

First Annual Rodeo coming to Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Saddle up, folks, because the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is bringing the first ever Hiawasse Pro Rodeo to town on Friday, June 26, and Saturday, June 27.

The event was initially set to take place Memorial Day Weekend, but it was rescheduled due to COVID-19.

"This will be the first time we have ever done a rodeo here at the fairgrounds, and it will be down on the ballfield," Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said. "It will be two nights, with the gates

opening at 6 p.m. and the rodeo beginning at 8 p.m. It is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children."

Seeing as how it is the first rodeo in the area to return since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, the affair is shaping up to be a major event that will bring in plenty of contestants and rodeo fans looking for a night out of the house to enjoy some outdoor fun at the fairgrounds.

"It is a sanctioned rodeo, and we will have vendors down there with food," Thomason said.

Of course, safety will be front and center for Thomason and the fairgrounds as they plan

accommodations to keep guests safe during all the excitement.

"We are bringing extra hand-sanitizing stations with soap for people to wash their hands," she said. "We will have restrooms, and we will bring in extra portajohns.

"We are trying to be as safe as possible and keep everything safe for everyone, because we want everyone to come out and have a good time."

Camping options are available, too, for families wanting to enjoy an extended stay alongside Lake Chatuge and the Hamilton Gardens while they're here.

"We are just trying to make

a big weekend out of it," Thomason said. "The campgrounds have been very busy since we have opened up, and people are wanting to go out and enjoy the outdoors instead of being home all the time.

"We were closed down for a month, and we have been sold out every weekend since we have opened back up. People just want to get out and about."

According to Thomason, a major goal for the weekend will be to bring business back to Towns County while providing people from around the area with some much-deserved entertainment.

"I know everyone has been inside, but it is a time to get out and enjoy life and get back to normal as much as possible," Thomason said. "We want everybody to be safe, and if they want to bring their own chairs in then they can.

"We are going to have

bleachers of course, and we are bringing in extra bleachers as well, but we want everyone to feel safe and come out and have a fun weekend, because we all need one."

For more information on the rodeo and pre-purchasing tickets, visit the newly redesigned GeorgiaMountainFairgrounds.com.

And people will want to stay tuned for the renowned Georgia Mountain Fair, scheduled for later in the

summer.

"We are most known for our Georgia Mountain Fair that we host each summer," according to the GMF website. "From Aug. 14-22, you can enjoy nine days of arts and craft vendors, mouth-watering fair food, live demonstrations and shows, a fantastic lineup of musicians, the Miss Georgia Mountain Fair Beauty Pageant, and a midway with rides that will delight both the young and young at heart!"



Baccalaureate...from Page 1A

by senior Sarah Sanchez and underclassmen Riley Thomas and Emma Roxbury.

Ongoing precautions against COVID-19 made for a different kind of baccalaureate service this year, but despite recent hardships, the class is still ready to move forward in life and pass the torch to younger classmates.

"As graduating seniors, we are getting ready to close this chapter and begin a new one," Sanchez said. "Whether the next chapter includes continuing our education or starting a new job, we leave behind a legacy.

"The legacy of being a Panther includes a strong work ethic, striving for excellence, and giving our all in everything we do. We now relinquish responsibilities, tradition and knowledge to the next class."

Senior Krysten Hodges offered a prayer and introduced her dad, Wade Hodges, as the guest speaker for the event.

Hodges is a math and engineering teacher at Union County High, and he encouraged graduating seniors to pursue their dreams and keep God in sight as they continue on life's journey.

"I just want to say what an honor it is to be able to bring you this message," Hodges said. "Through all this, the global pandemic that we have been going through the last few weeks, I know one of the things that I've learned and I hope that you have too is the value of the little things in life.

"Little things like a handshake, a fist bump, seeing someone smile, giving a neck



Underclassman Lorelei Skinner closed out the 2020 baccalaureate service, wishing the UCHS Class of 2020 well in the future. Photo/Screenshot

hug, and just being around each other socializing – all the little things that we have been missing, we all should be able to see how valuable those things are to us now.

"So, if anything, we have learned that. And like I told my daughter Krysten, you guys are going to have a wonderful story to tell at your 20th class reunion when you all get back together."

Underclassmen Ally Brey, Hunter Hartzog and Aubrie Banton also delivered prayers and Bible readings during the ceremony, which concluded with underclassman Lorelei Skinner praying over the entire senior class.

"We thank you for the graduating Class of 2020," Skinner prayed. "Although their

senior year was cut short, help them to remember all the good times that Union County High School brought to them over the last four years.

"As they leap into the next stages of life, whether it be starting college, entering a career or just taking the time to focus on all the world has to offer, illuminate your presence and guide them as they flip the next page into the next chapter of their life."

Automotive teacher and Fellowship of Christian Athletes Sponsor Robby Roxbury welcomed everyone at the start of the video. The entire Baccalaureate Service can be accessed via a link on the Union County High School Facebook page.

LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

MONTGOMERY CONCRETE
~ FOR ALL YOUR CONCRETE NEEDS ~
Forming through Finishing, House Slabs, Driveways, Sidewalks, Stamped Colored Concrete. Top Quality Work!
Big Jobs and Small Jobs! • Insured
See photos on Facebook under Lee Montgomery
Call 706-781-1806

Randolph Jones Grading

Backhoe, Bobcat, Excavator, Dump Truck, Dirt, Gravel, Septic Tank Repair & Install
Any & All Small Jobs Welcome!
706-897-4909

Trust Integrity Guidance
Taylor Insurance Group
WE DO WHAT OTHERS PROMISE
770-298-9161 ph/text
1-706-400-5754 Fax
tom@tomtaylorinsurancegroup.com

Tom Taylor
YOUR LICENSED LOCAL AGENT
Medicare Advantage Plans
Supplements, Life, Under 65 Health Plans, Dental

ACS GRADING & EXCAVATING
Grading, Dump Truck, Gravel, Dirt, Driveways, Underbrushing, Lot Clearing, Water Lines, Basements
No Job Too Small - FREE Estimates
Locally Owned & Operated
706-897-0411

TOTAL RECOVERY PAINT & BODY

(706) 745-9703
391 BLUE RIDGE HWY
ALL INSURANCE ACCEPTED

MEGA-TONE MUSIC
BLAIRSVILLE, GA.
BUY-SELL-TRADE-CONSIGN
✓ VINTAGE, NEW AND USED GUITARS, AMPS, EFFECTS
✓ GUITAR, PIANO, BANJO, BASS UKULELE, DRUM LESSONS
✓ INSTRUMENT REPAIR
✓ PA RENTAL
404.310.9356 - 44B Town Square - Blairsville, GA 30512

Southeast Geothermal & Spray Foam

706-745-8685
1442 Blue Ridge Hwy.
www.segeothermal.com
www.sesprayfoam.com

Auto Glass work

706-897-6984
Blairsville, Ga.
THE TRI-STATE AREA OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, NORTH GEORGIA & EASTERN TENNESSEE
Mobile glass replacement services for windshields, door glass, back glass and sliders and vent glass.
Call or email today to get an **instant quote**
AutoGlassWorxGA@gmail.com
553 BLUE RIDGE STREET
BLAIRSVILLE, GA 30512
"SAME BUILDING AS HOOBIE'S WINDOW TINTING"
BRET BARNES, OWNER

Sugar Magnolia

Home Decor
Forever Flowers
Baby Gifts
Fashion Acces.
Jewelry
Acrylic Dishware
Gifts and Interiors
267 B Cleveland St. Blairsville
Backside of the Nationwide Bldg.
(706)230-9100

Michelin BFG Uniroyal
Specializing In:
Alignment • Computer Balancing
Brakes • Auto Repair
Industrial Foam Fill
Oil Changes
Thomas Tire, Inc.
Auto & Big Truck Service
Oscar Thomas - Owner
(706) 745-0264
76 Shoe Factory Road
Blairsville, Georgia 30512

Kieth Prentice
Prentice Heating and Air LLC
1376A HWY 51SE
Blairsville, Georgia 30512
Owner Phone: 706-745-9665
Fax: 706-835-2684
Amana

Gibson Land Service
Travis Gibson
706-897-8564
Tree Removal
Bucket Truck
Grading
Views
24 Hour Service
Worker's Compensation Insurance

Litton Landscaping, Inc.
1250 Collins Road
Blairsville, GA 30512
706-745-5478
Cell 706-781-4858
Complete Design
Installation
Maintenance
"We go the extra mile"

TUFSTUF

SHAWN'S HOME FURNISHINGS
Mattresses, Porch Rockers & More!
"From the Front Porch to the Back Door We've Got You Covered!"
568 Blue Ridge St. • Blairsville, GA
FREE DELIVERY! **706-835-1209**
Mon-Fri 9am-6pm • Sat 9am-4pm • Closed Sun

Stover's Lawn Care
Jeremy Stover
FREE Estimates
Mowing, Trimming, Blowing & Spraying
706-994-8879
ucjstover@gmail.com

Jimmy D's Custom Home Painting

jimmydpaints@gmail.com
facebook.com/jimmyspaints
(706) 994-2392

JACKY JONES AUTOMOTIVE GROUP
We Make Buying Easy!
JACKYJONES.NET
Ford • Hayesville, NC • 888.342.2282 • Chevrolet • Murphy, NC • 888.614.8960
Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram • Hayesville, NC • 888.384.3145 & Franklin, NC • 828.369.5003