

Revolutionary Days to bring history to life this weekend

With more activities than ever before, the days of the American Revolution will come alive again all weekend as the celebration of Revolutionary Days in Washington returns, with men, women, and children in Colonial attire, a parade of patriotic colors, a day full of historic demonstrations and solemn ceremonies.

"Imagine Living in Wilkes County during the Revolutionary War" is the theme of Saturday's performances and demonstrations by Colonial personalities. Bill Ramsaur, SAR organizer for the activities, said, "This is your opportunity to ask questions about the American Revolution to persons whom you have discovered in history books."

Visitors will be able to talk with Wilkes County Revolutionary War heroes Colonel John Dooly, Colonel Elijah Clarke, and Nancy Hart, he said. "American Revolution leaders General George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson will be also present. Pa-

triot and Loyalists will compete for your allegiance and recruit for their militia."

There will be black-powder musket demonstrations; archaeologists will discuss recently uncovered artifacts from the battle; and the many Revolutionary War battle flags will be explained. There will be opportunities for children to play several Colonial games and drill with the Revolutionary Wilkes County Militia. Children's Colonial tri-corn hats and mob-caps will be available for purchase.

Visitors will enjoy living history displays in the windows of seven merchants on The Square. "Daughters of Liberty" featuring members of the Kettle Creek Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter will demonstrate hand work and sewing at the Chamber. Betsy Ross will tell her unique story at Petal Pushers Two; Sarah Hillhouse will entertain at Sophie's in the Fitzpatrick Hotel; and a Colonial spinner will perform in the window of Talk of



The Revolutionary Days weekend will bring hands-on living history activities for children. (Photo by Kip Burke)

the Town.

A new feature in this year's Celebration will be the presence of a merchant offering quality authentic

wearing apparel for sale. Debbie and Jake Pitonyak from New York will set up their "Sutler tent" featuring handmade Colonial ladies, men's

and children's 18th century garments.

The Washington Fitness Center will feature a puppet show of Colonial music performed by the Children of the American Revolution group from Lawrenceville. A backwoods trapper will display his pelts in the entrance to Grate Fires and a tanner will demonstrate Colonial leatherwork tools. At Master's Wildlife Taxidermy, a Continental Army Surgeon will describe how he attended to wounded soldiers.

Winners of the Washington-Wilkes Elementary and Middle School Revolutionary Days Poster Contest will be in the parade and their posters displayed at The Mary Willis Library during the entire month of February.

Battleground Tours

For years, faculty members from the US Army Signal Center at Fort Gordon have been supporting the annual Kettle Creek celebration by conducting battlefield tours based upon Army historic battlefields research. Army historian Steven Rausch said, "Walking the actual terrain provides a unique insight to the battle that can not be gained from just reading historic documents or books."

He and Army historian Walt Andre will lead guided tours of the battlefield on Friday afternoon at 3 p.m. and on Saturday morning from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

On Friday afternoon, Kettle Creek archaeologist Dan Elliott will also

participate in the tour to provide insight gained during the recent study of the Battleground. Rauch added, "Meet us at the Monument at War Hill on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning and learn what happened at Kettle Creek over 230 years ago."

Annual Parade

Saturday morning will start with the annual parade at 10 a.m. from the Mary Willis Library to The Square. Leading the parade will be the Georgia Society SAR Color Guard and the Elijah Clarke Militia, joined by Revolutionary War militia personnel from five other states. The Greene County JROTC will return for their annual performance, and a new unit dressed in splendid British red-coats will be the Seventh Regiment of Foot, a JROTC unit from Lawrenceville, Georgia. Washington-Wilkes Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4-H Club members, and other youth organizations are invited to walk in the Parade.

All activities are free and everyone is invited participate in the celebration, Washington-Wilkes Tourism Director Ashley Barnett said. "And be sure to shop and dine on The Square while you're here."

Ceremony and Skirmish at War Hill

The 230th Anniversary of the Battle of Kettle Creek culminates with a solemn wreath presentation ceremony Saturday at 2 p.m.. After

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New Athletic Director and Head Football Coach Lee Hutto with his wife, Hollie, and son, Patterson.

Lee Hutto is named Tiger head coach, athletic director for 2009-2010 school year

Lee Hutto has been named athletic director and head football coach at Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School for the 2009-2010 season.

In a called meeting of the Wilkes County Board of Education Thursday night, February 5, the board voted unanimously to name Hutto, who started his coaching career here, to the position. He was welcomed along with his wife, Hollie, and son, Patterson, and other family members.

Hutto replaces Coach Russell Morgan, who resigned after being told that his re-appointment as head coach would not be supported by school board members.

The new Tiger AD said that coming to Washington-Wilkes was like coming home. "I started my career here in 1997, as defensive line coach under first Coach Brooks then Coach Vohun. So I'm looking forward to the opportunity, and we're excited—this is a great move for us. Wilkes is a great community and a great place to live, and I can't wait to get started."

"I'm just delighted to have Coach Hutto joining our athletic family," said Wilkes County School Superintendent Joyce Williams. "I believe he will help unite our community around athletics in our school system."

Hutto, a 35-year-old Thomson native, returned to his alma mater to coach the Thomson defensive line under Coach Luther Welsh for five years, then went to Glynn Academy.

He has spent his last three years at Warren County, helping lead the Screaming Devils to the Class A state playoffs all three years.

Hutto says he'll be meeting with his Tiger players and coaches, but first he had to say goodbye to his Warren County team. "It's hard to say goodbye to my Warren players. They took a chance on me, and they've been great. I'll miss them, but I know they'll build on what we made there."

After saying goodbye to his old team, Hutto met Friday with his Tiger coaching staff and players. "We already have a lot of the pieces in place, with a great sports staff, and a great tradition. Wilkes County always has had talent, and I just have to get in there and get the discipline and organization to where it ought to be, get the weight program where it ought to be. It's a challenge, but it's exciting and I look forward to it. And it's not just football on Friday night, we want our kids to be successful in the total athletic program."

Thursday night, Hutto made it clear that he intended to make a home with the Tigers. "This is the kind of job you never want to leave," he said. "I don't want to ever have to leave Wilkes County—it's that kind of place. Similar to Thomson and Lincoln County, you've got a lot of great support, a great football tradition, you've got everything in place to be successful. How could you ask for more?"

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Mayor, City Council proclaim February as 'Sonny Barnes Month' for 47 years' service

By KIP BURKE
news editor

In Monday night's regular February meeting, the Washington City Council honored city Supervisor of Sanitation Hal "Sonny" Barnes Jr. for his 47 years of service and proclaimed February 2009 to be "Sonny Barnes Month."

Mayor Willie Burns, city council members, city employees, family and friends had hosted a reception for Barnes at City Hall last week, and Monday night Burns signed the proclamation praising Barnes for his "exemplary work ethics" and "courteous, respectful, and professional" demeanor during his decades of service.

The city council voted unanimously in favor of the proclamation naming the month in his honor.

To fill the void left by the retirement, council members discussed looking in-house first, then advertising for a Director of Public Works as they combine the Sanitation Department with Streets, Buildings, and Grounds.

In other action, the council approved a city proclamation naming February 12, 2009, as the 100th Anniversary of the NAACP; approved the city's application for a Rural Business Opportunity Grant; and authorized the use of The Square for a Girl Scout cookie sale Saturday. The council also authorized the Wilkes Ministers United to use The Square on May 7 to observe the National Day of Prayer.

The mayor and council, along with City Administrator Mike Eskew, discussed the list of city infrastructure projects that are ready to go if any new funding comes from the Obama administration.

Councilman Ed Pope Jr. asked if the push to increase recycling in the city was showing results. Eskew reported that there has been "a big increase" in the number of households recycling, but more important was that the volume of recycling is

much greater.

Opening the meeting were reports from Tourism Director Ashley Barnett and from Alan Soto, board member of the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce, reported that a Chamber After-Hours was scheduled for March 19 and the STAR Student Breakfast was set for Talk of the Town at 8 a.m. February 26.

June BRAG bike ride to bring thousands to Washington-Wilkes

The annual Bike Ride Across Georgia (BRAG) will return to Washington-Wilkes in June, bringing thousands of cyclists back to one of their favorite stops on the ride.

In 2006, some 1,600 bicycle riders and a few thousand of their friends came to Wilkes County. After they had set up camp and recovered from their ride, they spent the day dining and shopping and dancing on The Square. That night, most spent the night sleeping anywhere they could, including the high school's hallways and gym floor, while the lucky ones filled every bed in town and more.

By the time they left early Saturday, they were bragging about Washington, with many BRAG riders saying that the Wilkes County day was the best day of their six-day ride from Dalton to Augusta.

For 30 years, thousands of bicyclists have been gathering in the Georgia summer to complete the cross-state cycling trek known as the Bicycle Ride Across Georgia, Ride Director Vicki D. Thompson said. "BRAG is a social ride, not a race, comprising cyclists from all walks of life, ages, and abilities."

This year, the 381-mile ride starts June 6 and will take riders from Hiwassee across the state to Clarks Hill Lake with overnight stops in Dahlonega, Mt. Airy, Athens, Elberton, and finally to Washington on Friday, June 12. "Riders travel at their own pace along a set route that follows scenic roads with minimal auto traffic," Thompson said. "At the end of each day's ride, most riders pitch tents at a local high school. Others set up sleeping bags indoors in gyms, while others choose to stay at local motels. During the afternoon and evening, BRAG provides activities such as movies, games, talent shows, and entertainment."

"We're excited about BRAG coming back here," said W-WCHS Principal Steve Echols, who will again host the riders on school grounds. A dedicated rider himself, Echols said he would be working with the Washington-Wilkes Chamber of Commerce, the city, and other local groups to make the BRAG visit a good one.

Tignall search warrant results in methamphetamine felony arrests

Wilkes County deputies have made four methamphetamine arrests at a home on Freeman Road north of Tignall.

Sheriff Mark Moore said that on Friday, deputies, assisted by other agencies, executed a search warrant based on a federal probation warrant for William Anthony Harris, 41, of Tignall.

During the search of the home at 337 Freeman Road, deputies found a quantity of meth, firearms, marijuana, and cash.

Harris was charged with felony possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; felony possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. He is held on the federal

probation warrant.

Also arrested were Randy B. Fain, 38, of Tignall. He, too, was charged with felony possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; felony possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. He is held on \$50,000 bond.

Carolyn Norman, 30, was arrested and charged with possession of meth with intent to distribute and is held on \$50,000 bond; and Crystal Weaghting, 29, was arrested and charged with possession of drug-related objects. She was released on \$3,500 bond.

Sheriff Moore said that there were no more arrests pending on this case.



Brothers find buried treasures in Washington neighborhoods

Tom Burroughs (left) and his brother Randy show Washington Historical Museum Curator Stephanie Macchia the collection of artifacts they have found in years of metal detecting in yards and residential properties in Washington. Gaining permission of property owners from East Robert Toombs to Greens Grove and Lexington Avenue, the Burroughs brothers have found a trove of Civil War-era bullets, belt buckles, gun parts, and brass decorative items which will be on display at the historical museum. "We'd rather they be displayed where folks can see them than hide them away somewhere," Tom said. The Civil War artifacts make a nice counterpart to the Kettle Creek artifacts also now on display at the museum.