

Possum...continued from page 1A

At the age of 81, Jones is still able to wow an audience and put on a spectacular performance.

"We're making a comeback, but we're a little bit slow about it. The doctor says we're doing better," said Jones.

He joked with the crowd in between songs and they loved every minute of it.

"I don't know what's happened to country music these days," said Jones. "The artists have quit singing and the radio stations have quit playing good old cheating and drinking songs."

"But I've still got a few and I'm going to keep on singing them," he said.

And sing them he did. When he performed *Tennessee Whiskey*, the fans went wild and that set the scene for the rest of the evening.

Folks paid for a seat, but few used them as they were up on their feet most of the evening showing their love for this legendary country music icon.

Jones went on to perform some of his other great hits including *He Stopped Loving Her Today*, *The Race is On*, *Who's Gonna Fill Their Shoes*, and many other crowd-pleasing hits.

Brittney Allen, who performed alongside Jones, told the audience they had brought some of Jones' all time favorite CDs, including his latest, and

said, "we've got plenty, enough for everyone."

A witty Jones interrupted Allen and said, "We've got thousands. I don't need the money, but my relatives do."

Jones is one of the best-charting country artists of all time, with a staggering list of hit singles in every decade since the 1950s.

The Texas native also has 143 Top 40 hits to his name, has received two Grammy Awards, was a 2008 Kennedy Center Honor recipient, is a Country Music Hall of Fame inductee, was presented with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award this year, and holds a National Medal of Arts.

Confederate Railroad opened for Jones with their high energy music that can only be described as an earthy, cowboy style of country rock.

They performed several of their most popular hits including *Jesus and Mama*, *Queen of Memphis*, and the controversial *Trashy Women*.

Fans applauded, whooped, and hollered after every song.

This was just a great night to be at Anderson Music Hall and to witness the end of a Country Music era. Jones is a one-of-a-kind talent that will be missed by all who love him and those who just appreciate his classic style of Country Music. God's speed Possum.

BOE...continued from page 1A

storm' so to speak regarding funding for the Towns County Schools."

"In its conception, funding for schools was to be a joint effort between the state and local government. The state has cut funding to local schools requiring the local government to shoulder more of the financial responsibility for the schools," said Williams.

Williams reports that "each school system is assessed a local 5 mill share by the state funding level and this figure is taken out of any state earned funding before any funds are sent to the local system."

The amount withheld for the FY13 was \$4,221,111.

Williams went on to explain that the state takes another portion from any state earned funds for local schools through an "Austerity Reduction" cut.

According to Williams, the total taken from Towns County state earned funds since 2008 has totaled \$2,204,727 with the figure for the present year being a cut of \$424,395.

Towns County is one of several counties statewide that collects an additional 1 percent sales tax that is used to fund the general maintenance and operations of the schools.

"With the community being hit hard by the economic downturn, the school system has experienced quite a drop in this revenue source as well, down from \$2,301,355 in FY07 to \$1,778,582 in FY12," said Williams.

Williams stated that the board has been relying on its fund equity account (the rainy day fund according to Williams) to balance the budget and make up for the funding shortfalls for the last four years instead of passing the burden on to the local tax payer.

"Unfortunately, the economic situation has not improved and the fund equity account is near depletion," said Williams.

Williams went on to explain the increased expenses the board is now facing: personnel costs resulting from advanced degrees and salary step increases in the amount of \$255,000 (by law, the school system is required to pay on the state approved Teacher

Salary Scale which provides compensation for advanced degrees and experience levels); insurance costs for both certified and non-certified employees which has risen to \$190,000; and teacher retirement liabilities that the school system is responsible for have risen to \$75,000.

Williams also noted that "depending on weather conditions, the system could see an increase in energy costs this winter for both heating the facilities and bus fuel as well."

Larry Kimsey, School Board Chairman, said, "The state says they are not raising taxes and not cutting educational programs. What they are doing is cutting the funding for school programs and still requiring the programs and passing the burden on to the local taxpayers."

Williams said, "The board did make cuts to the budget before making the decision to seek a millage increase. Ten positions were eliminated; class sizes were increased above the state maximum size limits; existing staff were used to fill vacancies; program offerings were changed to increase state funds; the school calendar is still operating at 178 student days instead of 180 and 184 teacher days instead of 190, and the system decreased selected benefit options provided to employees. Those cuts saved the school system approximately \$500,000."

The proposed millage increase of .936 will result in a revenue increase to the system of approximately \$719,000, according to Williams.

Michael Anderson, Vice Chairman, said, "We have not raised taxes in the past, but relied instead on our fund equity in the revenue shortfall. We just don't have the funds to do this anymore. We have made cuts that we feel will reduce expenses without jeopardizing the quality of education we provide to our students and without laying people off."

"Yes, we cut positions, but most of those were filled with 49 percent employees who had already retired. We won't be so fortunate next time," said Anderson.

Healing Hands Community Clinic celebrates third year

Healing Hands Community Clinic is joyfully celebrating its third year of providing health care to the uninsured/financially disadvantaged members of our community.

Healing Hands is a non-profit, non-denominational faith-based clinic that is staffed completely by volunteers whose mission is to provide the best possible health care and show the love of Christ to our neighbors in need.

The clinic began as a MASH type unit in the fall of 2009. House of Prayer Church generously offered the use of the Family Life Center and every Saturday morning the volunteers would drive up and unload plastic storage tubs full of charts and supplies. At that time the clinic had one provider, Dr. Bryan Johnson, and a handful of volunteers. In the fall of 2010 the clinic moved to its present location, Village Towne Center, 64 Brackett's Way, Suite #3 (behind KFC) in Blairsville.

Healing Hands has come a long way in the three years since its founding-the clinic now has lab capabilities, 4 providers, a visiting chaplain program and the

best family of volunteers (nurses and lay people) that any facility could ask for. Healing Hands is open on Saturday mornings from 8 a.m.-12 noon.

The vision for future growth of the clinic is large (to be open 5 days a week, provide dental care, etc) and will require the community (individuals, businesses, churches and community organizations) to muster their resources and wholeheartedly pitch in and support the mission of Healing Hands.

Healing Hands Community Clinic is aptly named as it desires to serve the whole community, regardless of county of residence or religious affiliation. The volunteers graciously invite you to join them on a Saturday morning to help serve our wonderful patients. The mission field is ripe right here in your own neighborhood and the need for workers is great.

Awesome job Healing Hands Community Clinic-keep up the good work. You may contact the clinic at 706-995-6768 or email at healinghandscommunityclinic@yahoo.com. Visit the website at www.healinghandscommunityclinic.com. NT(Nov.21,12) SH

The Show...continued from page 1A

on Broadway in 1950 and ran for 1,200 performances. It was conceived by producers Cy Feuer and Ernest Martin as an adaptation of Damon Runyon's short stories.

These stories, written in the 1920s and 1930s, concerned gangsters, gamblers, and other characters of the New York underworld.

The following students brought the story to life on a set that showed spectacular creativity and design: Matthew Gay (Sky Masterson), Erin Westberry (Sgt. Sarah Brown), Bradley Rogers (Nathan Detroit), Christa Hamill (Miss Adelaide), Zyndel Payne (Lt. Brannigan), Austin Stephens (Harry the Horse), Aaron Dodson (Big Jule), Dustin Carver (Nicely Johnson), Kale Evans (Benny Southstreet), MegAnn Bradley (General Cartwright), Tyler Woodward (Society Max), and TCHS Principal Roy Perren (Arvide Abernathy). Lead dancers were Lindy Hollingshead, Caitlyn Sheffield, Ansley Vardeman, and Taylor Vardeman.

Behind the scenes students include: Kayla Olin, Student Director; Amber Williams and Alicia Williams, Costume and Design; Sara Scott and Hannah Anderson, Tech Crew, and Amy McIntyre, Choreographer.

Adams wanted to make sure that all that helped make this production a great success



Chris Adams and his talented students score again with *Guys and Dolls*. Photo/Libby Shook

were recognized.

Brasstown Dance choreographer, Amy McIntyre, donated her time to come and work with the students, Adams said.

"I believe she was concerned that I would come up with the dances. I don't dance," he said. "Well, maybe I should say that I shouldn't dance. It's scary and if you're close to me, it's dangerous."

Adams acknowledged Brasstown owner, Susan Vardeman, as well as Nina Kurrim-

bukus.

"They worked overtime helping with costumes and the programs."

Kudos to Kevin Olin, owner of K.C. Olin, Inc., who donated the materials and built the set for the show.

"The speed and quality shown was outstanding. This was the biggest set we've ever had, and Kevin and his guys built it in less than a day," said Adams.

Adams noted that Supe-

rior Paint of Hiwassee "really came through with the paint needed to paint the set. I am so grateful for their sponsorship."

"Casey Cagle, owner of Sweet and Sparkly Cakes, Inc., spent hours drawing and painting to make the set quite a sight to see," said Adams.

Adams extended a special "thank you" to Roy Perren, Georgia Corn, United Community Bank, Park Sterling Bank, Phillip Sampson, and Mark Mote.

Seniors ...continued from page 1A

sweet occasion as this was the last time they will meet at the old Senior Center that has held so many sweet memories for them over the years.

Future meetings will be held at the new Senior Center.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall and his wife Jean Kendall as well as the staff of the Commissioner's Office were a part of this celebratory event.

"Jean and I enjoy our association with the Mountain Community Seniors, and we thank them for the worthwhile projects they do in the county," the commissioner said. "

It was a pleasure for me and my office staff to accept their invitation to their delicious Thanksgiving luncheon," said Kendall.

Thursday's scheduled entertainment canceled unexpectedly and Alisa Richards of the Towns County Commissioner's Office stepped up to the plate and led the group in a very moving God Bless America.

Jean Kendall provided the blessing for the meal.

Everyone had a wonderful time and enjoyed the wonderful meal that had been provided.

Mountain Seniors President Shirley Stallings welcomed everyone to the dinner and went over some old and



There was no shortage of food at the Mountain Seniors recent Thanksgiving feast.

new business including the covered dish Christmas luncheon that will be held at the new Senior Center on Dec. 13th at 2 p.m.

"Jimmie Browning will favor us with her beautiful violin music and this is an event you will not want to miss. If you are a senior 50 years or older, you are invited to attend and bring a covered dish," said Stallings.

Stallings encouraged all present to bring a gently used book and a covered dish and come out and celebrate the Christmas season at the new

senior center.

"One of our endearing projects, in which we are participating, is our program of 'Books for Veterans.' Bring a gently used book that you have enjoyed, and place it with those collected to be delivered to the Veteran's Rehabilitation Center in Atlanta," said Stallings.

In this upcoming season of giving, it is wonderful to see this kind of outpouring of affection, generosity, and remembrance for our veterans.

If you would like to donate a book for this worthwhile senior project or should you

have questions or just desire additional information concerning the Mountain Seniors, feel free to contact Shirley Stallings at (706) 896-7943 or Ina Kozesky at (706) 896-2995.

"Bring your smiles and enthusiasm and let's get to know each other and share ways to contribute to the betterment of our mountain community," said Stallings.

Other than regular dinner meetings, the Mountain Seniors hold their regular meetings on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 1 p.m.

Seasonal art exhibit excels at Brasstown

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
libby.tcherald@windstream.net

The halls were decked and Christmas was definitely in the air as Christmas trees were to be found at every turn and Christmas lights lit the path to the beautiful Brasstown Valley Resort.

The Resort played host to some of the most talented artists in the Southeast for the Mountain Arts Association's 'Changing Seasons' art exhibition on Friday, Nov. 9th.

Folks gathered downstairs for the art show featuring 22 area member artists with 50 pieces of art ranging from oil, acrylic, watercolor, pastel, charcoal, and photography hanging on every wall and lining the hallway.

Fine wines and hors d'oeuvres were served as guests and artists discussed the art work on display and artists exchanged ideas with fellow artists.

The artists were more than happy to discuss their craft and explain their art work to anyone willing to listen, as well they should be as they had all definitely earned bragging rights with their craft.

Mountain Arts Association President Barbara Terrell was in charge of the exhibit and had her work represented as well.

Terrell was quick to brag on the many talented artists participating in this year's exhibit.

Terrell has been active in the visual arts her entire life.

She recently taught a class, 'The Natural Way to Draw,' at Young Harris College's ICL program.



Jackie West displays her art work at the Changing Seasons art exhibit at Brasstown Valley Resort. Photo/Libby Shook

gess said, "This is my fourth time and this is the best show by far. We're getting some top notch artists in from as far away as Asheville and Atlanta."

Burgess is an award-winning painter working primarily in oil. He has garnered numerous one-man gallery shows and commissions and his work is widely collected.

Bill Suttles of Blairsville said, "I enjoy the support of the community and this is a wonderful opportunity to see all the

great work of local artists right here in one place."

"The artists enjoy seeing all the other artists work as much as the visitors," said Suttles.

Suttles works with oils, pastels, and acrylics in his art work as he captures landscapes and figurative work on canvas.

This exhibit will be on display in the gallery from Nov. 9th - March 22, 2013.

available for purchase and would make a lovely addition to any home or office.

The Brasstown Valley Art Gallery was established in the Spring of 2009 as a premier venue for local fine art.

The Gallery seeks to enhance the experience of visitors to the area and to serve the local community's cultural needs.

For more information on the Mountain Arts Association, please visit them at www.themountainartsassociation.org.