

# Sorghum Fest...from Page 1A

commenced shortly thereafter, along with the other games like rock throwing and log sawing, and vendors sold their wares to patrons hungry for Sorghum Festival goodies and arts and crafts

Keeping with the theme from nearly 50 years ago when the festival first began, all crafters and vendors were required to sell only handmade goods, making for a truly authentic, downhome experience at the festival each year.

Crafters come from far and wide to sell homemade soaps, cornhusk dolls, beautiful wind chimes, handmade clothes and more to interested patrons. And for those who might want something just a touch bigger than a wind chime or T-shirt, the Blairsville Cruisers are selling raffles for a 2001 red Mustang convertible. Tickets are \$5 per ticket or five tickets for \$20, with the car being raffled off on the night of Saturday, Oct. 21, on the Downtown Blairsville Square.

While prizes, homemade goods and games make a festival livelier; the Sorghum Festival would not be what it is without its syrup namesake – sorghum. Cooking up that fresh sticky sweetness during the festival is Terry Kane, the resident sorghum man for most of the last decade.

“I’ve been making sorghum for about 30 years,” said Kane. “I haven’t made sorghum for the Sorghum Festival the entire time. I was out of it for a while but I’ve been back at it with this one since 2008.”

And since Kane has

returned, he’s worked tirelessly every October, cooking from sunup to sundown, making sure that patrons get a taste of that infamous, delicious liquid.

“Sorghum, the cane, is similar to sugar cane, but it’s just a different variety,” said Kane. “You take the stalk of the cane, once it’s grown and matured, and you bring it in to the mill and you squeeze the juice out of the cane. Then the juice comes down and it takes about 10 gallons of juice to make a gallon of syrup. So, you have about nine gallons of water that you have to evaporate out.”

Kane explained that, without evaporating the water, sorghum would not have the thick, sticky texture that it is loved for, and that making sure to evaporate just the right amount of water is one of the keys to making quality sorghum.

“Once you get the water evaporated out, then you can bring the temperature up, high enough so it will begin to thicken,” said Kane. “Cane juice has enough sugar and starch in it on its own, that once you get the temperature high enough it’ll thicken just like a jelly or jam would. But you have to get the water out of it to get the temperature high enough.”

“As long as it still has water in it, it’ll only come up to about boiling and it needs to get up to about 228 – 230 degrees to make sorghum.”

“If it’s not, and the temperature isn’t as hot as it needs to be, then the syrup will be real thin. You only have a six- to eight-degree window



**Biskit eatin’, a favorite pastime of Sorghum Festival attendees. Photo/Lowell Nicholson**



**The Tom Floyd Band entertaining folks at the festival on Saturday, Oct. 15.**

to make the syrup. You have to be right in that.”

Last Saturday, Kane only made 15 gallons, which he said is slightly less than he usually does for opening day of the festival, and was sold out completely by 2 p.m. But, never fear, Kane was back at it and open for business on Sunday with more delicious syrup up for grabs and promises to have plenty for this weekend’s festivities.

The Sorghum Festival continues this Saturday, Oct. 20, and again on Sunday, Oct. 21. On both days, festivities run as follows: syrup making to kick things off at 9 a.m., music begins at 10:30 a.m., festival games start around 1 p.m., and festivities close at 5 p.m.

And don’t forget about the Square Dance Saturday night at the Old Middle School Gym, beginning at 8 p.m.

## Miller...from Page 1A

“Corps Values” in which he recounts the simple but powerful lessons he learned while in service.

Zell Bryan Miller was born in Young Harris where he and his wife Shirley still live in the “Rock House” that his mother built by hand.

Always a dedicated public servant, he retired from the U. S. Senate in 2004, having served since 1999.

He is a former two-term governor and spent 16 years as lieutenant governor.

The HOPE Scholarship and Pre-Kindergarten Programs he created as governor remain in service today, offering expanded educational benefits to our youth to better prepare them as they become adult citizens of this great country.

According to Hall of Fame Board Chairman Col.

Rick White (USA-Ret), nominees must have ties to Georgia and qualify in one of three categories: valor for heroic action in combat; outstanding achievement while in service; or significant local, state or national contributions after leaving active duty.

“This year’s honorees will be inducted at the Fifth Annual Georgia Military Veterans Hall of Fame

Ceremony and Banquet at 6 p.m. on Nov. 4 at St. Luke Ministry Center, 301 11th St. in Columbus,” Col. White said. “This annual event is open to the public, and I encourage all interested Georgians to attend.”

For reservation details, visitors may access the Hall of Fame website at <http://www.GMVHOF.org>.

## BRMEMC...from Page 1A

platform for open meetings and transparency. He added that he was prepared to make a motion during the business portion of



**BRMEMC Directors Ray Cook and Bert Rogers. Photo/Shawn Jarrard**

the meeting to vote on open meetings.

He did just that, including in his motion that the next meeting in November be open to the public.

Roy Perren, the board’s secretary, was asked if he got Williams’ request.

“I did, and I second that motion,” Perren said. “I too ran on a platform of open meetings.”

In September, at the Annual Meeting, an amendment to the bylaws was proposed by former Towns County Republican Party Chair Chuck Luca to require the board to conduct business in open meetings. Likewise, it was given the seal of approval by the membership to place on the 2018 election ballot.

Williams argued last week that the board wasn’t required to put that as an amendment, rather, they could put it to a vote on Oct. 10.

With a motion from Williams and a second by Perren, President Cummings asked for discussion. Ray Cook, who represents Cherokee County, North Carolina, said as chairman of the policy committee, he asked the board for a straw vote on the matter during the summer. The board voted no in the straw poll to hold open meetings.

“I’m not saying that the folks in Cherokee County, North Carolina, don’t want open meetings, I’m just saying that no one has ever asked me to ask the board to do that,” Cook said. “I don’t think anyone in Clay County, North Carolina, has asked for open meetings.”

Board member Gene Mason said that the board had met with three separate attorneys, lawyers that have represented EMCs, and those lawyers each told the board that they would not recommend opening the meetings to the public.

Board member Cory Payne told the board that he voted against open meetings in the straw poll.

“It’s not an issue that came up in Clay County,” he said. “In the last few weeks I’ve talked with several members of the board. I would welcome open meetings.”

President Cummings called for a vote. Danny Henson, Gene Mason, Jeff Ledford and Bert Rogers voted to not open meetings to the public.

Larry Williams, Ray Cook, Cory Payne and Roy Perren voted to open the meetings to the public. Cummings, as president, voted to break the tie, and allow for

open meetings beginning in November.

Open meetings will require the board to follow the state Sunshine Laws regarding executive sessions.

Following state law would allow the board to go into executive session for only three reasons – personnel, real estate decisions and litigation matters.

President Cummings said a meeting place for the November open meeting has yet to be determined.

## Crash...from Page 1A

side door area with the front of the Jeep.

“After impact, both vehicles came to a rest in the crossover of Georgia 515 (Georgia 2),” Cpl. Bradburn said. “Ms. Garrett was pronounced dead at the scene. Mr. Moss was transported to Union General

Hospital with minor injuries.”

Funeral arrangements for Garrett were incomplete at press time, according to Max Cochran, of Cochran Funeral Home.

Cochran Funeral Home of Hiawassee has charge of arrangements.