

Mayor and City Council heard the first reading of an Ordinance amending the Water/Sewer Rate Ordinance to set the Rates for 2" Meters and all sizes above at \$3000 plus any additional cost for installation. A motion was made by Donald Keys, seconded by David Sellers to adopt the Ordinance; all in favor.

**MS. HAZEL NICHOLS PROPERTY:** The Mayor and Council had received a request from the executors of the Hazel Nichols Property asking for permission to relocate the sewer lines on the property, either at their expense or the expense of the buyer. The plans had been evaluated by the City's Engineer, Chris Poje. A motion was made by Matthew Miller, seconded by Terry Ingram to grant permission for the relocation subject to the letter from Chris Poje dated June 30, 2009; all in favor. Both the request and the Engineers report is enclosed and incorporated herein by reference.

**FENCE BID:** At the June meeting, the council had opened six bids ranging from \$5,200.00 to \$15,113.42. Because there was such a wide range in the bids, the Council decided that Dr. Kelley and Donald Keys would review the bids and contact the bidders to be sure they are bidding on exactly what the City had advertised. Dr. Kelley was unable to attend the meeting and Keys noted that they were leaving it up to the City Council. Attorney Cox advised them against deciding on a bid since all members of the City Council had not reviewed the bids. A motion was made by Matthew Miller, seconded by Donald Keys to table the decision until August; all in favor.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Attorney Cox reported that he has been contacted by an insurance company on behalf of Harvey Cohen. A motion was made by David Sellers, seconded by Donald Keys for Cary to proceed with subrogation; all in favor.

Attorney Cox also noted that the Council needs to call a Special Meeting within 10 days to approve the Letter of Conditions and the Bonding procedures for the Water Loan. A motion was made by Matthew Miller, seconded by Terry

Ingram to schedule such a meeting; all in favor.

**STREETS:** Once again the topic of how dangerous that Maple Street has become with all the traffic was discussed. Gary Willer will check on putting more dirt in the ditch lines in case someone is forced off the road. David Sellers also noted that he has received numerous complaints of a speeding teenager on High Street and Sunset. Residents are concerned about the younger children. Mayor Gibby noted that she will have signs installed stating that children are at play in the area. Attorney Cox said the recourse of the neighbors would be to call local law enforcement.

**WATER REPORT:** Gary Willer reported that he had nothing unusual to report. He said that they have painted two of the well buildings. He said a total of 3,737,000 gallons of water was produced in June. He also noted that he will have to purchase two new tires for the backhoe. Another topic of discussion was whether the water lines for the sprinkler systems at the new college buildings will be sufficient. Mayor Gibby said she will contact Chris Poje and have him survey the lines.

**WASTEWATER REPORT:** John Davis reported that the Wastewater plant had treated a Monthly Total of 4,095,960 gal., a year to date total of 22,616,350 gal., a daily average of 132,128 gal. using 55.1% capacity of the plant, a high flow of 273,350 gal. and a low flow of 61,820 gal.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Mayor Gibby reported that on July 16, the Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center will be holding two forums with the citizens of Young Harris, at City Hall, to discuss their ideas of a Long Term Master Plan for their City. One will be scheduled for the daytime and one for early evening to accommodate anyone who wishes to attend. She said that she would like for all the Council and Staff to attend one of the meetings if possible.

*This article was taken from the Young Harris City Council meeting minutes.*

## Race...from page 1

Melton in the Men's 35-39 age group.

The fastest time in the Ladies' 10K run was Cheryl Vail, who finished with a time of 41 minutes and 20 seconds. "It was a wonderful weekend," said bank spokesperson Rebecca King. "We were truly blessed on Saturday."

Earlier this month, Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis declared July as Bank of Hiwassee Month as it celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

For more than 100 years, Bank of Hiwassee has continued as a locally-owned and operated community bank with over 250 shareholders.

The bank founded a century ago, was issued a state Bank Charter on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 1909, organized with initial capitalization of \$25,000 and as of June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009, a century later, Bank of Hiwassee, continues to operate under its original bank charter name.

The bank, which over the years has expanded its operations to include Blairsville and Blue Ridge, celebrated its century of being a part of the Hiwassee community on Saturday with events that included a 10K road race run, a 5K run/walk and a 100-yard dash.

Winners of the 100-yard dash included Alison Brooke Thomas, Emily Taylor, Jensen Brown, Dylan Walls and Colton Thomas.

Mayor Mathis commended the bank last week for

its perseverance and performance standing apart as a Georgia state-chartered bank that has triumphed World War I, World War II, the Great Depression, and today is considered a loyal and worthy friend of the Georgia banking community.

"The City of Hiwassee congratulates the Bank of Hiwassee on its 100 years of service," Mayor Mathis proclaimed.

The bank, which holds total assets of approximately \$435 million has long reflected strong performance and capable management, Mayor Mathis said.

Over the years, Bank of Hiwassee and its sister banks have left customers feeling immediately comfortable with a sense of being at home.

Dating back to 1909, the Bank of Hiwassee is easily the oldest financial institution in the area. And with more than a century of service and private ownership, the bank is one of the most stable and best loved too, playing an integral part in the legacy of the traditional relaxing, mountain lifestyle.

Mathis said that the community relies on Bank of Hiwassee's century of experience.

"The city of Hiwassee extends appreciation to its shareholders, directors, officers and employees for their contribution to the citizens of the great state of Georgia," Mayor Mathis proclaimed.

## Wreck...from page 1

His mother Libby Shook arrived at the accident scene moments following the crash. She took one look at her son's car and her knees buckled. She thought there was no way her son could have survived the crash.

Initially, it was believed that Kerr's injuries included a broken right leg to go along with multiple facial cuts and a possible concussion. Paramedics feared that he had suffered internal injuries not visible to the naked eye.

Much to the amazement of everyone who checked Kerr out, including the doctors at Greenville Memorial, his most significant injury was a micro fracture of his upper palette. Otherwise, Matthew Kerr suffered from only bruises and minor cuts.

"It's a miracle. I truly believe that God put the palm of his hand between that semi and Matthew's car," his

mother, Libby Shook said. "I literally couldn't believe it when he walked out of that hospital on Saturday. He's alive today by the grace of God."

On Monday, Matthew Kerr sat in the den at his parents' home. He was surrounded by friends and family. He carefully perused through his fishing tackle. He can't wait until he feels well enough to go fishing.

"I want to thank everyone who said a prayer for me during a very difficult time in my life," Kerr said. "I truly feel blessed to have survived that wreck. For some reason, it wasn't my time to go. I thank the Good Lord for that because I wasn't in any big hurry."

Kerr, who has no recollection of his first helicopter ride, also is thankful that no one else was injured in the accident.

Thankfully, "the Good Lord" was working overtime on Friday, he said.

## Fair...from page 1

and the ever-popular Miss Georgia Mountain Fair pageant, the Fair truly offers something for everyone.

The Fair offers a rare glimpse into Northeast Georgia's rural roots with soap-making, blacksmithing, moon shining and hominy-making demonstrations, and tours of restored buildings in the Fairgrounds' Pioneer Village.

Fair visitors also will enjoy a juried arts and crafts show, featuring artists from throughout the nation. Visitors are welcome to tour the Fairgrounds' Exhibit Hall to view antique farm equipment, a display featuring history of the Fair and other unique exhibits. Visitors also will be able to buy jams and other unique homemade goods authentic to the North Georgia Mountains.

The Fair also is known for its world-class Country, Bluegrass, Gospel and Rock 'n' Roll performances at Anderson Music Hall. Throughout the event, headliner musical acts

will perform in the expansive Anderson Music Hall. The Fair opens with Joe Diffie performing in the Music Hall on Wednesday, July 15th and ends with The Bellamy Brothers on July 25th. Other performers include T.G. Sheppard, Janie Fricke, Connie Smith and the "Common Man" John Conlee. Other performers include Jimmy Wayne, Ronnie McDowell, Larry Gatlin and The Gatlin Brothers, Gene Watson and Tammy Davis. This year's entertainment schedule also includes Helen Cornelius and Jim Ed Brown.

Visitors can attend all musical performances for the price of a day's admission - \$9 (\$2 for parking). Admission to this year's event is free for children under age 10.

For more details on this year's Georgia Mountain Fair, visit the Web at [www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com](http://www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com). Remember to make arrangements for your pets as no pets are allowed inside the Fairgrounds.



Expect to hear plenty of Mountain Music as the 59th Georgia Mountain Fair gets underway this week at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Photo courtesy Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds

## Fun World...from page 1

Carolinas, Florida and of course, Georgia.

Fun World consists of laser tag, four face climbing wall, indoor batting cages, slick track Go Cart racing, indoor Miniature Golf, Toddler Town, Foam Factory, inflatables, more than 120 Arcade games and group events.

When families get hungry, Enrico's Pizzeria and Scoops Ice Cream is at their fingertips. And believe it or not, there's much, much more.

"Fun World is an adventure for kids of all ages," said Manager Don Lloyd. "It brings out the little kid in all of us."

At Fun World patrons encounter a fun and safe experience with great games, Mayfield ice cream and excellent pizza in a wholesome family atmosphere. That atmosphere includes a six theater movie showplace called Fieldstone Cinemas Six.

While it's hard to track the exact number of guests visiting Fun World, it's a breeze to track visitors gathering at Cinemas Six. In 2007, the theater attracted 250,000 customers; a year later, those figures jumped by 50,000 customers. In 2009, the frequency of customers returning to the theater puts it on a pace to make this year a very pleasant one for Fieldstone Cinemas Six, Lloyd said.

"Through it all, we haven't forgotten who got us here," Lloyd said. "We take pride in our community activities."

Lloyd isn't kidding. Fun World is active in many area schools. It has become a fieldtrip destination for many schools and church groups.

"Fun World is a reward for many school children," Lloyd said. "The rewards include a trip to Fun World and Cinemas Six."

Fun World's sense of community doesn't end there. For grades Kindergarten through the 6th, Fun World has introduced an A's for Excellence Program. Based on a student's report card, Fun World awards \$2 Bonus Bucks for each A and \$1 Bonus Bucks for each B. Students must bring in their report card, signed by their teacher, in order to receive those well deserved Bonus Bucks.

Last year, Fun World began a scholarship program for deserving seniors at several area high schools. Lloyd says the scholarship program will continue for the upcoming school year.

"The scholarships are awarded based on academics, community service and need," Lloyd said. "Applications are available from the high school guidance counselor at each school."

"Ken and Dana Merritt are so community-minded, it's an honor to work with such fine people," Lloyd said. "It means a lot to be able to give back to our communities."

Fun World means everything entertainment-wise to 15-year-old Joseph Huff of Blue Ridge.

"It's a great place to come and enjoy yourself," Huff said. "It's Six Flags without having to drive all the way to Atlanta. They got Guitars Hero and I've never seen it in arcade version."

"They got the indoor batting cages, the Go Carts, the rock climbing, man, it doesn't get any better than this," Huff said. "Finally, there's a place for young people to go and enjoy themselves."

Keith Gilbert of Jasper brought his family all the way from Pickens County for a surprise trip to Fun World.

"We thought it would be a great surprise for the kids," said Gilbert as he putted on the indoor Mini-Golf course. "It's Six Flags without the drive through Atlanta traffic. This is definitely the place to bring your kids for a summer retreat."

Gilbert's children, 11-year-old Kelsie and 15-year-old Kyle didn't disagree.

"This is great," Kyle said. "I didn't know where we were going until I saw the Fun World sign off the highway."

"I didn't know where we were going at first," Kelsie said. "But I eventually guessed where we were going. This is a great place. I love the rock climbing."

Tanner Cunningham, 3, of Hiwassee, and his cousin Logan Sosebee, 7, of Hayesville, NC, not only loved the games, they loved the Ice Cream.

"Fun World is a lot of fun," Logan said.

## Elvis...from page 1

perform during a spring concert.

"I remember the first time I did it here was for a chorus concert, and I hadn't actually done it for years at that time," said Perren. "I think everybody was surprised. They thought I was making a joke, but when I actually started singing, they went, 'Wow.'"

Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens said Perren was his replacement as the high school principal in July 2004 when Behrens was appointed to the school board.

Behrens said he knew nothing of the Elvis impersonations at first. It was during an educators training seminar when he learned Perren could sing. During one training exercise, Behrens and elementary school Principal Don Dermody both played guitar, and Perren sang the folk classic *Man of Constant Sorrow*.

Behrens sees Perren's avocation as an asset to his role as principal. "It has been a great service to the community. The kids love it. I think he has endeared himself to a lot of folks," said Behrens.

Class of 2009 Valedictorian Amber Allen said she and her classmates thought the impersonations were entertaining and funny. "Not all principals would be that cool in the general life scheme of things," she said.

Allen said she still has a video on her cell phone from a performance at school two years ago. She said Perren does his hair perfect for the impersonations.

High school teacher Melissa McConnell said they can always tell when Perren has been doing Elvis because he dyes his hair for the performances.

When asked if he dyes his hair for Elvis, Perren joked that only his hairdresser knows for sure. He admitted when he first started doing Elvis that his hair was jet black, but nowadays he does color it a little.

Perren likens himself more to the older peanut butter and banana sandwich version of Elvis, rather than the younger more dangerous pelvis version.

During his life, Elvis had hundreds of screaming female fans ready to risk life and limb to touch his sweat-drenched scarf. While Perren does not enjoy the same following, he does have one adoring fan—his wife. "She usually goes when I sing," he said. "She likes it. She thinks its fun."

Kim Perren called it an adventure being married to an Elvis impersonator. She thought it was hilarious the first

time she saw him perform, after they had already tied the knot. When asked if her husband ever called her Priscilla around the house, Kim replied, "No, he knows better."

"It really is a joy to listen to him sing," said Kim. "He is usually so serious about things. It is just fun to see him having a good time."

Kim isn't the only one in the family who's a fan. "Our son Preston loves to hear him sing," she said. Kim said during performances their 5-year-old will yell out "I love you, daddy."

Kim said she thinks her husband is good enough to become a professional Elvis impersonator: "We've talked about that, but he says he just enjoys doing it."

Kim is not alone in her opinion.

"I think he could probably go somewhere and get paid for it," said Allen.

When asked if he would quit his day job, Perren replied, "Absolutely not. I have fun doing it. If I tried to get paid for it, it would be work then."

In fact, Perren said he has never earned a penny on his impersonations. "If at any time anyone has given me compensation for it, I usually donate it to the school or something like that."

Perren can usually be found doing Elvis for charities such as Relay for Life, as well as performing on the Square in Hiwassee and, of course, at the school.

Perren said his impersonations do not cause problems at work. "The kids pretty much keep it separate. I really feel like I keep them very separate. There is no conflict between the two."

Superintendent Behrens said a high school principal's job is intense and demanding, and a person has to be hard working and resilient. "He [Perren] is doing a great job," said Behrens.

Allen agreed. She called Perren a man of faith and said as a principal he was somebody the students could approach with their problems.

So why does an otherwise normal man dress up like a dead rock star?

"The Elvis thing—I really love to sing and I like to perform, and this just gives me an avenue to do it that I probably wouldn't have if I just went out and said I was going to sing. That's probably what it boils down to. I am a fan, but I wasn't by any means a huge fan, though I am becoming one because of studying and listening to him. He was really an incredible talent."

## Sewer...from page 1

council members Janet Allen, Joan Crothers and Howard Cunningham, recently met with Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall, County Attorney Rob Kiker, Gene Mitchell and members of the Towns County Water Authority and other interested parties to discuss sewer service in the county.

Once again city leaders advised those attending that without funding from the county, the authority, or the Towns County Industrial Authority, that the city will not spend any city monies within the county to provide sewer service within the county.

Bottom line: the city does not plan to submit any applications for state and federal stimulus money for expansion or improvement of the city sewer plant. Most importantly, due to a lack of county funding response, the city does not plan to renew the state application for sewer plant expansion.

City leaders say that without expansion of the city sewer plant, the county will not have any meaningful sewer service for the next decade. Also, Towns County will miss out on the federal stimulus dollars and funding opportunities.

Hiwassee has been approved by the state for expansion of the city sewer plant from 300,000 gallons of capacity to 500,000 gallons of discharge capacity. This increase could meet the county's needs for approximately 30 years. The project was bid this year and the bid came in at \$1.5 million.

This expansion approval will expire in October. ARRA-GEFA would fund 70 percent

of the project. Other funding sources are available to further cut the costs.

According to Stancil, the city has made these facts known to the commissioner, the authority and the Industrial Development Authority. Furthermore, the city has made several proposals that would make the expansion possible. The city also has explained the ARRA-GEFA and ARC application and funding deadlines. The city has not received any positive response.

"Staff believes that the city has adequate sewer capacity to meet the city's needs and city commitments within the existing plant. However, city reserves are declining," Stancil said.

During the month of May, discharges from the city sewer plant increased by almost 100,000 gallons more than the month of April. This is the largest surge in many years. It appears that the increase or surge is due to inflow and infiltration, Stancil said.

"As everyone knows, the lake is the highest it has been in many years and we have had significant rainfall," Stancil said. "This I&I have seriously impaired the city's sewer reserves and prohibit that addition of new connections in the county."

"Staff believes that the ARRA Sewer Rehabilitation project will reclaim sewer capacity," Stancil said. "The city staff will monitor the sewer flows closely and attempt to locate all problem areas as a part of the rehabilitation project."