

Why isn't October the eighth month? See Page A5



Fort Chiswell takes homecoming win. Page B1

WYTHEVILLE

ENTERPRISE

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Fire prevention parade planned

BY MILLIE ROTHROCK
Staff

If you hear the lonesome wail of sirens Saturday evening, don't despair. Instead, head to Main Street to enjoy the Wytheville Fire Prevention Parade. The loud and flashy annual parade draws fire and EMS vehicles and personnel from Christiansburg to Chilhowie. The fun begins at 7

p.m. This year's route will run from Family Fare at the corner of East Main Street and 11th Street to the intersection of Main and Fourth streets. The vehicles will turn right onto Fourth Street and find their way to Spiller Elementary School, where the fire department will host a dinner for visiting participants.

Wytheville Fire Chief Marc

Brade asks parade observers to gather on Main Street to watch the parade.

The popular display gives firefighters and rescuers a chance to toot their own horns, but it's also a reminder that it's Fire Prevention Week, time to check your fire alarm batteries and plan escape routes at home.

"The week is important to us because fire prevention starts

at home with simple things like changing batteries, testing and replace smoke alarms," Brade said. "They should be replaced every 10 years even if they are still working."

Having a working fire alarm and exit plan helps the firefighters when they arrive on the scene to battle a blaze.

"It makes our jobs drastically different," Brade said. "If we are

dispatched to a fire and know everybody is out, we change our tactics based on that information. Instead of searching for a victim, we can go straight to fighting the fire and extinguish it faster."

This year, the fire department is stressing fire prevention education for adults as well as stu-

See PARADE, Page A7

Seasonal celebrations lined up in county

Staff Reports

You may not have known it by last week's sweltering weather, but the time for crisp afternoons, warm apple cider and spooky nights are very near, and in Wythe County, there's no shortage of ways to celebrate.

Haunted houses, festivals and other events are on tap throughout the month.

Each weekend through Nov. 2 brings the opportunity for thrill-seekers to get their fright fix at the Helheim Haunted Attraction in Wytheville. Located on Chapman Road, Helheim promises to "put the evil in Wytheville" with gruesome and sinister characters and acts that will scare the pants off visitors. Tours run from 7:30 p.m. through 11 p.m. The attraction is not recommended for those under 18 years of age.

If that's not enough to give you nightmares, another chance to get the heart racing can be found at Haunted Graham Mansion in Max Meadows, where they say this year, "there will be blood." Celebrating its 10th year, the seasonal attraction will bring terror to those who tour the mansion, its Trail of Terror, Bloody Barn, Psych Ward or other venues. The haunts start at 7:30.

Over in Rural Retreat, Williams Orchard dials down the scare factor with a Fall Festival each weekend in October. During the fun-filled festivals, children will get the opportunity to board a tractor-drawn hayride to the four-acre pumpkin patch where they can hunt for the perfect pumpkin to take home. A four-and-a-half acre corn maze also awaits them just across the way. A hay slide, barrel train, apple launcher and "punkin' chunkin'" are also part of the festivities. Admission comes in \$4 or \$10 packages and children five years and under get in free.

This year, the farm is showing gratitude to those who serve the community with a different appreciation weekend each week in October. Last weekend was Military Appreciation Weekend and this weekend will honor first responders. Next weekend will be Educators Appreciation Weekend. Those who bring valid identification will receive \$2 off admission price. During Kids Appreciation Weekend on Oct. 26 and 27, children 12 and under get in free. Children are encouraged to come in costume during Kids Appreciation Weekend.

Another fall festival is on tap in Wytheville this week. On Thursday, the Appalachian Regional Expo Center will kick off the Southwest Fall Festival with a performance by country singer and songwriter

See SEASONAL, Page A2

BIRTHDAY DONATIONS



Hannah Repass with this year's birthday bounty for the Agape Food Pantry. Every year, she asks family members to give food for the pantry instead of giving her a birthday gift.

Student swaps presents for pantry

BY MILLIE ROTHROCK
Staff

When it comes to birthday presents, 12-year-old Hannah Repass doesn't ask family members for gifts like silky bath bombs or colorful jewelry. Instead, she requests a can of green beans, a box of mac-cheese or a jar of peanut butter.

For the past four years, the Scott Memorial Middle School seventh-grader has gathered food for the Agape Food Pantry, which has been providing food for area residents for more than two decades. The pantry gives out food twice a month. At the last distribution, nearly 170 families received aid.

Repass' great-grandmother, Madaline Catron, has volunteered at the pantry

since it opened. Repass used to help out at the pantry sometimes, handing out cakes to children and packing boxes, until she got so busy with sports; she plays soccer, volleyball, basketball and sometimes softball.

Then, about four years ago, Repass thought of another way she could help Agape. Every year, her grandmother has a family Labor Day party, where relatives help Repass celebrate her Sept. 8 birthday. She decided to ask them to bring food for Agape instead of birthday gifts.

This year, about 20 family members donated macaroni and cheese, spaghetti noodles, canned vegetables and fruit, soup, peanut butter, tomato sauce and baked beans. In all, 119 items were collected and given to the food pantry.

"It's become tradition for me now," said Repass, the daughter of Todd and Jo Repass.

The middle-schooler also has a birthday party with a few of her friends every year. This year, they ate pizza from Domino's and worked their way through the Cryptix Escape Rooms in Radford. She said she doesn't ask her friends for donations because the family get-together is bigger so she gets more donations that way.

"I'm proud of her," Catron said of her great-granddaughter. "Because I want her to learn that giving is more important than receiving, and that we need to help others. There are a lot of little children who are hungry who go through those lines."

To reach Millie Rothrock, call 228-6611, ext. 35, or email mrothrock@wythenews.com

Florida pair face child neglect charges

BY JEFFREY SIMMONS
Staff

A Florida couple with a turbulent past and troubled present remained locked up in a Dublin jail on Tuesday after Bland County police charged them on Friday with hauling five children in the back of a sweltering U-Haul truck. The arrest came a little more than 10 years after three Ohio women traveling through the county were

accused of doing the same thing.

Delbray Delgado, 31, of Orlando and Alicia Monique Castillo-Reyes, 34, of Winter Park were given court-appointed attorneys on Monday during their Bland County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court arraignments. They are both charged with seven felony counts of child neglect and one count of possessing cocaine with the intent to distribute it.

According to Sheriff Jason Ramsey and

court documents, the suspects were arrested on Friday afternoon after a deputy stopped the U-Haul truck they were traveling in on U.S. 52 near the South Gap exit.

Deputy J.P. Agee and a state trooper pulled the truck over after getting reports that a man had struck a 1-year-old child in the mouth at the Love's Truck Stop and had made threats toward other children.

See NEGLECT, Page A2



Hoco 19

Fort Chiswell and Rural Retreat celebrate homecomings on Friday, Saturday. See Pages B2,3



Strictly Observing

Zach gets his Phil of a music idol. See Page A4.

