Candidates respond

Questions on water, future

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Wildcats ready to play

Team plays Hayesville Friday

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The Clayton Tribune

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Grand jury hears Kilby, Boggs cases

By Blake Spurney
Editor

The anticipation into what may come of the long investigation into actions taken by former Boggs Mountain Humane Shelter director Lowanda "Peanut" Kilby is over.

Rabun County grand jurors on Wednesday heard evidence that had been compiled against Kilby during the past 14 months. Prosecutors are seeking a 60-count indictment against her, the results of which were unavailable by press time.

Assistant District Attorney Maggie Hastings said the indictment she drew up contained 29 counts of felony theft by taking, 29 counts of computer theft, one count of felony theft by deception and one count under the Georgia Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, or RICO.

A conviction under the RICO statute carries by itself a prison sentence of 5-20 years. Convictions for felony theft by taking and computer theft carry sentences of up to 15 years on each count.

Hastings said the theft by deception charge was based on the allegation that Kilby accepted donations on behalf of the shelter by deceitful means. Specifically, she is accused of procuring donations under the fraudulent claim that Boggs Mountain was a no-kill shelter and that the animals in question would not be put down. The investigation has turned up about two dozen animals that were put down even though donations were solicited on their behalf.

Names of animals listed in the indictment include: Georgie, Buddy, Brady, Tug, Tank, Red, Spot, Jake, Ginger, Denver, Toshie, Kelly, Dixie, Roger, Nora, Spike, Boss, Lola, Oreo, Sally, Pookie, Brownie, Thor, Jenny, Molly, Tuxedo, Jersey and Bart. Of those animals, Hastings said 16 were dogs and the rest

Please see **KILBY**, A13

City race candidates finalized

By Mat Payne
Staff Writer

With two seats being contested on Clayton City Council and the mayor's office up for grabs, eight candidates are gearing up for an election that could drastically affect the city's future.

Candidates for mayor are incumbent David Phillips, who qualified Friday, Councilman John Bradshaw and Billy Johnson, chairman of the Clayton-Rabun Water and Sewer Authority.

"I hope to see us just continue to go forward with everything," Phillips said. "I've been in Clayton going on 52 years and have served almost 16 years on city council and mayor."

Phillips said a mutually beneficial consolidation of water and sewer services and job security for city employees were the issues about which he was most concerned.

Bradshaw said his decision to run for mayor

Please see **CANDIDATES**, A14

File Photo

Attendees enjoy a laugh at the 2012 Rhapsody in Rabun. The event earned about $61,000 for the Sid Weber Memorial Cancer Fund. This year's event to benefit the Foxfire Fund Inc. is being held Monday at the Rabun County Civic Center.

Rhapsody 2013 to benefit Foxfire

By Mat Payne
Staff Writer

In 1966, a group of Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School students began interviewing aging Appalachians about their traditions, heritage and personal lives. They collected their findings and put them together to form a single publication called Foxfire.

Forty-seven years later, Foxfire has evolved from a student-published magazine to the Foxfire Fund, Inc., a nonprofit organization that oversees multiple publications, operates a museum and helps put on the Foxfire Mountaineer Festival.

Monday night, Foxfire will be the beneficiary of the 23rd annual Rhapsody in Rabun gala

Please see **RHAPSODY**, A13

What: Rhapsody in Rabun
When: 5-11 p.m. Monday
Where: Rabun County Civic Center
How: Tickets for an open seat cost $50 and can be purchased by calling 706-746-5828.

Early voting sees low turnout

By Mat Payne
Staff Writer

The race to see who will fill the Post 5 seat on the Rabun County Board of Commissioners has officially begun, yet only about 3 percent of registered voters so far have cast ballots.

Voters have the ability to vote for Kay Darnell, David Fountain, Cory Justus or Sid Neville in the nonpartisan election

According to Jane Thomason, assistant supervisor with the board of elections, 235 had cast ballots as of Tuesday afternoon, and an additional 78 had returned an absentee ballot.

"Voting is just too easy now," said Nancy Gribble, an elections office worker. "You can request an absentee ballot and not even have to give a reason."

Early voting began Aug. 26 at the elections office and will continue until 5 p.m. Sept. 13. Election Day will be Sept. 17 with voting taking place

Please see **VOTING**, A13

Lyme disease spreads in Rabun, victims seek support

By Michael Leonard
Publisher

It is the little bug with a big bite. The tick.

And when that tick carries the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, it becomes a bite that can cause severe and long-term consequences.

Five Rabun County residents are among many across the area and thousands nationwide currently fighting the disease. The stories of how and when they acquired Lyme disease vary, but accounts of their suffering are achingly similar.

An unexpected catch

David Cantrell had been in Wyoming fishing this summer when on June 20 his wife, Barbara, noticed a tell tale sign on David's skin.

"She saw my back and said, 'Dave, you have Lyme disease. You have the bull's eye on your back."

He didn't think she could be right, but they went to a local clinic where the bad news was confirmed. He hasn't felt right since.

"Barbara noticed the bull's eye on Thursday morning. By Sunday, I began to not feel well," David said. "I was dizzy, aching and light-headed — flu-like symptoms."

Cantrell came home and saw his family doctor, who gave him what David said the medical staff called the atomic bomb antibiotic, a very aggressive dosage of antibiotics aimed at killing or controlling the organisms causing Lyme disease. However, the damage they had already caused was not reversed.

Lyme disease hangs around

Kathy Blalock is recovering from a second round with the disease she suffered from first 16 years ago.

"I had it in the fall of '97 and it was still in my bloodstream," Blalock said. "It kind of hides and is dormant. Then when you get run down and tired, it can come back."

Lyme disease laid Blalock low again in February. Her symptoms were similar to the first outbreak.

"Your muscles, ankles, knees — all of your joints hurt. Your finger joints, they all hurt," she said. "I couldn't walk for three months the first time."

Please see **LYME**, A7

Michael Leonard/The Clayton Tribune

Kathy Blalock, from left, David Cantrell and Tammy Rasmussen all have Lyme disease. It is a disorder spread by tick bites that causes debilitating pain and suffering. The three met recently to share information and provide support.

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WEATHER

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Sun and clouds.
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Coming Sept. 26
Service is our Business
See details Page A6 & C10

Mat Payne/The Clayton Tribune

Ken Muller, Frances Washburn and Mick Coleman await early voters Tuesday at the Rabun County Board of Elections office. About 3 percent of registered voters have taken advantage of early voting.

VOTING

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. in the Rabun County Civic Center.

Despite the ease of voting, only a small percentage of eligible voters have taken the initiative.

During the last special election, when voters approved renewing the county's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, 1,004 people voted early, Thomason said.

"We hope to see a lot of people come out," Gribble said. She added that some voters choose to wait until the day of the election to vote because they enjoy the sense of community during elections.

Though the ballots haves started coming in, votes will not be counted until voting ends Sept. 17.

Post 5 was previously filled by the late Stanley "Butch" Darnell, who also served as the commission chairman. Commissioner Greg James has assumed the role of chairman.

KILBY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

cats.

"This is the largest investigation by the district attorney's office that I've ever seen," Hastings said. "We spent countless hours talking to witnesses, talking to victims."

The services of a forensics accountant with IAG Forensics also were used in reviewing banking records. Don Page, an investigator with the district attorney's office, subpoenaed banking records and witnesses.

"He has made numerous charts and diagrams, and this investigation would not be anywhere without his help," Hastings said about Page.

Each allegation of computer theft is a felony regardless of the amount involved. The indictment alleges that Kilby used computers and a network to take donations intended for the shelter through PayPal, and that money was transferred into her personal accounts. Each allegation of theft by taking also is a felony regardless of the amount because Kilby was a fiduciary working on behalf of the shelter in soliciting the donations.

The RICO count alleges that Kilby unlawfully acquired $3,035 worth of Boggs Mountain property through a pattern of racketeering activity.

Four counts of felony theft are listed as underlying offenses relating to the alleged racketeering.

Hastings said the state was alleging that Kilby took more than $10,000 that was intended for animal adoptions.

"We do feel awful for all the dogs that were euthanized when people were told the dogs were adopted, and especially for people who received emails after the dogs had been euthanized saying that their dogs had been adopted," she said.

More than 50 witnesses are listed in the indictment. Hastings said she didn't know if all would be called to testify at trial. Some live as far away as Texas and Michigan.

"At this time, no one else is being charged," she added. "The state is leaving that open."

Problems with the shelter's Lucky Dog/Lucky Kitty program surfaced in July 2012. The next month, Kilby and Penny Burkitt, executive director of the shelter, both resigned.

District Attorney Brian Rickman acknowledged that many people had shown an interest in how the lengthy investigation was progressing. He also said those involved were extremely limited in what they could say, but he added that people would get a sense of the effort put into the investigation based on the grand jury's action.

"I hope people appreciate that when you're working on an investigation, you can't have a monthly press conference because you're wanting to protect the integrity on what you're working on," he said.

RHAPSODY

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

fundraiser, which is being held from 5-11 p.m. at the Rabun County Civic Center.

Rhapsody in Rabun is a black-tie gala held every year on the Monday after Labor Day. The event features silent and live auctions, cocktails, dinner from area restaurants, live music from Orange Krush and dancing.

"We're really excited about it," said Margaret Dunn, Rhapsody president. "We've had great support and a lot of donations."

Dunn said because of the legacy of preservation and tradition that Foxfire has built, the event would have an "old-timey" theme, with quilts hanging on the walls among other rustic decorations.

Dunn said Rhapsody had received more than $30,000 worth of donated goods and services.

Rebekah Krivsky, co-chairwoman of the auction, said donated items for the auction included: time shares for a variety of locations, handmade quilts, a flight with Bruce Russell, a handmade table from Beaver Carpenter, a tailgate pack from Alpha Dog and a scarf made by local weaver Sharon Grist.

Dinner is being provided by area restaurants, with each contributing one or two specific items. According to Rhapsody organizer Tom Payne, Lake Rabun Hotel will be providing dessert, Mama G's Italian Restaurant will be providing standard Italian fare, Glen-Ella Springs Inn will be serving its famous Caesar's salad, Mountain Man Grill and Pizza will serve a Greek salad, The Dillard House will contribute Southern-style vegetables, the Chophouse at LaPrade's will contribute barbecue and she-crab soup, Karan's Catering will provide light hors d'oeuvres and Main Street Bar & Grill will provide an open bar. Payne said other restaurants contributing food and drink are: Rumor Hazit, Kingwood Resort, the Beechwood Inn, Hawg Wild BBQ and Catfish House, Huddle House and Tiger Mountain Vineyards.

Last year, Rhapsody earned about $61,000 for the Sid Weber Memorial Cancer Fund. Dunn said she believed the event would raise at least that much for Foxfire.

"There are a good number of available seats left," Dunn said. "We've sold over 300 tickets, and capacity is about 400."

Open seating for the event costs $50. Tables seating up to 12 people cost as much as $2,500.

According to Ann Moore, president of the Foxfire Fund, money raised from the event will be used to digitize more than 5,000 hours of interviews on cassette and reel-to-reel tape.

"This is something that nobody else has," Dunn said. "It's not only going to preserve the tapes, but it will also make them available."

Dunn added that because of their age and the conditions in which they had been stored, many of the tapes were disintegrating.

In addition to digitizing the tapes, Foxfire will use funds from Rhapsody to create a fireproof and waterproof vault, which should stop further degradation of the tapes.

According to a Foxfire Fund press release, the organization has more than 2,100 interviews, 82,000 black and white photo negatives, 10,000 color slides and 1,100 videotaped interviews. Ninety-eight percent of older Appalachians interviewed have died, and with them so has much of the traditional Southern Appalachian dialect they spoke.

"It is not Foxfire that will be impacted by the funds raised," Moore said. "It will be family members of those who shared their lives and stories with us: for genealogical research, for scholarly researchers who are documenting the history, culture and dialect of the area; and for younger folks to be able to learn valuable lessons from past generations."

Ridges & Reflections

A coffee-table-style magazine containing stories about our heritage of people and places in this land of mountains and lakes. *In this issue:* Wolffork, Clayton, Mountain City, Warwoman, Lakemont, Betty's Creek and Persimmon.

Jefferson Davis Beck, shown with his family in this historic photo, was a descendant of the well-known Indian fighter Col. Sam Beck.
Photo Courtesy Rabun County Historical Society

Members of Wolffork Baptist Church gathered for this photo in 1909.
Photo Courtesy Rabun County Historical Society

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