# Keowee Courier to move after 114 years



The Keowee Courier newspaper in Walhalla has been asked to vacate its building by the end of February, as requested by property owner Oconee Heritage Center.

FILE PHOTO

BY MIKAYLA KREUZBERGER
THE JOURNAL

WALHALLA — The Keowee Courier has been a Walhalla icon in its Short Street location for 114 years, but the newspaper will have a new home by the end of next week.

Courier Editor Ashton Hester said the newspaper's new office will be in the "old Water Grant" brick home behind the Walhalla Police Station on N. College Street.

Oconee Heritage Center currently owns the historic Short Street building, and OHC Director and Curator Leslie White said the board has requested the Courier be out of the building by the end of February.

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"It was decided in January," White said. "Vacating the building would be in the best interest of everyone involved ... The building they're moving to is still downtown and in much better condition."

The Courier building is in urgent need of renovation; its leaky roof has proven ominous now that Hester won't be there to collect rainwater in buckets.

White said she is hoping to hear from a developer interested in restoring the building – at this time, she has yet to hear more from real estate developer John Powell, who once expressed an interested in the dilapidated building. Seneca architect Lori Sons was turned away by Walhalla's Zoning Board of Appeals after she expressed interest in transforming the building into a senior living apartment complex in 2012.

Hester said he has yet to move the office out of the Short Street building, but he expects to do so next week.

"We really only have a desk and a few chairs to move," he said. "The former owner, Jack Hunt, stored some of his things in our building – he's hauled his leftover stuff out in the last few days."

The Courier's new home on College Street was just recently painted and had its carpets cleaned, he said.

Hester has been an editor at the Keowee Courier since 1973. He moved from Florida in 1971 to work at The Journal in Seneca for two years prior to his time at the Courier.

Established in 1849, the Keowee Courier is one of South Carolina's oldest newspapers and publishes every Wednesday.

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