash" which will be held on August 1 in the front of Towns County Schools from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. If you or someone you know is in need of school supplies for the upcoming school year, please plan to attend during this time slot. It will be helpful if you have

your child's school supply list or teacher's name with you upon arrival. Agencies will be on hand and activities will be available for children.

For more information, please contact Amy Rosser at (706) 896-4131 x 1233 or arbibby@townscountyschools.org.

From the Desk of



Addressing issues and concerns

There are a number of issues of growing concern that I will try to address over the next few weeks. Some of these issues involve new unfunded mandates and other issues involved in Georgia's "Criminal Justice Reform".

This "reform" will significantly impact our local government in ways most people may not be aware of. Aside from lowering the morals of our state by reducing the penalties of crimes, this "reform" also involves the new "restricted records". Unfortunately, not much thought was given to those who have traditionally performed the task of maintaining these records. As a result, the new law, which amounts to an automatic expungement of sorts, will require additional administrative duties. Once again, the cost of providing for the additional workload falls to the law-abiding local taxpayers.

Under the new law, which took effect July 1, if three people commit a burglary and one of the three is not prosecuted (for example, one decides to testify against the other two in exchange for not being prosecuted for the offense of burglary), the sheriff's office would have to redact that person's name from all records involving the case. This would mean that any request for that person's records would need to be examined thoroughly and cautiously. We

would have to determine if it applied to the case in question and the person's name would have to be removed from every document - from the 911 call, the incident report, the supplemental reports, the arrest report, the jail log, the case file, the District Attorney's records, etc., etc.

The new law also provides that, should this person request a criminal history and not like the way their record is reflected, they may file a civil suit against the agency disseminating those records. Many larger agencies may need to hire as many as a dozen or more employees just to comply with the law. As expensive as that will be, it hardly compares to the liability of not hiring the additional administrative staff. Even in Towns County, it is doubtful that we will be able to fully comply with the law without an additional administrative person.

Historically, the Office of Sheriff has been happy to assist our local citizens, businesses, schools, churches, and youth programs by allowing them to send their potential employees and volunteers for a criminal background check. Unfortunately, due to the liability and extreme cost of performing this task under the new law, we will no longer be able to provide this service. In an effort to continue to assist our citizens, however, we will provide them with the necessary tools to request this information directly from the GCIC center, who, by the same law, is required to comply with a written request for these records within three business days.

I have no doubt that this "reform" will save the state government money, but it will cost the local government, in my opinion, more than it saves the state.

Parade...from Page 1

North Georgia Mountains.

"It's always a beautiful place to come to," Gov. Deal said. "To be a part of this fair, and this parade, Sandra and I are just honored to be a part of it today. I'm glad to see the weather cooperated, there was a great crowd along the parade route, it was a great day for North Georgia."

It was like the old days of the Georgia Mountain Fair, when visitors came to Hiawassee, no one got in a hurry, and traffic was backed up as far as the eye could see.

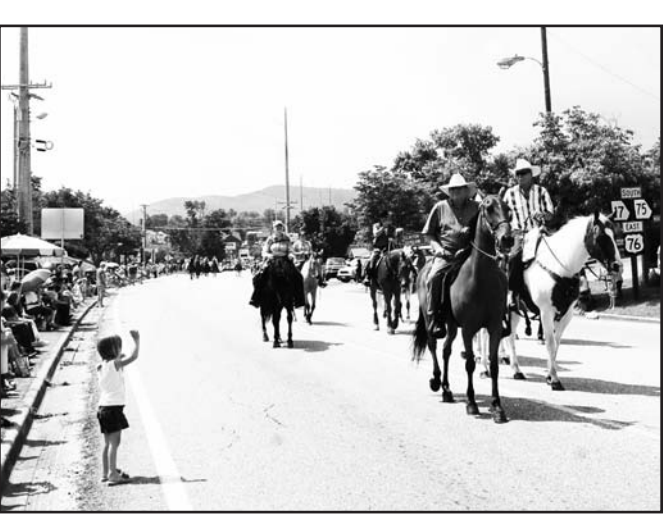
Gov. Deal said the crowd was an encouraging sign that economic recovery was emerging in the North Georgia Mountains.

"We hope so," he said. "The numbers are out for the 2013 Fiscal Year for the state, and we came in ahead of our projections, with the exception of our sales tax, which was down just very slightly."

"We did our best this past year to give folks some additional sales tax breaks," Gov. Deal said. "We've added a considerable amount of money to our Rainy Day Fund and that's always good."

Gov. Deal said it was humbling to be asked to be the Grand Marshal of such an historic event.

"Sandra and I always



A small Towns County child waves at the passing horses.

enjoy being able to see people," Gov. Deal said. "Given the privilege of being the Grand Marshal is indeed a great honor for both of us. It's great to see that people still come out and celebrate events such as this, and celebrate the fact that we are in one of the most beautiful parts in these United States. All of those things make for a good parade."

Speaker Ralston was ecstatic about his experience. It was his first ride in a horseless carriage.

"I've had a great time," Speaker Ralston said. "It's good to get up here and see a lot of old friends. There are so many people here today and every-

body's having a great time. It's been a little warm, but nobody seemed to mind.

"The mountains are home to me," Speaker Ralston said. "The mountains are a part of me. I take these mountains where ever I go. Once the mountains get in your blood, and get in your entire being, they're always a part of you."

"That's the great thing about the parade and the fair, it's a way that we celebrate our mountain heritage," he said. "Those of us who are fortunate enough to be born and raised in the mountains, we celebrate our way of life, year round. This week, we get to share our mountain heritage with people

from other places. That's what makes the Georgia Mountain Fair so special."

Following the guests of honor, an assortment of amazing parade attractions that sped by at a snail's pace so everyone could get a good look.

Sheriff Clinton and his crew kept the parade moving along the route that took them from the center of Hiawassee to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, approximately 1 hour and 10 minutes, plus a little extra time for some.

It was a family event that did Hiawassee proud just like it does every year.

House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison walked the entire parade route, as he does every year.

"It's such a blessing to be up here," Rep. Allison said. "The people are so warm and friendly, we always have a great time. Today was no different. That's the best parade we've been in."

"It's great to see the Governor and the Speaker here," he said. "I think it's great to have the Speaker of the House from Blue Ridge, the Governor from Gainesville, and the Lt. Governor from Gainesville. It's great to see Nathan and David coming up here and showing support for our mountains."

Pageant...from Page 1

happening."

From the standing ovation she received, it would be an understatement to say her class and grace had won over the crowd at Anderson Music Hall.

The building belonged to Jones on this night. And while the other young ladies were certainly deserving, you wouldn't find anyone who would take issue with Jones representing the local community and the Georgia Mountain Fair for the next 12 months.

"I look forward to working in the Fall Festival and the rest of this year's Georgia Mountain Fair, I hope to help support the Pageant in the parades, and I hope to visit the local high schools and create more enthusiasm for being in pageants," Jones, a sophomore at Belmont University said.

And what advice would hand out to future contestants?

"I would tell them to always be yourself, that is the most important thing," Jones said. "Everyone will love you just for who you are, and don't try to change to be like anyone else."

The First Runner Up was Leah Cheshire, a student at Young Harris College. The fourth of five Towns County representatives in the Pageant, came to Young Harris, via Bremen.



Miss Georgia Mountain Fair and her court. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Andrews, NC is home to the Second Runner Up, Britany Rowland, a one of two representatives from Cherokee County, NC.

"I've been so blessed by this experience and all of the girls have been so wonderful," Jones said. "I am so glad with all the friendships that I made, they are all so incredible and I am just blessed."

Also on the card for the evening were the previously mentioned Bellamy Brothers, and before them the Paris Dancers.

The Bellamy Brothers had an interesting day themselves, but for all the wrong reasons.

The duo's tour bus broke down in Chattanooga, Tenn. and they were two hours late for their 1 p.m. performance.

And when they arrived in Hiawassee, their instruments and equipment had yet to arrive.

"People that work here were calling around, rounding up guitars, and they found some amps in storage, so we took whatever was available," said Bellamy Brothers' Lead Guitarist Randy Hiebert. "I know a lot of it came from locals, but to be honest, I don't know where most of the stuff came from."

Fortunately, when they arrived back at the Hall for the 7 p.m. gig, their gear had arrived and Howard and David had all their tools at their disposal.

And the long-time veterans of Anderson Music Hall didn't disappoint.

The Reggae Cowboys played an hour long set that included all of their staples. Instantly the crowd would recognize the opening guitar lick, or the drum beat to hits like *Old Hippie*, *Do You Love as Good as You Look*, *If I Said You Had a Beautiful Body (Would You Hold it Against Me)*, *Let Your Love Flow*, or *Redneck Girl* and the Bellamys had Hiawassee in the palms of their hands.

Before the second show, the *Towns County Herald* got a few moments chat with the Bellamy Brothers about the past, future, and the hectic events from earlier in the day.

"It's been a heck-of-a-day and we spent the night on the side of the road, so we're a little worn out," Howard said.

"We didn't have our equipment for the first show, but they were very kind to us and gave us a standing ovation," David Bellamy added. "I don't know if it sounded good out there, but they seemed to like it."

The Bellamy Brothers are regulars in Hiawassee and try to play at least one show a year at The Hall.

"These people are like family up here," Howard Bellamy said. "We've been coming up here for at least 15-to-18 years, we always try to get here during tomato season," David Bellamy joked.

Bassmasters collegiate tourney Aug. 1-3

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Lake Chatuge Reservoir has been chosen as the competition waters for the 2013 Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship on August 1-3.

Young Harris College is sponsoring the event and the YHC Bass Club team of Brad Rutherford and Mathew Peeler have earned the right to compete in this year's championship.

Rutherford, a recent business and public policy graduate from Lavonia, and Peeler, a recent business and public policy graduate from Williamson, qualified for the championship by finishing fourth at the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series Wild Card tournament on Pickwick Lake in Florence, Ala. on June 14-15.

It was the last event that could qualify them for the championship and they made the best of it finishing fourth overall and claiming one of the 68 available spots for the event on Lake Chatuge.

The Bassmaster College Series is a unique college club competition that promotes bass fishing through fishing clubs on college campuses.

Campus fishing clubs started becoming popular several years ago and this will be the eighth year in a row that Bassmaster has held a national college competition.

According to College Series Manager Hank Weldon, the tournament "promises to be the biggest in the history of the series." Competitors will weigh in their catches each day at 3 p.m. on the YHC Campus Plaza, and the tournament will receive

national television coverage from ESPN.

Most major colleges in the United States and many small colleges now have at least one college fishing club team.

These teams are not part of the school academia, but are a separate club inside the parameters of the sponsor school.

The teams are not financially supported by the school and must fund their travels and expenses privately.

YHC Assistant Professor of Biology Jonathan Davis, Ph.D., is the team's advisor and scientific expert.

This event represents a lot of "firsts" for the Bassmaster College Series.

It is the first time in its eight-year history that the event will be held outside of Arkansas, which says a lot about the quality of Lake Chatuge and its fish.

It is the first time that a Carhartt Series weigh-in will be held on a college campus as YHC will host the weigh-in on the plaza in front of President's Office, and it is the first time a team from outside the U.S. will compete as a team from Monterrey, Mexico qualified.

It is also the first time Bassmaster has held a national tournament on Lake Chatuge in Hiawassee.

The tournament will be held three days starting on Thursday, Aug. 1st with a 6:30 a.m. launch.

The fan expo will begin each day at 1 p.m., as the event sponsors set up their merchandising booths for all to see.

The public is welcomed to the expo and the weigh-ins.

"We encourage folks to come out for all three days of the weigh-ins and check out the expo which is open to the public. The tournament spon-

sors will be here so everyone can explore the vendors and learn a thing or two or possibly pick up some new equipment if they so desire," said Jay T. Stroman, Vice President of Advancement at YHC.

The format will have the teams qualifying for one of five spots allowed on the third day of competition. The third day is the only day in which teams can win the national title. Teams qualify up to five bass per day with the five heaviest combined weights for the first two days determining the Top Five teams for the Saturday, Aug. 3rd final. The final weigh-in will be held on the campus of YHC as well so plan on coming to the exciting finale.

This is a huge event for Towns County and for host YHC.

"We are pleased to host this national collegiate tournament and to have bass fishing teams from all over the country visit our campus," said YHC President Cathy Cox. "YHC's bass fishing program is a huge asset to our community, and I am so proud of our team that continues to grow and thrive as they compete locally, regionally and nationally."

Four of the final five teams will advance to the Carhartt College Series Classic Bracket, which will be

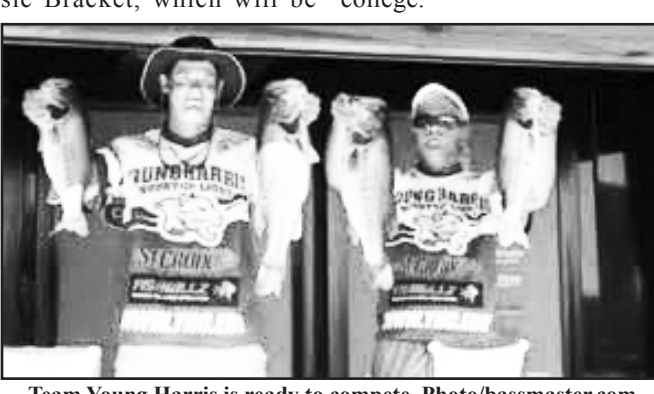
held in conjunction with the Bassmaster Elite Series post-season tournament held during the Toyota All-Star Week, Sept. 27-29 in Muskegon, Mich.

This event will send one team to the 2014 Bassmaster Classic to be held Feb. 21-23 in Birmingham, Ala.

"I think this tournament is going to be huge for the College and for the people of our area," said Rutherford, who led YHC's team to a 10th-place finish in the national championship last year. "Having the tournament on Lake Chatuge will allow us to show off this great lake we have and hopefully host more big tournaments in the future. I'm proud to be a part of this monumental moment for YHC."

Sixty-eight two-angler teams representing 49 colleges and universities will make their way onto Lake Chatuge. Once the National Championship begins, the entire field will compete for two days to determine which teams can weigh in the heaviest five-bass daily limits. The field will be cut to the top five teams for the final round, after which the Carhartt College Series National champions will be crowned.

For more information about the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship, visit bassmaster.com/college.



Team Young Harris is ready to compete. Photo/bassmaster.com