

last two years. Both of those games have been very physical and emotional contests. We don't expect to see anything any different on Friday night. They're relentless."

The Lions and the Indians square off at Towns County Stadium at 7:30 p.m. on Friday.

Meanwhile, last week's contest was a little hard to swallow. The yellow flags started flying early on as quarterback John Swilley went deep to Mat Hogsed. The senior speedster swatted at a Rabun defender who had his hand carefully tucked in Hogsed's shoulder pads. However, what the officials saw was Hogsed swatting at the defender and immediately a yellow flag emerged with the call going against Hogsed.

Later in the first half running back Matt Beni was brought down from behind by a Rabun defender who pulled Beni down by the back of the shoulder pads, better known as an illegal horse collar tackle. A yellow flag went flying and the Towns County coaching staff felt assured that a personal foul was in order against Rabun.

That wasn't the case. What the official saw was a phantom block in the back by a Towns County blocker, a foul that didn't happen on the game film. The lead official apologized to Coach Langford for missing the horse collar tackle by Rabun County. He told the coach: "Don't worry, we'll be watching for that next time Coach."

In the second half, the Indians were driving and Swilley connected with wide receiver John Bleckley on a long gainer. The play was called back for what the officials determined was an ineligible receiver downfield. The Phantom had struck again.

Make no mistake about it, Langford never once brought up the officiating. Rather, he pointed out that Rabun running back Daniel Campbell had a career night, rushing for 236 yards against the Indians' defense.

"When we looked at the game film, parts of it looked pretty well and parts of it looked pretty bad," Coach Langford said. "The effort was there, it was fine. We just didn't

play very good.

"To be quite honest with you, it's probably one of the worst coaching performances that I've seen in a long time," Coach Langford said. "I did a poor job getting them prepared. We probably threw too much at them in the game plan this week."

Coach Langford tossed a large box of excuses into the large trash can in his office.

"Campbell is a real work-horse, he carried the ball about 38 times and he did the job," Coach Langford said. "We didn't tackle very well at all and he did a really good job."

"But, we've got to block better and we've got to tackle better. We're talking about everybody. We're going to get better," he said. "We're going to play better this week and we're going to take care of the football."

All wasn't lost against the Wildcats. Swilley connected on two long touchdown passes, the first, a 38-yarder to Hogsed in the first half, the second a 56-yarder to Bleckley in the second half.

The Indians emerged from the match up with Rabun fairly healthy, Coach Langford said.

"Dylen Nelson played with a stomach ulcer, Taylor Denton had a deep bone bruise in his hand," Coach Langford said. "Taylor is fine and everybody should be ready to go this week."

"If we take care of the football this week, we'll be okay," Coach Langford said. "Any time you turn the football over three or four times, it's hard to beat anybody."

Tribe tidbits: Quarterback John Swilley was selected as the Jacky Jones Supercenter/Towns County Herald Offensive Player of the Game. The senior signal caller finished the game with two touchdown passes and 180 yards through the air. Defensively, defensive lineman Josh Goodwin was named the Jacky Jones Supercenter/Towns County Herald Defensive Player of the Game. Goodwin recorded a team-leading eight tackles against the Wildcats.

Swilley and Goodwin will each receive a pizza from Big Al's Pizza as the reward for their performance.

Hoedown...continued from page 1

weeks," she said. "If you're interested in that, sign up with the Towns County Recreation Department."

"It's for folks 18 years old and up," she said. "That's one project we've started and then over in Bald Mountain Park, we've started a Neighborhood Watch program."

"We're trying to get the crime in that area under control," she said. "The program has been on going for more than two months and already we've seen a big difference."

As for the Hoedown and Barbecue, the group of couple attending experienced good food and good fellowship, Friedley said.

"There's a lot of good dancing going on," she said. "Even with the rain, we're having a great time."

Charlene Jasmine, a visitor from Largo, Fla., said the event was more than she expected.

"This is great," she said. "I'm visiting here, I love to dance and I'm learning to square dance. I'm here with my friends and we're having fun."

"It's exciting, I'm learning some new stuff," she said. The event lasted throughout the evening and went under the pavilion when the raindrops began to fall.

"We're not going to let a few raindrops spoil our evening," Friedley said. "We wish more people had turned out but we understand that this is a first time event. We certainly feel that this is an event that will grow with time and exposure to the community."

Festival of Arts to return ...continued from page 1

Crowds were modest, with recession-minded patrons looking for a bargain.

Cathy Holloway of Mineral Bluff was excited on Sunday. It was her birthday and she was taking her time shopping for birthday gifts. She stopped at Melissa Stroud's booth to look at all the beautiful handcrafted rugs made by the resident of Shelby, NC.

"I think the festival is wonderful," she said. "It's been well advertised and I've been looking forward to coming to it. The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is a nice place to hold festivals."

Stroud said the flat economy put a damper on sales.

"I think people are really shopping for bargains," she

said. "I can understand that."

Blue Ridge Mountain Arts Association Executive Director Sarah Verner said that a few more patrons would have made the weekend a bit more enjoyable.

"We anticipated some low numbers in terms of patrons because this is the first year of this event," Verner said. "Our artists were phenomenal and all of our artists love the venue."

"We like the location, we just need to get more people into the show," she said. "We're going to do it again next year and we hope to make it an annual event."

Jennifer Danner, of Ducktown, Tenn., played guitar and sang Sunday afternoon.

She said she was thrilled to be a part of the festival.

"Most definitely," she said. "It's been great. There have been a lot of really nice people coming through. It's been kind of quiet, but it's been a very relaxing weekend."

The next big event, the Last Kiss of Summer, as artists gather on the downtown square in Hiawasse to celebrate the coming of fall and hawk some of their talents and works.

"Come join us for a community celebration of creative expression held on the Square in beautiful Hiawasse," Denison said.

The event features art exhibits, music, dance, theatre, poetry, crafts, street dance and food. Admission is free.

Board of Education waits on tax digest

By Charles Duncan
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Dr. Richard Behrens and the Towns County Board of Education soon will be faced with their toughest decision of all, setting a millage rate.

A shortfall of revenues combined with increased financial burdens imposed by state cutbacks, increased Local Fair Share obligations and mandated salary requirements will impact the 2010 millage rate set by the BOE. How much impact remains a question only the board itself can answer.

Add a smaller tax digest to the list of hurdles the BOE must overcome when deciding whether to raise or maintain the current millage rate level.

"That's what we're hearing," Dr. Behrens said on Monday. "We'll just have to wait and see how much impact that will have. The board must make those decisions."

"Hopefully we'll know where we stand within the next month," he said. "It's my understanding that the tax digest has dropped."

A drop in the value of the county's tax digest could

lead to an increase in millage rate, however, Dr. Behrens has his fingers crossed that that won't happen.

"We won't know where we stand until we get an idea of where the tax digest is," Dr. Behrens said.

Dr. Behrens and the BOE are in the midst of determining just how next year's budget will shape up. Sensing that the economy may stay flat for a while, Dr. Behrens has proposed a smaller budget than the current fiscal year, well under the current \$12 million budget. Behrens has trimmed almost \$200,000 from the proposed 2009-2010 budget.

The 2009-2010 Budget currently is being advertised by the BOE at just over \$11.8 million. That cut rate is the amount Dr. Behrens says is necessary to cover educational necessities.

Revenues for the 2009-2010 school year are estimated to be \$1 million less than expenditures.

The Local Fair Share (5 mills of local tax dollars to pay for Quality Basic Education) has swelled from \$2.3 million in 2006 to an estimated \$4.1 mil-

lion for the coming school year. Towns County has the lowest BOE imposed millage rate in Northeast Georgia at 3.544 mills.

Just how tough will the decision by the BOE be? The local board has not raised its millage rate since 2003. In fact, the millage rate has dropped during that time frame from 5.25 mills to the current 3.544 mills.

"I honestly don't know how things are going to shape up," he said. "Right now, there are more questions than answers. Hopefully, things will work out for the best. These truly are tough times."



Dr. Behrens

Road crew...from page 1

view of motorists at some intersections.

The county was alerted on July 1 that the road maintenance crew was eliminated due to state budget cuts, Kendall said.

Had the road crew not been reinstated, the maintenance of Towns County state roads would have fallen to state road maintenance crews in Rabun, White and Union, Kendall said.

Commissioner Kendall also was grateful to state DOT officials for keeping an open mind during difficult financial times.

"They listened and responded positively by bringing back our DOT crew and assurances that the crew would not be taken away again," Kendall said.

Commissioner Kendall added that the returning crew could soon find itself in new surroundings.

"The old state maintenance barn on Georgia 76 at Lower Hightower will probably be eliminated and all operations moved to the newer state maintenance barn near Presley and Streak Hill going toward Helen," Kendall said.

Classic...from page 1

Also, the 4H 2-Bit Horse Club will have its first organized meeting of the year on Sept. 14 at the Blairsville Civic Center at 4 p.m. The inaugural gathering will focus on introductions, consideration of officers and setting up the 2009-2010 calendar of events.

The club is looking for new members and the horse club is for anyone who has a passion for horses. You don't have to own a horse to become a member.

Stimulus...from page 1

the State Transportation Improvement Program, or STIP. "When these projects are completed, Towns County's state road program, especially outdated bridges, will be modernized and up to date," Kendall said.

The \$8 million worth of projects include:

- Replacement of two bridges on Georgia 17 and Georgia 75;
- Replacement of the bridge at Georgia 66 and Brasstown Creek;
- Replacement of the bridge at Georgia 66 and Crooked Creek;
- Replacement of the bridge at Tallulah River Road from County Road 90 to the North Carolina state line;
- Transit projects for Towns County.