

Sweet 16...continued from page 1

Mt. Zion 28-13 at halftime. In the third quarter, Moss came alive, scoring nine of the Lady Indians' first 11 points on a trey, 4 for 4 free throw shooting, and a drive to the basket for two by the 3:54 mark. Moss' effort helped put the game on easy street as the Lady Indians led 39-15.

They led 48-21 entering the fourth quarter and it didn't get any better after that for the Lady Eagles as

the Lady Indians extended their lead in the fourth quarter for a 67-31 victory.

Scoring leaders for the Mt. Zion game for the Lady Indians were Arencibia with 20 points, Bleckley with 14, Moss with 9 and Lindsay Patton with 6. Ben Pong and Makayla Underwood each finished with 5 points. Leading in assists, according to your reporter's tally, were Underwood with 4 and

Bleckley and Patton with 2 each. Five different Lady Indians sank at least one 3-pointer in the game for a team total of 11 with Arencibia and Bleckley leading the way with four each. Also, the Lady Indians returned to a season pattern of excellent free throw shooting with 14 for 17 accuracy after struggling a bit at the line in the Region Semi-Finals and Finals.



Lady Indians' fans celebrate their team at Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium. Photo/James Reese

Ladder Truck...continued from page 1

Towns County firefighters for two nights. The hometown boys were treated as if they were members of those two departments and were able to respond on a number of alarms during their stay.

The local firefighters came away not only with a good understanding of their

new truck, but also had an opportunity to experience the life in a busy, urban department.

You can probably pick those four firefighters out today. They're the ones that still have that big smile on their faces, and they are still talking about the experience they gained and the friendships they formed.

The truck is designated as Ladder 6 and will be housed at County Fire Station 6 located on Sunnyside Road. You will probably see it in the community as our firefighters train on its use and become familiar with its capability, so stop by and ask them to give you a tour.

Gas Prices...continued from page 1

On Thursday, motorists traveling through Blairsville did a double-take as the price of regular unleaded at both Circle K locations in the city had swelled to \$3.39 per gallon. It didn't take long for prices at surrounding convenience stores to jack their prices up to the same price or just under that cost.

In Hiwassee, prices went up gradually, but go up they did. Gas lines quickly formed before prices rose, with waits of up to 20 minutes for motorists at some stations.

Thursday morning, gas prices in Hiwassee and in unincorporated Towns

County began to rise. Slowly, but surely, they made it to the \$3.25 per gallon price at most stations. Cash Gas stayed at \$3.15 a gallon on Thursday.

On Friday, the price at Cash Gas went up to \$3.25 a gallon and remained steady throughout the weekend. On Monday afternoon, the price spiked to \$3.29 a gallon, with most stations following Cash Gas' lead.

On Monday, oil prices dipped to \$97 a barrel with concerns over the global oil market eased amid televised reports that some Libyan shipping ports had been reopened to oil tankers and Saudi Arabia was boosting exports.

The price of crude per barrel soared higher than \$100 a barrel last week as the civil war in Libya continued on the outskirts of Tripoli, where Col. Gadhafi remains holed up with his family and security forces.

News on Monday had U.S. naval forces closing in near the Libyan coast. It won't be long before U.N. troops, that include the United States Military, take measures to end the senseless violence created by Col. Gadhafi, his sons and his security forces.

When the violence ends, the price per barrel of crude should begin to slide along with the prices at the pumps.

Defamation...continued from page 1

Gene Cooley around with allegations of child molestation, extensive criminal background, drug rehabilitation attempts, drug use and drug dealing," said Stookey, who represented Cooley in his defamation suit against the anonymous posters.

"Gene Cooley went to Florida to the funeral of Ms. Harper and was soon asked to leave her parents home due to a call from 'some woman' in Blairsville, Georgia," Stookey said.

The woman from Blairsville told Harper's parents all about Cooley, Stookey said.

"Gene went to the local sheriff's office, had a background check done which proved he had never been arrested for anything," Stookey said.

Cooley returned home to Blairsville to find that his name had been blasted all over TOPIX, Stookey said.

"When he went to work, he was fired since 'some woman' came to the hair salon and told the owner that

she and her friends would never use them as long as Gene Cooley was employed there," Stookey said.

Supposedly, the postings about Cooley were to "protect" Paulette Harper's young daughter from Cooley, who the anonymous posters had labeled as a "pervert" and "child molester" in the TOPIX chat room, Stookey said.

Eventually, the embarrassment, ridicule and lack of employment forced Cooley to move away from Blairsville and take up residence in Augusta, Stookey said.

Stookey filed suit on Cooley's behalf against an anonymous poster named "MOUTH", which Stookey said was the leader of the pack bashing Cooley.

Stookey subpoenaed TOPIX for the identity of "MOUTH" using the IP address, which is basically the fingerprint of personal computers. TOPIX was more than happy to oblige.

The legal pleadings determined that "MOUTH" was Sybil Denise Ballew of

Blairsville, Stookey said.

It also was determined that Ballew also had the aliases of "Calvin," "Mountain Man," "Yuck," "Bugs," "Pete," "David," and "Slim," Stookey said.

During the trial, Ballew admitted making each of the defamatory posts about Cooley, Stookey said.

Basically, Ballew was carrying on a conversation about Cooley with herself, disguised as each one of the anonymous names on TOPIX. She declined legal counsel during the trial and refused to apologize to Cooley for making the remarks, Stookey said.

The civil complaint was amended to include the true identity of the anonymous poster, Stookey said and the case went to trial on Jan. 12 before the honorable Judge David Barrett. A six person jury was selected to hear the case, court records show.

A six-member Union County jury awarded \$404,000 in damages to Cooley in January.

Widening...continued from page 1

State officials say funding for the project could become a reality by 2014. Construction is anticipated to begin by 2017.

Specifically, the proposed project would consist of widening the existing two-lane and three-lane roadway to a four-lane highway with

a median for the majority of the project, according to state documents.

In December, it was agreed upon that input and collaboration with locals would be crucial to the success of the project and, as a result, a follow up meeting would be scheduled to

discuss potential alignment alternatives, state documents show.

Overall, traffic concerns along the corridor are the reasoning behind the proposed widening project, GDOT Project Manager Steve Adewale said.

Storms...continued from page 1

old Polk County, Tenn. man was reportedly killed when a tree crashed through his mobile home Monday afternoon.

The five-day forecast according to the National Weather Service calls for cooler temperatures at night and with lows in the high 20s

and low 30s. It also calls for rain to return to the local forecast by Saturday.

Winter isn't over by a longshot in Towns County.

Volunteer Orientation for Gardeners

Maybe spring fever is getting to you, or perhaps you cannot tell a valuable native plant from a weed. Help is available. The Preservation Committee of the Community Council will kick off the 2011 season with its Volunteer Orientation on March 7, at 10 a.m., in the auditorium of the Georgia Mountain Research & Education Center. The orientation will be a great time to meet like-minded folks, learn more about the native plants of this area and maybe even enjoy a snack. It will provide an introduction to the Preservation Committee and its projects, and a short lesson on the various orchids native to this area. And you thought all we had was Kudzu.

This group of volunteers meets during spring, summer and fall to maintain the native plant gardens at the GMRE Center. In the Ethnobotanic Gardens, we prune, pull a lot of weeds, mulch the garden beds, and do general trail maintenance along the shady Woodland Medicine Trail. We have transformed an old cannery into an interpretive center and are working to restore an old spring into a peaceful spot to just sit with nature. We will be guiding tours of the gardens on Monday mornings, beginning in May.

We are very informal: some work for an hour or two, some of us work longer. We share the work and learn a lot about plants, birds and

anything else that lives in our gardens and in the southern Appalachians. Enthusiasm for plants is more important than extensive horticultural knowledge. Gardening in earnest begins on Monday, March 21 at 9 a.m., and will continue on the first and third Mondays of the month. So even if you can't make it to the Volunteer Orientation, please feel free to come to the gardens whether you plan to work or just visit. It is a great place to learn more about our native plants.

The GMRE Center is located three miles south of Blairsville on Hwy 19/129 south. For more information, please call Clare Johnston at 706-745-2655. NT(Mar2,Z6)CA

Consumer Protection warns about sweepstakes scam

The Governor's Office of Consumer Protection is warning consumers about a scam being perpetrated by a company calling itself American Direct Sweepstakes and Promotion Company. Consumers are receiving notification letters purportedly sent by Lincoln Financial Group, an alleged agent of the company, informing them they have won \$20,000 in a sweepstakes. The letter also falsely represents that the sweepstakes is affiliated with Publisher's Clearing House. Enclosed with the letter is a check for approximately \$1500, purportedly to cover non-resident taxes due on the winnings. Consumers are instructed to call a number for instructions on how to claim their prize. When the consumer calls the number, he is instructed to deposit the check and then wire most of the

\$1500 "back to the business" so that the taxes can be paid on his behalf. The consumer is told that he will receive a certified check for \$20,000 after the payment has been received.

Only that's not what happens. This is a classic fake check scam. The check sent may look real, and may even fool the bank, but it is counterfeit. Yet because banks are required by law to give you access to the funds you deposit within a few days, the check will still "clear". However, that does NOT mean the check is legitimate or that funds are actually available from the issuing bank. Unfortunately, it can take weeks or longer to discover that the check is a fake. In the meantime, the consumer will have already sent money to the scammer, (who is often located in another country). When the check bounces, the

consumer is responsible for reimbursing the bank the amount of the fraudulent check. Incidentally, since this is a scam, no check for \$20,000 ever arrives.

Consumers can easily identify this type of scam. Legitimate sweepstakes will NEVER ask you to pay taxes or fees to claim a prize, nor will they require you to send money to enter a sweepstakes.

If you receive a bogus sweepstakes solicitation or if you have been the victim of a sweepstakes or fake check scam, contact the Governor's Office of Consumer Protection at 404-651-8600 or 1-800-869-1123. You can also report it to the National Fraud Center at www.fraud.org.

For more information, contact Bill Cloud, Governor's Office of Consumer Protection, at 404-656-3790. TM(Mar2,F3)SH



Glossary for good health - part one

Acidophilus culture complex, including lactobacillus bacterium, is essential to good digestion and intestinal health. These bacteria counteract harmful organisms and help maintain a healthy colon. Most quality yogurts contain active acidophilus culture (it should be printed somewhere on the packaging). Yogurt should be consumed on a regular basis and especially after taking antibiotics and other medications that kill off both good and harmful bacteria.

Aconite is a homeopathic remedy for children's earache. Aconite also helps the body deal with sudden fright or shock.

Agar is a fibrous thickener used in foods and cosmetics. It is derived from a type of sea algae.

Algae, especially the blue and green varieties, are

also called phyto-plankton. They are harvested from the oceans. Blue green algae are considered perfect super-foods and may help alleviate world hunger someday in the future.

Algin is found in seaweed. It is useful in the treatment of obesity, asthma, and blood poisoning. Algin absorbs toxins from the digestive tract and keeps them from being absorbed into the body. Algin helps give a boost to the whole immune system.

Allantoin is an ingredient added to cosmetics and lotions. It is derived from the comfrey plant and is used as a skin protector and softener.

Alpha Hydroxy Acids (AHA's) are naturally occurring substances found in foods like apples, sugarcane, and sour milk. They dissolve the sticky lipids that hold cells together and can penetrate deep

into the skin to loosen clings bonds (and clogged pores). As the top layers of skin are loosened and released, a smoother complexion is guaranteed. Glycolic acid from sugarcane acts very quickly and very deeply, but can be irritating. Lactic acid from sour milk works slower and is a gentle alternative. Tartaric acid from grapes, malic acid from apples, and citric acid from lemons are all effective. The difference is in the pH. A lower pH (around 2.5) works quicker. A higher pH (between 3 and 4) has a moisturizing effect.

Alpha Tocopherol is an antioxidant that protects the body from free radicals (harmful by-products of cell metabolism). Alpha Tocopherol is found in wheat germ, nuts, seeds, eggs, organ meats, oats, and olives. It helps prevent sterility, improves circulation, promotes longevity, helps prevent blood clots, prolongs the life of red blood cells, strengthens capillary walls, helps the body to utilize vitamin A, contributes to healthy skin, makes hair shiny, and helps maintain the integrity of cell membranes. (Look for more on antioxidants next week.)

Anti-carcinogenic herbs and foods can stop or delay tumor formation and development. Some of the most useful include ginseng, garlic, echinacea, goldenseal, licorice, black cohosh, wild yam, sarsaparilla, turmeric, maitake mushroom, blueberries, beans, broccoli, other colorful vegetables, and quality soy products.

* Because some blue-green algae may be contaminated with toxins and heavy metals, do not give to children (and always purchase from a reliable dealer). Always consult with a healthcare professional before using any herbal remedy especially if pregnant, nursing, or taking other medicines. For more information, visit www.EveryGreenHerb.com. NT(Mar2,C1)JAC

Blue Eyed Girl to play at Folk School



L to r: Annie Fain Liden, Pearl Mueller, Ellie Grace

Old time music by Blue Eyed Girl, a string band from Asheville will be featured at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 4 in the Keith house Community Room of the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown. Admission is free, but donations are welcome.

Blue Eyed Girl is a dynamic group of three young women whose roots are deep in traditional music and dance. Their high-energy dance numbers, sweet Appalachian vocal arrangements, and old-time rhythmic flair draw from the music passed down to them from their families.

Pearl Mueller grew up in Black Mountain, NC, soaking up traditional Appalachian music and dance from her two fiddling parents. She picked up a tiny violin at age 5, and since then has fiddled her way through hundreds of foot-stomping contra dances and folk concerts. Pearl has toured the U.S. and beyond with contra dance band Mock Turtle Soup.

Ellie Grace spent her childhood performing professionally as a singer, multi-instrumentalist (guitar, man-

dolin), and dancer with her family band in Missouri. She now carries on her family's musical traditions, touring and teaching nationally and internationally, often as a duo with her sister, Leela Grace.

Annie Fain Liden was raised in Cherokee County, NC, where as a small child she often fell asleep under the piano at the John C. Campbell Folk School while her parents played for square dances. She has played banjo with several string bands in the Asheville area as well as with her parents, brother and sister in the Liden-Owen Family Band. She teaches banjo and book arts workshops from her studio in Asheville.

Upcoming Friday concerts at the Folk School will feature Castlebay (March 11) and Steel String Session (March 25).

The Folk School concert schedule is available on the world wide web at www.folk-school.org.

For further information call the Folk School at 828-837-2775 or 1-800-FOLK-SCH. NT(Mar2,M2)JSH

S.A.F.E. Board Meeting

The next monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of S.A.F.E. (Support in Abusive Family Emergencies, Inc.) will be Tuesday, March 15th, at 5 p.m. Call 706-379-1901 for location. NT(Mar2,Z8)CA