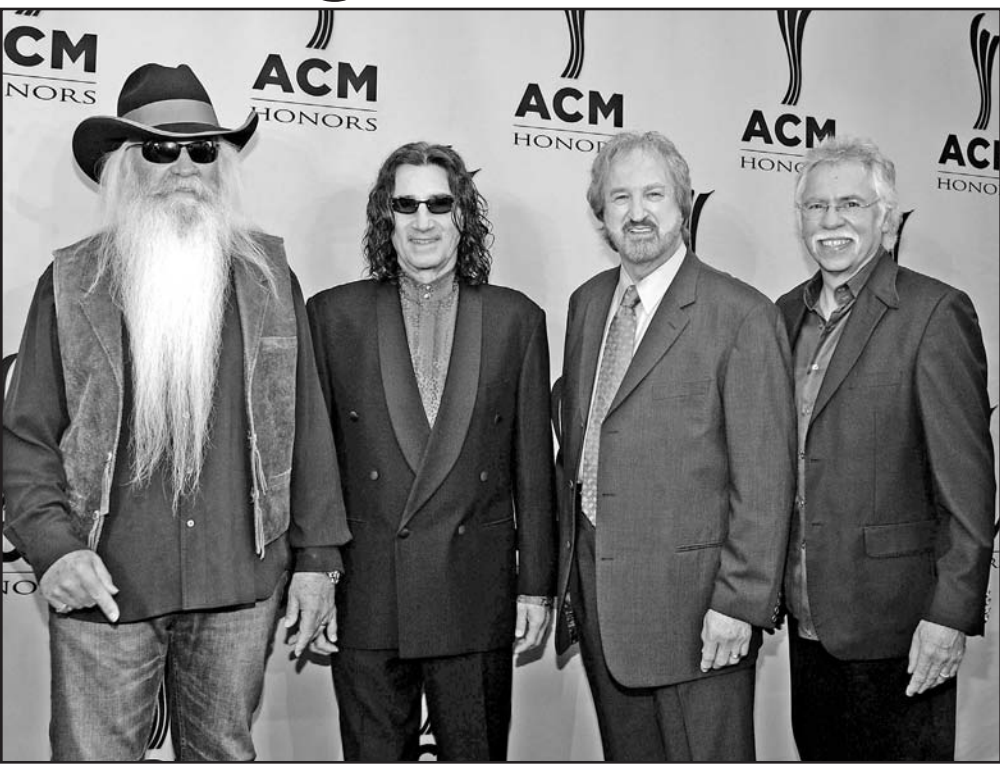


Oak Ridge...from Page 1



...foursome to be together, but we're still going strong," said Sterban. "That's the great thing about this - if 42 or 43 years ago you asked any one of the four of us if they thought that 42 or 43 years later we would still be doing this, and doing it at a high level, at this level - I don't think that any of us would have believed it.

"But here we are, 43 years later, still going strong. And the thing is, we do not plan to retire. We still love doing what we're doing, we still look forward every night to taking our music live audience to our fans and to our audiences. When we come to Hiwassee, that will be no exception for sure. We will certainly be looking forward to getting on stage that night as well."

Many know and love the classics by The Oak Ridge Boys, and Sterban wants every-

one to know that those are on the menu when they play the Fairgrounds on Aug. 21.

"When we come to town, the bulk of our show is going to consist of our hit records," said Sterban. "We've been very fortunate over the course of our career to have 23 No. 1 Country records, and close to 50 chart records. We have a lot of hit music and a lot of familiar songs, and people like to hear those hit records.

"So, a big part of our show is going to be Oak Ridge Boys hits. *Elvira* is going to be included for sure, you can count on that. And *Thank God for Kids*, that's another very special Oak Ridge Boys song that will be in the show, and *Leaving Louisiana in the Broad Daylight. Y'All Come Back Saloon*, our first hit ever, that will be there, and a lot of the hits that you expect to hear from

The Oak Ridge Boys."

Concert-goers can also expect to hear some of the new music that Sterban, Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall and William Lee Golden have produced of late, including always close-to-the-heart Gospel Music.

"Our latest album, which is doing very well for us, by the way, is a Gospel album," said Sterban. "It's called *The Oak Ridge Boys - Rock of Ages*. As that title implies, it is an album of old hymns - songs that all of us grew up on, songs that we've been singing from the time we all went to Sunday school in church as kids."

Tickets are currently on sale at the Fairgrounds for the 7:30 p.m. show on Friday, Aug. 21, with two levels available for \$42 and \$32 respectively. For more information, visit www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com.

Hiwassee...from Page 1

"The council approved, last meeting, moving forward with the ultraviolet light replacement, and the installation. So after that meeting, the mayor wrote to the vendors, telling them we had accepted their proposals, and they're going to get back with a time schedule

of when work can be done," said Stancil.

In the future the city will also be considering updates to its compensation plan for city employees.

"We have members of the public that want to revisit the compensation plan of the

city's salaries, that was last done almost 15 years ago. The University of Georgia, the Carl Vinson Institute, basically had done that for us years ago. And now at the request of members of the public we're going to look at updating it," said Stancil.

Speech...from Page 1

where direct communication, where talking to people, is being replaced by texts and these little pictures called emojis, and we are losing our ability to communicate."

Rep. Allison said that he was impressed that the contestants were taking it upon themselves to start speaking publicly at such a young age.

"When you put a young person up into a room to speak to 5 or 10 or 15 people, he becomes petrified," he said. "He can talk to this circle of friends at the lunch table, but talking to anyone else becomes a challenge. These young people, probably as young as 12, are going to come up here, and speak."

He explained that there is a common misconception that the only people who have to learn public speaking are "politicians and preachers." To combat this misconception, he gave examples of professions in which public speaking is required.

"One, because I am one, is a lawyer," he said. "Lawyers go in front of a jury all the time, and I'll be honest with you, I've been practicing now for 18 years. I can speak in front of hundreds of people and not feel nervous, but if I have to go in front of 12 people, in the jury box, I'm petrified."

Rep. Allison also praised teachers, because teachers have to give lectures and presentations, every day, which also requires a high degree of skill at speaking publicly.

"Some of these young people aspire to be teachers and forget that one of the primary components of being a teacher

is interacting," he said.

Finally, Rep. Allison spoke directly to the contestants.

"The biggest mistake people make in public speaking or anything else, don't evaluate your performance on where you want to be," he said. "You forget that sometimes you have to pay your dues and do these things. All of you are winners tonight. There's going to be someone who walks home with the check, and everyone in this room, respect the fact that you have the courage to come in front of these people and give a speech."

Finally, the contest began with the middle school students, who gave speeches on every topic ranging from popular comic book characters to the many uses of electricity. Peyton Barrett took home the prize for the sixth grade, Colton Wood won for the seventh grade, and Kenda Moody won for eighth grade.

Next, the high school students took the podium, most armed with controversial topics. They tackled themes of patriotism, religion, and education.

Several voiced their opinions on the dangers of liberalism and secularism. Others chose to speak out against homosexuality. Still others came down firmly on the side of Creationism and against the Theory of Evolution.

For his winning speech, Kendall Floyd spoke on the erosion of our First Amendment rights in the conservative South.

"The First Amendment is being restricted for some Southern conservatives because of their religion and heritage," he said.

Floyd explained that he

chose to speak on the topic after seeing the controversy caused because of Dylan Roof, the Charleston Church shooter. In the wake of the recent shooting, many public places opted to remove the Confederate flags from their landscapes.

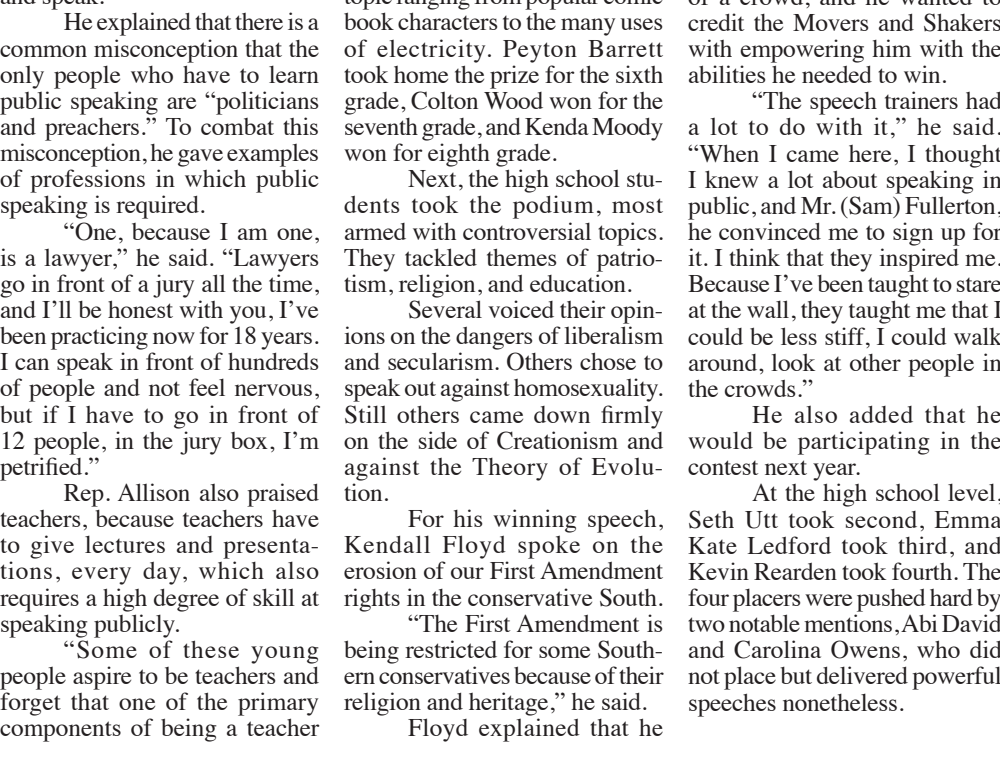
"I just think people need to realize that the ideals of one man do not reflect on the whole group of people," he said. "It's my heritage, it's what I believe, and I think that a lot of people don't give people from the South enough credit, and I'd like people to realize that we matter, too."

Floyd said that this was his first time speaking in front of a crowd, and he wanted to credit the Movers and Shakers with empowering him with the abilities he needed to win.

"The speech trainers had a lot to do with it," he said. "When I came here, I thought I knew a lot about speaking in public, and Mr. (Sam) Fullerton, he convinced me to sign up for it. I think that they inspired me. Because I've been taught to stare at the wall, they taught me that I could be less stiff, I could walk around, look at other people in the crowds."

He also added that he would be participating in the contest next year.

At the high school level, Seth Utt took second, Emma Kate Ledford took third, and Kevin Rearden took fourth. The four placers were pushed hard by two notable mentions, Abi David and Carolina Owens, who did not place but delivered powerful speeches nonetheless.



FBLA...from Page 1

These young business leaders worked tirelessly the entire year to make it to this level of competition, advancing from region to state to national level. Their dedication and strong work ethic paid off as the results were tallied.

Mia Manto is no stranger to national level competition. Having competed and winning at the national level her sophomore, junior and senior years, Mia has set a school precedent as no other competitor has achieved this task. Manto competed in the Client Service performance event and placed 5th in the nation. Manto said "I will be forever grateful for the experiences I have gained through my years of FBLA."

After placing first in the national last year in Nashville in Spreadsheet Applications, Senior Ashley Abrahamson competed in Computer Applications in Chicago and made it back on stage once again, placing 5th in the nation in her event. Abrahamson stated "Being a member of FBLA has been the best part of my high school career. FBLA has helped me grow into a better leader by increasing my confidence and developing my business skills. I am so grateful to Mrs. (Melissa) McConnell for encouraging me to be a competitor and having confidence in me, always pushing me to do my best. Without her, I don't know if I would have been successful. Thank you, Mrs. M for all you do."

Competing for the second time at NLC, senior Alana Calhoun competed in the Word

Processing event, where she placed third in the nation.

"FBLA has allowed me to gain knowledge and experience about the business world that will help me in my future career. Placing at nationals, showed me that dedication and perseverance eventually pay off and helped me understand the core work ethic necessary for this type of industry."

The presentation team of MegAnn Bradley, Kyle Davis and Emily Davis competed at NLC in the Public Service Announcement event.

"FBLA has impacted my life in many ways. Not only has FBLA helped with business skills, but my confidence and communications skills have increased. As a graduating senior, FBLA has successfully prepared me for the business world and my future career," Bradley said. Davis added, "FBLA has opened doors for me and has given me valuable experiences as I enter the business world."

First time competitors and freshmen Caden Pyrluk, Chase Williams and Jordan Hyatt competed in the Principles and Procedures event. They stated, "We are so glad we made the decision to get involved with FBLA and to compete this year. NLC was such a great learning experience and so much fun."

The Awards of Excellence Program is part of a comprehensive national competitive events program sponsored by FBLA that recognizes and rewards excellence in a broad

range of business and career related areas.

For many students, the competitive events are the capstone activity of their academic careers. In addition to the competitions, students immersed themselves in educational workshops, visited an informative packed exhibit hall, and attended motivational keynotes on a broad range of business topics throughout the conference.

The 2015 National Competitive Events Team from Towns County would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support throughout their journey including our Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong, our principal and counselor, Jonathan Gibson and Erica Chastain, the Board of Education, our parents and families, our teachers, our corporate sponsors and the Hiwassee community.

A special thank you is in order to FBLA advisers, Melissa McConnell and Billy Barnhart, who believe in the abilities of their FBLA team and support them to the end.

Corporate sponsors for Towns County FBLA include Lake Chatuge Rotary Club, Towns County PTSO, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Towns County Lions Club, Stephanie W. McConnell, attorney, Susan DeVries State Farm Insurance, and Pamela Kendall Floyd, attorney.

Congratulations to Towns County High's FBLA chapter, its members, advisers and national winners.

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"We're also seeking sponsors as well. You can pay \$250 and be a sponsor, and you get a table to set up inside. We've got vendors that will be setting up inside the auditorium, and you get four free tickets for your sponsorship, and you get to be on the big video screen in the music hall, and you also get on the big marquee down at the highway and on our website."

Doors open at 4 p.m., and the two-hour show flares into action at 6:30 p.m. - those looking for a preview of what's to come can search YouTube for Taste of Home Cooking School.

Then, on Saturday, Oct. 24, County Music Icon Gene Watson will be performing at the Fairgrounds. The 71-year-old Watson has been entertaining for decades, and his resonant voice is admired to this day

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by industry giants the likes of Willie Nelson, Merle Haggard and Moe Bandy. Tickets are now on sale for \$24.

And just confirmed to the roster of musical talent gracing The Hall this year is The Beatles/The Return, a Beatles cover band that will play the Fairgrounds on Saturday, Oct. 31, Halloween.

The Return are known for their painstaking attention to detail and pursuit of pure Beatles authenticity, and are renowned globally as one of the best Beatles cover bands ever.

Their show will be broken down into 50 minutes of early Beatles followed by a brief intermission and 50 minutes of later Beatles music.

Tickets for The Beatles/The Return go on sale Sept. 11 for \$33 and \$23.

All tickets can be purchased using the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds website, or by calling the Fairgrounds for more information.

Fairgrounds...from Page 1

Never Even Called Me By My Name, Would You Lay With Me (In A Field Of Stone) and *Mona Lisa Lost Her Smile*. Tickets for Coe are on sale now for \$34 and \$24.

Switching gears in The Hall, cooking enthusiasts won't want to miss the Taste of Home Cooking School Show coming Saturday, Sept. 19. The show promises exciting, energy-packed live cooking demonstrations featuring Chef Michelle Roberts, with plenty of door prizes and special perks for VIP tickets, which are only \$37.

VIP tickets are going fast, with only a handful remaining, and regular tickets can be purchased for \$17 - as anyone who has ever graced The Hall knows, there's no such thing as a bad seat.

"I am excited about it, I think it'll be a fun show," said Thomason. "It'll probably attract a lot of women more than it will men, because women like to cook, but we're going

to give away a bunch of door prizes - we're going to have 75 door prizes to give away on the stage.

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Back to School...from Page 1

"I don't miss preparing the lessons and all that hard work, but you still have the same interaction with the kids. Actually, you get to have a little bit more instead of just your grade level or just your subject area. In my position, I get to see grades 6-12," he said.

In contrast, Becky West is a new teacher who is just beginning her first year with Towns County.

"I'm just amazed at how well mannered the kids are, and I'm so proud to be here, I really am," she said. "And I think this is just awesome, the community is so involved, and I come from a situation where it always like that."

West, who is transferring from Columbus, is looking forward to getting involved in the homecoming parade and other events.

For senior Alyson Nelson, the new school year will be one of her last opportunities to spend time with her softball friends before heading off to college.

Nelson, who won first place in spreadsheet application at the Future Business Leaders of America National Competition, is planning to attend college at the University of North

Georgia in Dahlonega and majoring in accounting.

"I'm looking forward to the upcoming softball season, as well as just being family with my friends, having a lot of fun, and making it the best last year I can," she said.

After the open house, the teachers and administration only had one more day to prepare before classes started. For Dr. Connie Hobbs, the new high school principal, it was just a matter of providing the finishing touches to make sure the year got off to as smooth a start as possible.

"It went very well," she said of the first day back for students. "No major catastrophes, students got where they were supposed to go. There were a few schedule changes, we're working on that. Technically by Monday everyone will be in their correct class, but for my first day I thought it went great."

Hobbs said she didn't foresee any real problems for the rest of the school year.

"As smoothly as yesterday went, I think we've got it made," she said. "This past week, we've had days where we didn't have air conditioning, days when the Internet was

out, one day we couldn't get anything to copy. So I emailed all my teachers and told them if we can make it through this week with no AC and no copier and no Internet, I think that we'll be doing good. It's going to be a piece of cake from here on out."

Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong echoed that sentiment. Even though the school has gone through a number of faculty and administrative changes, he said that the school year is off to a great start.

"I actually think it's been one of the smoothest starts we've had," Dr. Berrong said. "Dr. Hobbs has fallen right in, and Mrs. (Erica) Chastain has kind of taken the job (middle school principal) right over, and I think it's going very smoothly, actually."

"I don't look for any complications right now," he added. "I feel very optimistic about this year actually, and then when we had our faculty breakfast the other morning with all our new staff, it felt like a new energy and it felt like everybody is ready to come back and I'm excited about this year. I think we're going to do great things and be stronger than we've ever been."

