

School...from Page 1A

said High School Principal John Hill. "Most of the kids' schedules were correct, so we've had very few schedule changes to be concerned about. No behavior problems whatsoever, good morale. Kids are excited to be here, very excited."

"They're excited about the Fine Arts Center, excited about some of the new courses and programs that we're offering. Overall, just extremely positive - a very good day."

During Meet Your Teacher, which took place the day before on Thursday, Aug. 6, students in kindergarten through ninth grade did exactly that - they met their teachers.

Seth Beaver, 12, attended the event, and while he's not too thrilled to see summer break at an end, he is excited to see all of his school friends once again and to get back to middle school wrestling.

Owen Liebross, 5, started kindergarten this year, and during Meet Your Teacher, he discovered that his favorite part of his classroom was the dress-up area, specifically the policeman's uniform.

"I love it," said Ow-



It's time to get on the school bus, the school day is over. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

en's mother, Heather Liebross, of the school system. "It's changed a lot since the '80s."

She and her husband, Todd, are both products of Union County Schools, and they have full confidence that Owen is in the right place.

"We get to see him develop, and they teach him a lot, so it's rewarding in that way," said Todd Liebross, who owns Tank Town USA, an adventure-filled business where people can drive tanks

and crush cars, just over the county line into Fannin County up Highway 515.

Over at the elementary school, Parent Engagement Liaison Judy Hughes met parents and students, and informed families about the new Panther PIT - Parent Involvement Team.

"The biggest thing I want the public to know is that we just want more parent involvement at our schools," said Hughes, who does RTI, or Response to Intervention, with fourth and fifth-grade

students, with an emphasis on math and reading. "Because we have become more active in engaging parents, I think it has improved."

"But I feel like we could do even better, and I think our schools can do better with more parent involvement. The more we can engage parents in helping us do school policies, and be on committees and make decisions - not just come in and volunteer, but be actively involved in some of the decisions that we make. I

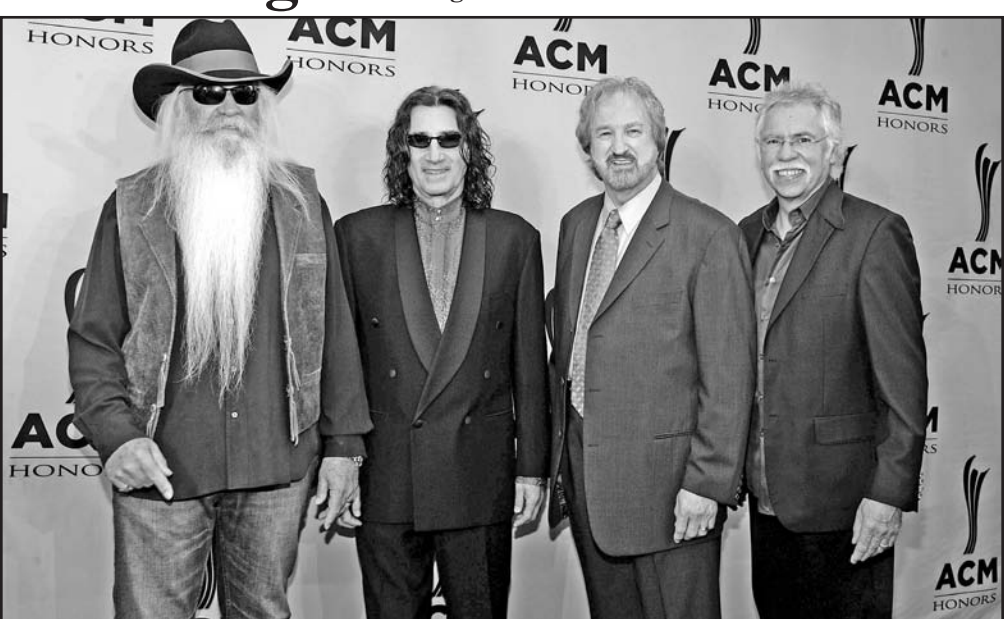
think that will make us more productive, and I think it'll make our students more successful."

Each school in the system has its own Parent Engagement Liaison whose goal is to ramp up parent engagement to new levels.

"Research shows that when parents are engaged in the school, the students

are much more successful in life," said Hughes. "That's been something that we're really tackling, and it's going to be in our school improvement plan. That's something else that's important. We're working on our school improvement plan, our parent involvement policy and our compact, and we want parent input."

Oak Ridge...from Page 1A



longest standing in a group with World War II-era roots, have spanned more than four decades and seemingly countless hits.

"It's about to be 43 years, which is hard to believe, for this foursome to be together, but we're still going strong," said Sterban. "That's the great thing about this - if 42 or 43 years ago you asked any one of the four of us if they thought that 42 or 43 years later we would still be doing this, and doing it at a high level, at this level

- I don't think that any of us would have believed it."

"But here we are, 43 years later, still going strong. And the thing is, we do not plan to retire. We still love doing what we're doing, we still look forward every night to taking our music live onstage to our fans and to our audiences. When we come to Hiawassee, that will be no exception for sure. We will certainly be looking forward to getting on stage that night as well."

Many know and love the classics by The Oak Ridge

Boys, and Sterban wants everyone to know that those are on the menu when they play the Fairgrounds on Aug. 21.

"When we come to town, the bulk of our show is going to consist of our hit records," said Sterban. "We've been very fortunate over the course of our career to have 23 No. 1 Country records, and close to 50 chart records. We have a lot of hit music and a lot of familiar songs, and people like to hear those hit records."

"So, a big part of our

show is going to be Oak Ridge Boys hits. *Elvira* is going to be included for sure, you can count on that. And *Thank God for Kids*, that's another very special Oak Ridge Boys song that will be in the show, and *Leaving Louisiana in the Broad Daylight*. *Y'All Come Back Saloon*, our first hit ever, that will be there, and a lot of the hits that you expect to hear from The Oak Ridge Boys."

Concert-goers can also expect to hear some of the new music that Sterban, Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall and William Lee Golden have produced of late, including always close-to-the-heart Gospel Music.

"Our latest album, which is doing very well for us, by the way, is a Gospel album," said Sterban. "It's called *The Oak Ridge Boys - Rock of Ages*. As that title implies, it is an album of old hymns - songs that all of us grew up on, songs that we've been singing from the time we all went to Sunday school in church as kids."

Tickets are currently on sale at the Fairgrounds for the 7:30 p.m. show on Friday, Aug. 21, with two levels available for \$42 and \$32 respectively. For more information, visit www.georgiamountaintainfairgrounds.com.

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