

Association...from Page 1A

even crank, let alone push the boat around the lake, so we salvaged that boat out also."

Other things Sheriff Mason said his department discovered missing from inventory was scuba gear for dive operations.

According to Sheriff Mason, the Sheriff's Office had purchased four sets of scuba gear at around \$1,000 each, and they were missing when he arrived in the office. One-and-a-half sets were found at the Fire Department, but the whereabouts of the remainder of the scuba gear remains a mystery.

"At any rate, there is not a program right now for us to enforce the laws on Lake Nottely other than working with Ranger Dyer and the DNR," Sheriff Mason said. "We will have people on the boats with (DNR)."

Ranger Dyer discussed new boating laws and changes made to current laws, as well as fielding questions from the membership.

The law changes stemmed from two incidents on Lake Lanier last summer when on June 18, 2012, 9-year-old Jake Prince and his 13-year-old brother Griffin, were killed on Lake Lanier when an intoxicated boater collided with their family's boat.

On July 8, 2012, 11-year-old Kyle Glover, step-son of Grammy-winning singer Usher, was left brain dead after a Jet Ski accident on Lanier. He passed away two weeks later.

Senate Bill 136, also known as the "Jake and Griffin Prince BUI Law," reduces the state's legal blood alcohol limit from .10 to .08 for boating under the influence. The bill was signed into law by Gov. Nathan Deal on April 23rd during a ceremony at Lake Lanier.

Another law change is the new life jacket rule, that requires anyone under the age of



Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris talks with members of the Lake Nottely Improvement Association. Photo/Todd Forrest

13 to wear a safety vest while the vessel is in motion.

Also, anyone born on or after January 1, 1998, and those turning 16 years old thereafter, must complete a boating education course before operating a motorized vessel on the waterways of Georgia.

There are exemptions to this law, such as private lakes and ponds as well as anyone licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard as a master of a vessel.

Ranger Dyer also thanked Sheriff Mason for providing a deputy to ride along with him while he patrol's Lake Nottely.

Finally, Commissioner Paris addressed the group.

"Lake Nottely is the heartbeat of Union County, especially when it's full," Paris said. "I do want to thank the Sheriff and his people for being so budget-minded. Every time I talk to them about something they always say they want to keep their budget low, so I can't argue with that."

Paris followed up on what Sheriff Mason said about not having enough money in the budget for a permanent law enforcement presence on the lake.

"I know some of you that live on the lake, your taxes are some of the highest in the county, but our property taxes are still the fourth lowest in the state," Paris said. "Yet we've got to be practical and realistic. If the Sheriff's Department can seize drugs at a house that has a nice boat, it's more likely that we can get a boat on the water."

In other items, Wentworth announced the Forest Service's five-year Davenport Mountain project has been completed.

According to Wentworth, the Forest Service acquired what used to be farm land in the 1960s and have been managing the land for wildlife, timber, recreation and a variety of uses.

"We're doing a lot of thinning of the white pine and Virginia pine and coming back in and planting white oak and short leaf pine to get the more native pines growing back in the area," Wentworth said.

The Forest Service has been building fire breaks along the private property that adjoins Davenport Mountain, restoring the old farm fields, improving fishing by creating fish attractors in the lake.

"Davenport Mountain also has an ATV trail system and we've been working on relocating some of those trails to better locations," Wentworth said.

Wentworth added that the trails should be opened by the end of July.

The Forest Service's Todd Dempsey followed Wentworth to discuss another project about to get underway.

A timber sale is taking place near Forest Drive and Chapman-Ford Road with another smaller project happening near John Smith Way.

According to Dempsey, the Forest Service is currently taking bids until July 30 and should have a contract before the end of August.

The winning bidder will have three years to complete the deal.

"It may not last that long," Dempsey said. "It just depends on the contractor and how they want to process their timber. There will be no clear cutting, just a thinning. The primary species of trees that we're going to remove is the white pine and some of your lower quality hardwoods."

Dempsey also cautioned the locals regarding the increased traffic and noise in the areas where the thinning will be taking place.

Association President Henry Dominick summed up the purpose of the organization by saying, "anything we can do to help the lake."

"We clean the lake and do everything that we can to get the lake levels to stay up," he said. "The Nottely River eventually flows into the Ohio River and then into the Mississippi. So if those parts of the country get a lot of rain, then the TVA will keep the lake levels up."

The Association also holds four road clean ups every year and two on the lake.

Shucks...from Page 1A

third. Jennifer's son Trent Kerr was a pretty good shucker too, out shucking a young lad from Titusville, Fla. with an impressive 10-ear performance.

The championship round is easy to remember, like it just happened yesterday.

In the final round, Knight, now Union County Tax Commissioner, was originally credited with 18 shucked ears.

Because of Knight's political ambitions, Mason demanded a recount. It was later determined that Knight had only shucked 16 ears of corn.

Meanwhile, Mason was humble in accepting his title as "Shuck King."

"Aw shucks, nothing beats experience," Mason said with a grin, as he humbly claimed top honors.

He faced some tough competition en route to his victory as kids and adults alike traveled from as far away as Corpus Christie, Texas to try their hand at ripping the husks off the bright yellow vegetable that was later cooked and sold to benefit the local food pantry.

Also this year, Charles Totherow is expected to debut his new hybrid pepper at the Corn Festival.

"We're calling it the Paris Pepper," Totherow proclaimed.

For those that don't remember, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris also was on hand last year to shop and welcome visitors, but he encountered a little problem.

Totherow considerably offered to let Paris sample what was thought to be a "mild" green pepper.

"It's not hot is it," Commissioner Paris inquired. "No, not at all," Totherow said confidently.

Commissioner Paris took



Traffic as usual at the Farmers Market. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

a big bite of the bright green pepper and took off in a dead run for the sweet tea stand.

"The lady next door to Charles promised me it was mild," a smiling Commissioner Paris said. "I've gotten a lot of vegetables from Charles over the years. I'm a little leery now."

A tall glass of sweet tea, a piece of homemade pie and two small tubs of Ronnie Dyer's homemade ice cream later, Commissioner Paris discovered that you had better pay attention to those little locally grown, green infernos.

It took all three Market favorites to somewhat take the sting out of Commissioner Paris' unfortunate up close encounter with a habanero chili pepper.

"My mouth was on fire for two hours straight," Commissioner Paris said.

Of course, a smiling Totherow said Commissioner Paris chose the wrong pepper. Totherow later blamed the pepper mix up on his wife, but it just goes to show how much fun The Market and its organized events really are.

No word yet on whether Commissioner Paris is up for the challenge of taste test of Totherow's latest creation.

"Lamar is definitely the namesake of the Paris Pepper," Totherow said. "We'll see if he's interested in endorsing this year's peppers."

Escape...from Page 1A

son — he was extradited to North Carolina from Puerto Rico, where he allegedly fled to avoid prosecution for child molestation charges, the *North Georgia News* has learned.

According to Sheriff Davis, Graham's bail was raised another \$500,000 for his escape charge, bringing the total to \$1 million.

Graham, escaped Sunday afternoon from the sally port of the Clay County Jail, and was injured climbing the sharp razor wire at the top of the fencing, Sheriff Davis said.

Graham left blood evidence behind, Sheriff Davis said.

Graham's last known address was Blairsville. Union County Sheriff Mack Mason had his deputies paying close attention to Graham's neck of the woods.

"It's good to hear he's behind bars again," Sheriff Mason said. "He needed to be rounded up really quick and he was."

Sheriff Davis said that the effort to round up Graham was part of a cooperative effort of local law enforcement agencies. Graham has also been held in the Cherokee County Detention Center in Murphy, NC. No further details were available at press time.