

Vanzura dies at 69...continued from page 1

and big smile. "Carl and I had a running joke over the years," Henrikson said. "He always used to tell me he was a bad man who was good with people. Carl, we all know that you didn't have an evil bone in your body. "We're going to miss him, yes, we really are," she said. Vanzura was born on May 8th, 1942 in Compton, Calif. He is preceded in death by his father, Edward John Vanzura, and his mother, Florence Maxine Bridges Gregory Vanzura. He attended All Souls Parochial School in Sanford, Fla., and graduated from Seminole High School, Class of 1961, in Sanford, Fla. Vanzura was an avid sports fan who covered hundreds of motorsports events ranging from local and regional dirt and asphalt tracks to NHRA drag racing and NASCAR events. Vanzura coached Little League Baseball for more than 16 years. Among his teams, he coached a team of 13- and 14-year-olds into the Pony League World Series in Lafayette, LA in the early 1980s. Vanzura served as

Herald editor from 1995-2008. He first began in newspapers writing articles about local sports racing, as he did for a number of years. He was a sports reporter for the Sanford Herald in Sanford Fla. In a 2008 interview with the Herald, Vanzura said the biggest change during his tenure was the growth in the county, particularly Hiawassee. He said some of the stories he found hardest to report on was the problems with the sheriff's department under Sheriff Rudy Eller and Chief Deputy Eddie Osborn, as well as the death of Towns County Sole Commissioner Jack Dayton. "We were friends," Vanzura said, in reference to Commissioner Dayton. "Jack was a good ole boy, and I guess I am too." When Vanzura started, a yearly subscription cost \$12 and the paper was still in black and white. Today, a year's subscription is still within reason at \$15 per year; the paper is now in color on the front of its sections and back pages. Vanzura also worked at the Tri-County Racetrack

in Brasstown, NC in public relations for more than 10 years. Before relocating to Blairsville in 1991, Vanzura also worked for Hostess and Wonder Bread for 14 years. In his early years, Vanzura was one of a group of young racers who pioneered the Seminole Timing Association at the Osceola, Fla. Drag Strip in the early 1960s. Vanzura is survived by his loving wife of 48 years, Patricia Anne Smith Vanzura, two children, Jon Jeffrey (wife Jessica, expecting grandchild No. 6), of Blairsville, and Daniel Wayne (wife Kristen), of Longwood, Fla., five grandchildren, Nicole, Justin, Kai, Luke, and Grayson, and a sister, Wilma Jean Gregory Vanzura Donley (husband Ralph), of Lakeland, Fla. Vanzura was a member of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Blairsville, a dedicated husband, loving father and loyal friend to many. Carl Vanzura will be dearly missed by all who knew him in this life.

Easter...continued from page 1

The event sparked a ton of excitement and anticipation by a large group of youngsters. Parks and Recreation Director Wes Hooper and Assistant Alan Rogers stuffed the hard-shelled plastic eggs with codes for Easter basket prizes, made sure the field was ready and then hide the eggs in the grass and sand at the recreation ball fields. "It was a chore, but it was well worth it," Rogers said. "You couldn't have

picked a more beautiful day to have a bunch of children running loose looking for Easter eggs." In all, there were 28 prize eggs. Fourteen went to children ages 4, 5 and 6. Fourteen went to children ages 7, 8 and 9. It took about 40 minutes for the children to find all the eggs on this holiday scavenger hunt. "We couldn't have hoped for better weather," Rogers said. "The best I can tell, there were a lot of

happy children. Everyone found Easter eggs, everyone went home happy, some more so than others." A full weekend of Easter activities took place in Towns County over the holiday weekend. Churches throughout the community hosted Easter Services on Sunday in remembrance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. By far, it was one of the most eventful Easter weekends in recent memory.



It was a busy day for Towns County youth on Saturday. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

Blairsville...continued from page 1

are off, projects in Dawson, Hart, Franklin, Stephens and Towns counties and the other counties in the region will not get funding." Locally, if the TSPLOST passed, it would raise local sales taxes here to 8 percent, and that 1-penny tax is included on food, heating oil and other essentials that fixed income families can't afford. It exempts jet fuel, gasoline, off-road diesel and anything else that lobbyists rallied for at the State Capi-

tol. Sims said that people on food stamps didn't have any lobbyists there. "The folks that only bring in \$58 a week from food stamps didn't have a lobbyist there," he said. "This is a money grab by GDOT and it's going to keep going as long as voters in the region keep voting it in. They're already talking about passing it again 10 years from now." Sims also said that a regional vote is an infringement on a county

government's Home Rule and the voting rights of every person not living in Hall and Forsyth counties. "Hall and Forsyth counties make up 58 percent of the voting power," Sims said. "Those two counties alone can vote this TSPLOST tax in without any other votes from within the 13-county region. "That's why it's a bad tax for the economy, an unfair tax, an unbalanced tax, and a bad tax altogether," Sims said.

Market...continued from page 1

ers of America have teamed together to create a local farmers market. The market will be temporarily located at the old tennis courts on U.S. 76, which are near the Towns County Beach Pavilion parking lot across from the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. The market will accept produce from Towns and neighboring counties Union, Rabun and White in Georgia, and Clay County, NC, Commissioner Kendall said. "It's important to get the word out now so that local farmers and growers can plan ahead for the growing season," Commissioner Kendall said. The market's inaugural location will be temporarily since long range plans are to refurbish the tennis courts. "Initially we will be limiting products to locally grown vegetables, fruits, plants and honey," said Frank Riley, a Towns County FFA

advisor. "Farmers and gardeners with fresh produce are wanted at the Farmers' Market. "As chairman of the Extension Leadership System (ELS), I want all of Towns County to know about the Farmers' Market; both buyers and sellers," said Dorothy Lee. Farmers' Markets are becoming increasingly popular given the continued state of the economy. Union County recently established a local Farmers' Market. Several years ago, Dawson County Extension Agent Clark Beusse established one in his county. Actually, Farmers' Markets are a growing trend in Northeast Georgia with several Websites dedicated to nothing but vegetables and where to find them. The state's agriculture industry plays a major role in Georgia's economic vi-

ability Georgia ranks first in the nation in the production of broilers, peanuts and pecans Annually, Georgia's agriculture industry tops \$5.4 billion. "Our country is slowly getting away from its agricultural roots," Riley said. "It's small projects like this that can keep a young person's interest alive in the agriculture industry. Young people are smart and they understand the value of a dollar. "If we don't play our cards right today, there will be a time when the United States is importing the bulk of its agricultural food supply from foreign countries," Riley said. "That's not good for our economy and, as we've seen in the oranges industry, it can be dangerous too." For more details about the Towns County Farmers' Market, call the Towns County Extension Office at (706) 896-2024.

Isakson...continued from page 1

over leveraged and we've got to stop it now," he said during a rare joint Town Hall meeting at Young Harris College with the Sen. Chambliss. "It's a serious situation, but, it's fixable," Sen. Isakson said. Isakson told the crowd that only a bipartisan effort would mend the debt crisis. Both parties must put all differences aside to work for the betterment of the American people, he said. "If there is no common ground, there is no solution," Sen. Isakson said. "We're going to have to work together so we can get this thing fixed." Isakson, a University of

Georgia graduate, began his business career in 1967 when he opened the first Cobb County office of a small, family-owned real estate business, Northside Realty. He later served as president of Northside Realty for 22 years, overseeing the company's growth as it became the largest independent residential real estate brokerage company in the Southeast and one of the largest in America. Isakson entered politics in 1974 and served 17 years in the Georgia General Assembly and two years as chairman of the Georgia Board of Education. In 1999, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in

Newt Gingrich's 6th District seat, for the first of three terms before being elected to the U.S. Senate in 2004. He was re-elected to the Senate in 2010. The Senate leadership named Isakson to serve on five committees that have jurisdiction over education, healthcare, transportation, foreign policy, veterans' affairs and employment issues. Isakson also served in the Georgia Air National Guard from 1966 to 1972. He currently resides in Marietta with his wife, Dianne. They have three children and nine grandchildren. For more details, call the Office of the Registrar at (706) 379-5125.

GOP...continued from page 1

Woods Grove Baptist Church. The historic church, located at 2224 North Highway 17, is facing its biggest challenge to date: a proposed 1.1 mile, five-lane highway connected to the regional projects approved by the Regional Roundtable for the TSPLOST. Locals call the proposed 1.1 mile widening project "the road to nowhere" because it ends at the North Carolina line and our neighbors in the Tar Heel State have no plans to widen their portion of the roadway for the next 20 years. The proposed widening project also threatens Laurel Hills Memory Gardens (the cemetery) and several businesses on both sides of the road. "It's not a good deal for Towns County," Commissioner Kendall said. Come July 31st, voters in the 12 Georgia Mountain Regional Commission districts throughout the state

will be asked to consider the 10-year, 1-cent sales tax that will fund transportation projects in each region over the next 10 years. The Mountains region includes Towns, Union, Dawson, Rabun and even Hall and Forsyth counties. The Mountains region is expected to collect an estimated \$1.25 billion over the life of the 10-year sales tax period. Of that amount, 75 percent of those dollars would be designated to a number of transportation projects decided upon last fall by a Regional Roundtable of local officials. The remaining 25 percent of revenues from the TSPLOST would be given to cities and counties throughout the region to spend on local projects that were not included on the list approved by the Roundtable. Meanwhile, Sen. Wilkinson will give the Republicans a report on the Legislative Session just

completed in Atlanta. Senator Wilkinson will be talking about House Bill 386, the Georgia Jobs and Family Tax Reform Plan that eliminated the annual "birthday tax" paid when renewing the registration on a vehicle and includes a one time title fee equal to 6.5 percent of a cars value. This was Sen. Wilkinson's first legislative session since he was elected in a special election to replace Sen. Jim Butterworth. Bicknell, a candidate for U.S. Congress from the realigned 9th District also will be speaking. Bicknell is the Jackson County Commission Chairman and he would like to take this opportunity to introduce himself to the voters in Towns County, GOP Chair Chuck Luca said. "This is a very important and informative meeting with a full agenda," Luca said. "Everyone from Towns County is invited and should make a special effort to attend."

Canceled...continued from page 1A

in the paper before that meeting." Commissioner Kendall, who is against the TSPLOST, wasn't the only one to back out of the forum. The Towns County Chamber of Commerce also pulled up stakes. "The Chamber's commitment to co-sponsor the April 17th forum was contingent upon both sides of the issue being presented," Chamber President Candace Long said. "It was our understanding that the Georgia D.O.T. and Commissioner Kendall's Transportation Panel would both present information. The Chamber has learned that only a representative from the Georgia D.O.T. will be a presenter. "The Chamber's intention was to be involved only if the forum is to be non-biased and educational," Lee said. "The Chamber has not and will not take a stand on the TSPLOST issue. With the removal of Commis-

sioner Kendall's Transportation Panel from the agenda, only one side of the issue will be represented. Therefore, the Chamber declines to participate." Meanwhile, Commissioner Kendall is calling for residents in Blairsville and Hiawassee to attend the "anti-tax" meeting on April 26th at the Towns County Senior Center. The tax that residents in Towns and Union counties don't like is a 1-cent proposed regional sales tax that could elevate local sales tax rates to 8 cents on the dollar in both counties. Commissioner Kendall is calling for a bipartisan meeting at the Towns County Senior Center Thursday on April 26th, at 6:30 p.m., for the purpose of informing residents of a proposed 1-cent TSPLOST regional sales tax that will be voted on July 31st. "This important vote, if passed, will increase your sales tax to 8 percent and

will drastically effect families' well being and pocket-books for many years," Commissioner Kendall said. Commissioner Kendall is calling all political parties, asking Independents, TEA Party members, Republicans and Democrats - to join together to defeat the proposed 1-cent sales tax increase. On Thursday, Commissioner Kendall will explain the TSPLOST referendum on the July 31st ballot at the Towns County Democratic Party meeting at 5:30 p.m. He'll be speaking to Towns County Republicans at 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Kendall is very concerned that many residents are still unaware of the upcoming vote and the effect it will have on their families when purchasing food, clothing, home heating oil and other necessities of life. "The purpose of these meetings is to discuss ways to inform citizens of the upcoming vote," Commissioner Kendall said.

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