

Halloween...from Page 1A

p.m., and the square is closed to traffic at 5:30,” Harper said. “People need to be where they need to be by 5:30, because they aren’t driving through the square.

“The event is from 6-8 p.m., and it’s two hours of chaos and candy. Takedown will be from 8-8:30 p.m., and traffic to the square opens back up around 8:30.”

First Baptist Church at 296 Blue Ridge Street will be holding its annual Fall Festival from 6-8 p.m. on Nov. 2 as well, and community members are invited to partake of free popcorn, candy, hotdogs, Kona Ice, games and bouncy houses.

There will also be a Fright Night Haunted House at the Old Fort Sorghum starting Friday, Nov. 1.

The Haunted House will run Friday and Saturday night from 7-10 p.m., with a \$5

admission fee. Children’s games and marshmallow roasting will also be available.

“It’s a lot of fun for the kids,” said Katie Walker, who is helping to organize the event. “The Haunted House actually has a little storyline to it, but if you are somebody who wants to go and you get a little freaked out, there is a bailout point in the middle. And there is an ‘Enter If You Dare’ towards the end.”

The event will serve as a fundraiser for a Union County Fine Arts student fieldtrip.

“It’s the band, chorus and theater, and they are raising money to go to New York City,” Walker said. “They will be going in the spring, and every bit of participation and support helps get them there.”

Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President Steve Rowe said he really enjoyed the sense of

community felt in the county around holidays.

“Halloween is a fun tradition, and with the communities and the houses and whatnot so spread out, the Halloween on the Square and those types of things are just a fun time to pull the community together,” Rowe said.

Added Rowe, “The kids can get an opportunity to accept candy in a fun sort of way, and of course, you have all the people, whether adults or kids, that are getting creative with their costumes, and they have a good time dressing up.

“It’s just a chance for the community to get together in a good and safe way. We used to go house to house for Halloween, and now it’s difficult to do that anymore for a number of reasons, so it’s nice to be able to get the kids and the grandkids out in a safe environment where they can come and celebrate with the whole community.”

Arby’s...from Page 1A

we’re interested in having them here.

“So, it’s kind of a good faith thing. These deals take sometimes years to come to fruition, so you don’t want to be too shortsighted. We’re willing to work with them as long as they’re willing to work with us.”

The most recent contract extension creates a new drop-dead date sometime in mid-November, at which time the DDA will become free of any obligation in the contract and will be able to walk away from the deal and retain the land.

Closing on the deal would provide the DDA with enough money to settle its debts with the city, which several years ago paid off an interest-bearing loan the DDA used to acquire the Haralson Property in the first place.

Money from the Arby’s

deal would also allow the DDA to get started on its parking plans for the downtown area, including the potential development of parking on the Haralson Property parcel across from Cook’s Country Kitchen along Pat Haralson Drive.

The promised paved parking area behind Blairsville City Hall is on hold until construction starts on Steve Cockerham’s mixed-use commercial development known as Courthouse View.

Cockerham said he has secured a builder for the project, and that the builder is working with the building’s architect to lower construction costs before the final contract is awarded.

Popeyes construction has been temporarily delayed pending the availability of certain equipment being used to build restaurants for the company elsewhere, according to the

DDA.

Up the road from the Haralson Property, the LongHorn Steakhouse development at Murphy Highway and Georgia 515 continues making progress, as the building begins to take shape with ongoing construction.

Harper said residents shouldn’t be surprised to see online “For Sale” ads for the new chain restaurants in the coming months, which would be part for the course in the franchising world.

“People need to understand that these are corporate stores, and they will sell them as franchises,” Harper said. “Just because they see a store for sale does not mean it’s defunct or is never going to open – it’s simply corporate advertising for a franchisee.”

DDA Board Members will hold their next regular meeting on Nov. 18 at noon inside City Hall.

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Gooch Bypass, was not meant for pickleball, though pickleball players would continue to have access to the “Old Rubber Floor Gym” for indoor games.

“Adjacent to the new double gym building, we’re building eight new outdoor pickleball courts, which is located directly behind the Health Department,” Paris said. “So, we’ll finally have some dedicated pickleball courts.

“We’re planning in the future to have restrooms and a pavilion there, but with the new gymnasium construction, there’s not going to be room to build that until the gym gets done.”

Moving along, Paris reported that the county was still working with the Georgia Department of Transportation on building an access road from Georgia 515 to Panther Circle, which runs behind the new Sears store and the Aviator Cafe.

“It’s probably going to be spring before we actually start on that,” Paris said.

Finishing touches on the Meeks Park Pavilion behind the upper ballfields are slated to be completed by springtime, Paris said, including paving with block islands and landscaping.

The pavilion has been in use for some time now, but Paris said it will be much nicer when the finishing touches are complete. There will be an additional 30 parking spaces across the road from the new pavilion as well.

Touching on the 50th Anniversary Blairsville Sorghum Festival that ended Oct. 20, Paris said the first Saturday of the festival this year “was the largest, by far, of any Saturday they’ve ever had.”

“I want to thank all those that were involved with the Sorghum Festival. It was a great event this year, as usual,” Paris said.

Moving along, he noted that SPLOST revenues “continue to be excellent, and we should be completely out of debt in the county” by the time the current SPLOST expires in spring 2021.

Looking ahead, Paris said the county had two projects in the works for the upcoming voter-approved 2021 SPLOST.

“We’re going to build four youth ballfields in the bottom land across from the Farmers Market,” Paris said.

As for the other project, Paris said he finally wanted to build something that’s been put off for a long time, namely an outdoor covered amphitheater near the Sorghum Mill in Meeks Park.

“For future Sorghum Festivals, or church events or musical events, there will be about a 1,200-seat covered amphitheater,” Paris said, adding that the slopes on either side of the amphitheater could accommodate even more people. “It will be a tremendous asset to the community.

“Both of these together, (the amphitheater) and the sports complex, will fit easily within our SPLOST budget and leave us a

lot of funding for other things.”

In other business, Paris said the county had completed paving on all the roads in its lists “and patched many more roads and striped more miles of roadway than any time in the past 19 years since I’ve been here.”

Paris amended the contract between the county and CHA Consulting, Inc. dated July 25, 2018, for professional design services for the Youth Ball Field Complex at the Farmers Market.

Effective Sept. 16, 2019, the contract amendment is for additional services such as data collection, schematic design, design development, and construction documents in the amount of \$137,000.

Paris approved an agreement with LexisNexis Coplogic Solutions, Inc. to provide for a small fee online

accident report services to people involved in motor vehicle accidents.

There will be no cost to the county for this service, Paris said, noting that it will save local law enforcement both time and money.

Paris approved a lease agreement with Ninth District Opportunity for the use of office space at the Pat Haralson Memorial Civic Center in the amount of \$230/month or \$2,760 for the term of the lease, from Oct. 1, 2019, to Sept. 30, 2020.

The commissioner approved an Accountability Courts Sub-Grant for Enotah Family Drug Treatment Court in the amount of \$38,950 in passthrough money from the state for the next year.

He also proclaimed Oct. 6, 2019, as St. Clare’s Episcopal Church Day.