

Storms...from Page 1A

Stay away from tall, isolated trees or other tall objects. If in a forest, stay near a lower stand of trees.

If in a group, spread out to avoid the current traveling

between group members. If camping in an open area, set up camp in a valley, ravine or other low area. A tent offers no protection from lightning.

Stay away from water, wet items, such as ropes, and metal objects, such as fences and poles. Water and metal do not attract lightning, but they are excellent conductors of electricity. The current from a lightning flash will easily travel for long distances.

Heritage Day...from Page 1A



A view from the 2017 Heritage Day event in Towns County, where all veterans were shown appreciation for their service.

a young man that is 95 years old, and he can still get in his uniform," said Phillips. "He spoke last year. I gave him 15 minutes, and he spoke exactly 15 minutes, and he closed with 'I'll be back.'"

Phillips expressed that Heritage Day is to honor all veterans, and they are all welcome to attend.

"We are honoring all veterans, whether they have been in a war or not," said Phillips. "This past meeting, we received a lot of names. We will be taking names all the way

up to the beginning of the event and even during it. We will be giving out certificates to all veterans that attend.

Phillips will be paying a special tribute to Zell Miller that will be a highlight of the event.

"I would love to honor Zell Miller," said Phillips. "He was my professor at Young Harris College. He was well known everywhere, not only in this area. He was well known everywhere, and he was also a Marine, and we are gathering as much history on Zell Miller

as we can.

"I remember when Zell's mother was building her house in Young Harris, and while I was walking to school, I would stop in and help her."

This is for sure to be a patriotic event where all are welcome to attend, and it will be held at the Historical Society Building at 900 North Main St., aka the Old Recreation Center.

Lunch will be served as well, courtesy of the Historical Society.

Moonshine Cruiz-In returns to GA Mtn. Fairgrounds

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds will host the 10th Annual Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In from Thursday, July 12, through Saturday, July 14.

During the Cruiz-In, folks can expect to see plenty of class cars, hotrods, trucks, bikes, rat rods and more.

There will be two cruises that Thursday, said Moonshine Cruiz-In founder Rakes Parrish, a morning cruise of about 60 miles and an afternoon cruise of about 100 miles.

And the Sour Mash Kick-Off Bash will start at 6 p.m. that Thursday, around back of Anderson Music Hall, said Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton, his wife Crystal, and drummer Kenneth Eller will put on a music show at the kick-off bash.

"We're pretty excited about getting to kick off the Moonshine Cruiz-In. It's always a lot of fun every year," said Sheriff Clinton.

It's open to the public, and there will be no charge for admittance to the kick-off bash, said Thomason.

In addition to the music, there will be hamburgers, hot dogs, barbecue sandwiches, beverages, prizes, a wet bar and more.

There will be about 300 classic cars parked down below the music hall on the pavement for the kick-off bash, she said.

The opening ceremonies will be at 10 a.m. on Friday," said Thomason. "On Friday and Saturday, the car show will be held here at the fairgrounds."

There will also be a parade of classic cars through Hiawassee on Friday night starting at 6:30.

On Saturday, there will be live bands during the event, and later that day, at 4:30 p.m., there will be awards, cash and prizes. Molly Hatchett and the Atlanta Rhythm Section will perform at 7 p.m. inside The Hall.

Parrish, who lives in



Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In founder Rakes Parrish with a classic car at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in 2011.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Tupelo, Mississippi, said he grew up in Towns County to an extent. He said his grandparents built Leisure Woods Campground out on Owl Creek Road in the 1960s, and he spent his summers helping out at the campground.

He said he's never forgotten the beauty of Towns County and never wanted to lose his ties here, which is why he originally wanted to bring people to the area to enjoy it as much as he does via the Moonshine Cruiz-In.

"We've brought people from places that have never heard of Hiawassee," said Parrish. "We've got them coming from Texas and Kansas and all over."

He even mentioned people coming from Europe last year to the Moonshine Cruiz-In.

Parrish added that, once people come here for the show, they fall in love with the area and come back for holidays and vacations.

"I came up here 10 years ago and met with Hilda and other board members, and we discussed (the Cruiz-In) and we started it," said Parrish. "The first year started out great, and it's just grown from there since."

Parrish indicated that his only regret is that there aren't more accommodations. He said if there were more

places to stay, the event would get even bigger.

Of course, the people of nearby Hiawassee love the annual Cruiz-In.

"The Moonshine Cruiz-In for us in the city is a huge event," said Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales. "It draws so many people here. All of our hotels are full, all of our campgrounds are full, our restaurants get a lot of business. So, we encourage and like to work with the Moonshine Cruiz-In promoters."

Mayor Ordiales said that last year, for the first time, they had a big block party on the square on Thursday.

This year, everyone agreed to have the block party on Wednesday, July 11. The city will be showing the movie "Grease" that evening, and it will be billed as a drive-in movie, she said.

Many of the "cruizers" will be parked around the square during this event.

There will be no charge to get in and everyone is invited, said the mayor.

Berrong Street will be blocked off, and people can bring lawn chairs and blankets.

Food and beverages will be available.

Prayer...from Page 1A



What could be better than good food and fellowship? A view inside Macedonia Baptist Church during the June 26 Sheriff's Prayer Breakfast.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Langley, Hiawassee Police Chief Paul Smith, Col. Gene Moss and others.

Pastor Ed Jump of Macedonia Baptist delivered the invocation before breakfast, thanking God for all the blessings bestowed upon law enforcement officers, the men and women in government, and all their families.

Sheriff Clinton quoted from Ephesians 6 out of the Holy Bible, saying that folks should put on "the full armor of God," because the fight is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities of darkness, evil.

"It's a spiritual battle and we (as Christians) recognize that," said Sheriff Clinton. "I'm thankful that we have people in our local government that share our beliefs."

Macedonia Youth Pastor Bradley Thomas offered some parting words for consideration by those who joined together that early Thursday morning for food and fellowship.

Thomas based his comments on Romans 6 of the Holy Bible, saying that human beings are slaves to one thing or another - that some are slaves to God, righteousness and goodness, and some are slaves to sin.

But everyone, he said, will stand before God and be judged.

"I don't want anybody in here to have a lame excuse when they meet God," he said.

Free GED summer session

The GED summer session will start with registration July 10 and 12 at 4 p.m. at the Old Recreation Center in Hiawassee. These classes are free to the public and sponsored by North Georgia Technical College. Anyone who did not complete high school come to registration and take advantage of this opportunity to advance your future. For more information phone 404-428-6758 and ask for Wayne. T0004.11.G1)SH



A cool-looking hotrod in the 2015 Moonshine Cruiz-In Parade in Downtown Hiawassee.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Hands-Free...from Page 1A

content and other internet data while on the road, though voice texting is allowed.

Furthermore, drivers cannot watch videos when they are on the road, with the exception of navigational videos.

GPS navigation devices are allowed.

Drivers also cannot use their phones or electronic devices to record video when they are on the road, but continuously running dash cams are still allowed.

A driver may listen to streaming music that does not include videos on the screen of their phone or device while driving, but they may not touch their phone while on the road to activate or program any music streaming app.

Streaming music that is controlled by and listened to through the vehicle's radio is allowed, just keep in mind that activating or programming music streaming apps must be done before hitting the road.

There are several important exceptions built into the law, though drivers must remain free of distractions while employing an exception.

These exceptions include:

1. The reporting of a traffic crash, medical emergency, fire, criminal activity or hazardous road condition.
2. Employees or

contractors of utility service providers acting within the scope of their employment while responding to a utility emergency.

3. First responders, i.e. law enforcement officers, firefighters and paramedics during the performance of their official duties.

4. When in a lawfully parked vehicle, which does not include vehicles stopped for traffic signals and stop signs on the public roadway.

According to GOHS, the Georgia Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement have the option of issuing warnings for violations as part of the effort to educate and to help motorists adapt to the new law.

"However, citations can and will be issued starting July 1 for any violation of the Hands-Free Law, including those where the violation involves a traffic crash," according to Heads UP Georgia. "There is not a 90-day grace period provision in the Hands-Free Law."

In Towns County, residents should fully expect to be held accountable for obeying all laws, including the new Hands-Free Law.

"Citations are a tool that we will use if necessary, but we are hopeful that by educating the public that hands-free is going to be the new law, we will

get a voluntary compliance," said Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton. "If not, we will use citations when appropriate. We want our community to be safe."

Hiawassee Police Chief Paul Smith said that he, too, wants people to know that his department will do its best to educate the public about the new law.

"Our goal here is not to write a bunch of citations, but to make the streets safer," said Chief Smith. "So, we will be informing drivers of the law because I know not everybody's going to be aware of it right away. We'll be educating drivers through warnings, and when appropriate, (writing) citations."

Everyone who is convicted under the new law will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

A person's first conviction in a 24-month period, as measured between offenses, will result in a \$50 fine and one point on their license.

A second conviction in a 24-month period will be a \$100 fine and two points on a license.

Third and subsequent convictions in a 24-month period will result in \$150 fines and three points on a license.

If someone gets a ticket for violating the law and it's their first time, they may appear in court with a hands-free device or proof of purchase for such a device, at which point they will be found not guilty.