



Revolutionary Days visits schools

Fourth graders at Washington-Wilkes Elementary School listen raptly as George Thurmond of the Sons of the American Revolution describes Wilkes County during the Revolution and how the Battle of Kettle Creek affected the American fight for liberty. The fourth-graders’ Georgia history coursework has them studying the Revolution this semester, their teachers say. “This makes it more meaningful for them.”

Snowfall can’t stop Revolutionary Days activities observing Kettle Creek battle

A Friday night snowfall failed to dampen the Revolutionary spirit as hundreds of people came to observe the anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek in Washington over the weekend. “We just bundle up and think of Washington at Valley Forge,” laughed one Sons of the American Revolution participant Saturday morning. “We’re pretty fortunate.”

Despite the snow, Revolutionary history came alive all over Washington’s town Square, with the annual parade and over 30 unique living history performances all over town. The first-ever battle skirmish re-enacted the surrender of the Loyalist forces in Fort Washington Park as an appreciative crowd watched through the trees. The annual wreath-laying cer-

emony, usually conducted at the War Hill site, was held at The Pope Center Saturday afternoon due to the weather. “The road and the parking area were a mess out at the battle site,” said Bobby Towns, past Georgia Society SAR President and coordinator of the Memorial Ceremony. “We had to move it inside.” The observance brought more than 120 members of the Sons, Daughters, and Children of the American Revolution to Washington-Wilkes. This year’s visit was marred by Friday night’s annual banquet at the Pope Center, which the visitors said was badly organized and poorly prepared. “We had 120 prepaid reservations, and [the caterer] fed us overcooked chicken on plastic plates,” said George Thurmond. “We had to scramble to get tables set up – they weren’t prepared at all, and the food was terrible.” The initial investigation has shown that more than half of elementary and middle schools across Georgia had at least one classroom where the number of erasure marks was great enough to indicate cheating may have occurred. Reports say that state and local



Marchers in Saturday’s Revolutionary Days parade were fewer in number as snowy weather kept some participants away.



Snowy Fort Washington Park provided a perfect backdrop for the re-enactment.



Photos by KIP BURKE

Patriot forces prepare to attack the Loyalist forces in Saturday’s skirmish re-enactment.

Wilkes schools are all clear in scandal involving 2009 CRCT testing erasures

Wilkes County schools have been completely cleared in a widespread cheating scandal revealed last week affecting the state’s 2009 Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT). “We were completely cleared. I received a call from the Governor’s office that very afternoon saying that our results were ‘Great, in fact,’” said Wilkes County Superintendent Dr. Rosemary Caddell. Georgia public school students in grades 1-8 are required to take the CRCT in English, reading, and math. Students in grades 3-8 also take exams in science and social studies. After suspicions were raised last year, the state board had the testing company scan all test takers’ answer documents to detect erasures and note which classrooms had wrong-to-right answer changes that were well above the state average. This week, the Georgia Department of Education released official results from its investigation showing that test results from some 191 schools across Georgia show suspicious patterns of erasures and corrections in at least 25 percent of the schools’ classrooms. The schools suspected of cheating are largely in Atlanta, although there is one Richmond County school on the list. The state board of education Thursday ordered immediate investigations of the 191 Georgia schools that are facing questions of tampering on last spring’s tests. At least two schools in Atlanta are suspected of cheating in nearly 90 percent of their classrooms. Results of the investigation show that Atlanta’s Gideons Elementary and Parks Middle schools had suspicious results from 88.4 percent of classes and 89.5 percent, respectively. The initial investigation has shown that more than half of elementary and middle schools across Georgia had at least one classroom where the number of erasure marks was great enough to indicate cheating may have occurred. Reports say that state and local

officials are taking steps to follow up the investigation at schools with the most classrooms in question. A 2008 investigation by the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* had found widespread evidence of cheating on state tests, so in 2009, Gov. Sonny Perdue ordered a probe of all state-mandated tests taken by Georgia students in grades 1 through 8. CTB-McGraw Hill, the vendor that provides Georgia’s statewide tests, did an “erasure analysis” test in which several hundred Georgia

schools showed evidence of a pattern of erasures and corrections that were well beyond normal student erasures. The company’s analysis showed that in 74 Georgia schools, more than a quarter of the classrooms tested showed evidence of erasures much higher than normal. At least two Atlanta educators have already faced criminal charges based on lying to investigators about changing tests at their school in 2008.



HORNER



AVERY



JOHNSON

Classical trio set to ‘serenade’ music lovers in intimate setting

The trio of classical musicians behind the celebrated “Serenade” album will be performing in Washington on February 20 at the Bolton Luncford Playhouse as part of the Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation Concert Series. “Serenade: Music for Saxophone and Piano” is a lush and romantic concert experience comprised of Brian Horner on the saxophone, Elizabeth Avery on the piano, and composer M. Zachary Johnson. The musicians will perform and discuss musical and emotional contexts behind the music of “Serenade” in an intimate setting that encourages open dialogue with the audience throughout the performance. The Foundation Concert Series is presented by the Washington-Wilkes Historical Foundation (W-WHF) and Sound Artist Support. This dynamic new series began as a fund-raiser to help build membership and public support for the Washington-Wilkes Historical

Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving all aspects of local history. Throughout the past 200 years Washington, Wilkes County, Georgia, has been a cultural incubator for emerging talent in the performing arts. The W-WHF aims to continue that tradition by supporting young talent while also continuing to serve the historical community of Washington founded in 1780. The 2009-2010 season of the Foundation Concert Series is comprised of four unique musical performances by a range of artists that have performed throughout the world including John Mock, Russell Davis, Connye Florance, and David Davidson. Tickets are available for purchase online at historyofwilkes.org/events.html. To view the complete musical lineup for the season, visit historyofwilkes.org. To learn more about the “Serenade” album please visit soundartistsupport.com.



The Wilkes County Young Farmer Equipment Auction will be held Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m., at the McGill-Woodruff Ag. Center on U.S. Hwy 78 By-Pass, Washington. Buy or sell. For information call Eric Holton at 706-678-4044 day, 706-285-2863 night. Auctioneers will be Eddie Christian GAL #1672; and Leslie Smith GAL #3391.

The St. Luke Baptist Church, 3130 Metasville Road, Lincolnton, will have its annual Women on the Move for Christ Prayer Brunch, Saturday, March 13, 10:30 a.m. Rev. Kathy Jones and her congregation from Freedom Ministries will be the special guests. The Virtuous Women of Praise will be in charge of the music. All women are encouraged to attend. Lunch will be served. For more information, contact Cender Walton, 706-825-4060.

Pleasant Grove Baptist Church will have its black history program on Sunday, February 28, at 2 p.m. There will be a skit, speakers, messengers, African singing, instrumental presentations, stepper, and refreshments.

Victory Baptist Church on the Newtown Road will have homecoming on August 8 and a celebration if its 45th year. Former pastor Lawrence Griffith will be preaching in the morning service and Evangelist Billy Ingram will preach during the evening service and through Wednesday night. Calvary Quarter will be singing beginning at 5:30 Sunday night.

A concert of saxophone and piano music featuring Brian Horner and Elizabeth Avery will be presented at the Bolton Luncford Playhouse on February 20. They will be accompanied by M. Zachary Johnson, composer. Cost is \$30. Call 706-678-5001 for information.

The 28th annual Kiwanis Art and Talent Showcase will be held March 11, 7 p.m., at the Washington-Wilkes Elementary School. Cost is \$5.00 for adults; \$3.00 for students.

Work Ready testing next week to help Wilkes workers get jobs

To make workers in Wilkes County more competitive in the job market, testing for the Work Ready program is set for next week. “Having a Work Keys Certificate gets you to the front of the line when an employer is interviewing. Having the first shot at a job is very important in today’s economy,” said David Jenkins. “This testing will give workers a Work Keys Certificate that is used by employers in their job screening and job interview process.” The upcoming Work Ready testing is set for Tuesday, February 23, at 5:30 p.m., and Saturday, February 27, at 9 a.m. in the computer lab at Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School. “Washington-Wilkes is trying

to become a Work Ready Community,” Jenkins said, “so that we can be more attractive to expanding businesses and businesses wishing to locate in Georgia. Washington-Wilkes is currently at a disadvantage in this area. We are looking for 21 persons currently employed in the private sector in order to become a Work Ready Community. We have sufficient tests in the other qualification categories.” Interested persons should call Jenkins at 706-678-4654 to pre-register. They need to provide their first name, last name, date of birth and the last four digits of their Social Security Number. The Work Ready website is: www.gaworkready.org.

Community Calendar	
February 18	Tignall Homemakers, 2 p.m., NW Library
February 20	Music concert, Playhouse
February 21	W-W Food Bank open, 420 Jackson St., 6-9 a.m.
February 21	Doris Booker black history, 3 p.m., Mt. Carmel Pole Branch Young Adult Choir anniversary, 3 p.m.
February 22	Hilliard Statioin black history, 11:45 a.m.
February 22	LIR Geological Aspects, 2 p.m., Parish House
February 27	Civil War Roundtable, 6 p.m., Jockey Club
February 27	New Saints CME Church SNAP meeting, 10 a.m.
February 28	Jackson Chapel black history program, 11 a.m.
February 28	Pleasant Grove Baptist black history program, 2 p.m.
February 28	Samaria Temple family/friends day, 11:15 a.m.
March 1	LIR Geological Aspects, 2 p.m., Parish House
March 1-4	Pre-K registration, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., Senior Center
March 1-4	Kindergarten registration, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., Primary School
March 5	Pre-K registration, 8 a.m.-12 noon, Senior Center
March 6	Bingo Night, Tignall school lunchroom, 7-9 p.m.
March 7	Trinity Baptist pastor’s anniversary, 11:30 a.m.
March 8	LIR Geological Aspects, 2 p.m., Parish House
March 8	Washington City Council, 6 p.m., Pope Center
March 11	Kiwanis Talent Showcase, 7 p.m., W-WES
March 20	Young Farmers Auction, 10 a.m., McGill--Woodruff Ag Center
March 20	Lions Club chicken barbecue, 11:00 a.m.-1 p.m.
March 25	WMH Lunch & Learn, 12 noon, library
March 25	Animal Shelter Assoc. meeting, 6:30 p.m., MW Library
March 26	Ga. Botanical Gardens, meet Parish House, 10 a.m.
April 2-3	Spring Tour of Homes
May 7-8	Relay for Life, W-WPRD track