



# Working together

Residents team up to build playground / **American Profile Inside**

## The Clayton Tribune

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# Drug raid shutters businesses

By Blake Spurney  
Editor

Two Rabun County businesses were raided Monday as part of a three-county investigation into the sale of synthetic marijuana.

Don's Mobile, 4244 Highway 441 N., and Body & Soul Lingerie, 239 Highway 441 S., were shut down for making illegal sales of JWH, bath salts and other designer drugs to undercover officers as part of an eight-month investigation.

Overall, about 70 federal, state and local law enforcement officials participated in the simultaneous raids of eight businesses in the

Mountain Judicial Circuit. Five of the businesses were in Habersham County, and one was in Stephens County.

Rabun County Sheriff Frank Andrews announced the raid Monday morning after officers began executing search warrants. He said the Narcotics Criminal Investigation & Suppression team began working on the investigation in January after it received reports of businesses selling the designer drugs.

"It gives you the same high marijuana will give you," Andrews said about JWH.

No arrests were made Monday, but indictments charging the owners of the businesses

and those who made the sales were unsealed Tuesday in their respective counties.

Specific charges in Rabun County are: Shirish N. Shetty, three counts of sale of a controlled substance and one count of commercial gambling; Cindy Warren, two counts of sale of a controlled substance; Casey Hensley, one count of sale of a controlled substance; and Karen Gonzalez, seven counts of misrepresenting noncontrolled substances and single counts of commercial gambling and sale of a controlled substance.

Please see **RAID**, A7



Blake Spurney/The Clayton Tribune

Jeff Harris, patrol commander with the Rabun County Sheriff's Office, left, and Lt. Jack Tanksley are pictured in front of Body & Soul Lingerie, 239 Highway 441 S., in Clayton during a Monday morning raid.

## CASA seeks help in Rabun

By Shelby Harrell  
Staff Writer

The Northeast Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates is seeking more volunteers in Rabun County to help with an increasing number of cases of abused or neglected children.

After a few recent retirements, Rabun County counts only eight CASA volunteers. They are working with the 29 children who have been placed in their services, not counting an additional five children currently on the waiting list.

To recruit more local help, Northeast Georgia CASA, which serves eight counties, is offering a training class Sept. 12 in the Hollywood area for anyone who is interested in becoming a part of the CASA family.

"We do our best to de-

Please see **CASA**, A8



Shelby Harrell/The Clayton Tribune

Sharon Grist checks the color of her yarn after letting it soak in a dye made from boiled day lily blossoms Aug. 6 at the Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center.

## Artist keeps dyeing alive

By Shelby Harrell  
Staff Writer

Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center artist Sharon Grist had no idea that her hand-weaving hobby would turn into a long career of traditional weaving, dyeing and

yarn making.

Known as "the village weaver," Grist is presenting yarn-dyeing demonstrations on Saturdays during August in her studio at the museum.

Curious visitors came to observe Grist make

color dye from boiled flowers and change the color of her handmade yarn.

Grist has worked in her own professional studio since 1981, when she began working for

Please see **DYEING**, A13

## No sheriff's building in immediate future

By Blake Spurney  
Editor

Sheriff Frank Andrews said he was not angling for a new administration building down by the detention center, despite the language used by grand jurors in their recent civil presentments.

Grand jurors referred to substandard conditions at the sheriff's office in their presentments that were published earlier this month.

"One option is to enter into discussions regarding the construction of a new metal-type building on seven acres across from the Boggs

Mountain Road Detention Center," the grand jury noted. "We were told that, in general, prisoners don't 'act-up' as much when the Sheriff's Office is physically located close to the jail."

Andrews said the county was not ready for a new administration building. Any recommendation for a new building would be for some time in the future, maybe 20 years from now.

"Hey, we're not expecting anything," he said. "It's just a proposal for the future, whether it be 20 years or more in the future."

Please see **BUILDING**, A14

## CVB plans workshop to promote center

By Shelby Harrell  
Staff Writer

The Rabun County Convention and Visitors Bureau polished the details of the upcoming creative economies workshop at its monthly meeting Friday.

The workshop, which will begin at 1 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 25, at The Dillard House Conference Center, will show guests how to use creative economies to increase tourism and

boost sales for creative businesses in Rabun County.

Pete Cleaveland, interim executive director of the CVB, has been promoting the workshop to recruit future tenants for the proposed Georgia Mountains Creative Economies Center in Tallulah Falls.

"Right now, we're starting to get some people outside the county registered,"

Please see **CENTER**, A8

## 'Right off the page'

George Bush portrait painter to donate work at Rhapsody

By Jeremy Styron  
News Editor

After about 35 years living and working in Paris, a painter with a client list as long as it is luminous has found her way to Northeast Georgia, and she will donate a portrait during the upcoming Rhapsody in Rabun gala.

Mary Villon de Benveniste, who currently lives in Batesville, is perhaps best known for her 2001 portrait of George and Barbara Bush, which she created using photographs of the couple taken at their home in Kennebunkport, Maine. She also painted a portrait of Pamela Harriman, U.S. ambassador to France under the Bill Clinton administration.

With the help of her son, William, Villon de Benveniste photographed George and Barbara Bush for about an hour, and she quickly got on a first-

Please see **PAINTER**, A13



Jeremy Styron/The Clayton Tribune

Mary Villon de Benveniste works on a portrait of two sisters recently from her home in Batesville. Villon de Benveniste, who lived in Paris for about 35 years, is donating a pastel portrait for the annual Rhapsody in Rabun gala that takes place Sept. 12 at Rabun County Civic Center.

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