

## Hiawassee Garden Club learns about GMREC



November hosts: Shirley Fleisher, Mary Ann Nutter, Dick Fleisher, and Maddie Botting.

Thanks to Judy Bundy, Shirley and Dick Fleisher, Maddie Botting and Mary Ann Nutter for hosting the delicious luncheon at the Hiawassee Garden Club November 18, 2010 meeting. The magnificent purple Ballaria orchid centerpiece is one of Shirley's specimens.

Our guest speaker today was Joseph C. Garner, Superintendent of the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center located in Blairsville. Many of us check their weather station daily for the most accurate readings in the area.

Mr. Garner did a very interesting presentation of information about ongoing research and education projects, as well as highlighting monthly adult education programs presented by the

Community Council of GMREC Center. The mission statement of the center is "to seek, verify and apply knowledge to enhance agriculture, the environment and communities".

Some of you knew the center as "The Blairsville Experiment Station," which was formed in 1930. With the assistance of the TVA during the depression, fertilization techniques were introduced to increase production of produce to feed people.

The research programs include apple rootstock study, sentinel plots to teach disease, organic green bean plot, endangered hemlock, honey bees, American chestnut project, turf grass experiment, and corn gluten to feed livestock.

The Community Council offers a variety of classes and field trips to children on site or in classrooms. Subjects

covered are birds, water, trees, environment, and fish. The Preservation Committee sponsors seminars on herb gardening, plant rescue, nature botanical sanctuary with Interpretive Center to identify and evaluate. The seminars are monthly, excluding December and April, and are free of charge.

We will not have a meeting in December, but will have a Christmas pot luck dinner on the 16th at 6 p.m. If you would like to join us, you are welcome at the England-Hiawassee Garden Club Center, 34 River Street. Our next meeting will be January 27th at 12:45 p.m. with a speaker on Appalachian Native Botanical Sanctuary.

Submitted by Kathleen Hancock

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Speaker for the November meeting was Joe Garner, GMREC Center.

## Towns County GOP ends year strongly

Republican Party faithful officially concluded a strong year of service to Towns County at their final meeting of 2010. Republican officials, Clerk of Court Cecil Dye, Sheriff Chris Clinton and Judge David Rogers, all gave reports on their successes for the year.

Dye, citing the extreme economic condition of the county, said that never-the-less his department took in more money than they spent. Excess money generated by his department has been a long-time source of income for schools and county government. Dye, in reporting that the 2011 budget has been reduced by \$50,000, was quick to report that he has successfully balanced the budget for the past 26 years.

Dye concluded by reporting that deeds and plats can be accessed on the internet dating back to 1900. "We are constantly looking for ways to make things easier for the citizens of Town's County", Dye said, "We are your servants".

Judge Rogers cited many statistics in explaining the responsibilities of his department. Basically, 2010 was not very different from 2009 in the number of cases handled.

Sheriff Clinton, said his job is divided into three areas, courts, corrections and law enforcement. His report concentrated on the corrections aspect, saying that in two years they haven't had a single incident of inmate violence at the jail. In fact, the jail is now run so well that parents of inmates have been known to call the Sheriff to express their appreciation of how safe their child felt. Clinton reported that the jail has become a model for the state and other counties have sent personnel to Towns County to see how it is done and to receive training.

Clinton echoed Dye's desire to be a servant to the people of Towns County. "We're looking for ways to

serve you better", he said.

In other business, Joan Crothers was named chairman of the County Beautification Committee; Chuck Luca announced January 29 as the date of the Youth Leadership Speech Contest; tee shirts

were presented to Katie Norris, Chairman of the Young Harris College Young Republicans, for all members of the club; and Chairman Darrel Barrett stated the Towns County Republican Convention will be held on March 15. T(Dec1,G2)SH



Membership Chairman Sam Fullerton (left) and GOP Chairman Darrell Barrett, presenting tee shirt to Katie Norris, Chairman of the Young Harris College Young Republicans.

## AYP success continues...from page 1A

wide assessments and other academic indicators. Accountability is key to No Child Left Behind as the state, each local school district, and each individual school is held accountable for the academic success of students.

Federal law mandates that each state set high academic standards and implements an extensive student-testing program that is aligned with standards and measures students' achievement.

AYP requires schools to meet standards in three areas: 95 percent Test Participation (for both Mathematics and Reading/English Language Arts), Academic Performance (for

both Mathematics and Reading/English Language Arts), and a Second Indicator of attendance or graduation rate.

The school system scored high marks for CRCT Mathematics and reading/English Language Arts. The school system achieved a 99.8 percent participation rate during the test window, state Department of Education records show.

Also, in the Academic Performance for both Mathematics and Reading/English Language Arts, 87.1 percent of students met or exceeded the State's Annual Measurable Objective (AMO).

For the Second Indica-

tor, the school's graduation rate was 96.7 percent.

The school system's students, parents, faculty and community have worked together to ensure the success of Towns County Elementary, Towns County Middle and Towns County High schools.

For additional information about AYP, 2010 Georgia reports for Adequate Yearly Progress can be found at the Georgia Department of Education Web site. If you need additional information about Towns County Schools and Adequate Yearly Progress, please contact the Towns County Board of Education at (706) 896-2279..

## AT quest attainable...continued from page 1A

County each spring to resupply, stay in hotels and rest up from their hike before continuing their jaunt. Between 25 and 30 miles of the Trail is in Towns County.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the national organization that oversees the maintenance of the Trail in 14 states, is starting a program where they identify trail-friendly communities, Carnes said.

"They're identifying communities that welcome hikers, that have supplies, communities that will shuttle hikers and do other things to make the hikers feel welcome in their temporary communities," Carnes said. "Right now, a committee is working to achieve that status in Hiawassee and Towns County."

The committee, made up of 16 area leaders, met recently at Hiawassee City Hall. The discussion included talks of partnering together to develop a city/county map to aid hikers in their quest for supplies, food, inexpensive or free transportation from the Trail to Hiawassee and or Young Harris.

The talks also included discussion about the development of hiker-friendly signage, Web site development and providing informational articles in the local newspaper.

"Dahlongega has already done this," Carnes said. "Blairsville has already done this, so we are attempting to do this as well."

Carnes said that the hope is to encourage local businesses to give hikers "Trail" discounts or possibly just put up signs that welcome hikers to the community.

"If hikers need other supplies that we don't have here, we'll find a way to get those," he said. "For instance we don't have canisters, freeze-dried foods or other supplies that hikers need. We need to make hikers feel welcome and let them know this is a community that is a Trail-Friendly town."

Those present at the meeting expressed a definite interest in partnering together in developing a city/county map for hikers to find supplies and food; inexpensive or free transportation from the AT to Hiawassee and or Young Harris; do trail maintenance; a logo, signage, and Web site development in addition to putting informational articles in the local newspaper.

Already in place locally is an educational Outreach Program within Towns County Schools, where students, under school supervision, go out to the AT with Appalachian Trail Conservancy volun-

teers to experience the trail firsthand.

Carnes said that not many people know it, but the Hiawassee Inn has a shuttle service already in place to aid hikers who need a ride from the Trail into town.

"They go out pick up the hikers for free and the hikers stay at their lodge," Carnes said. "When they get out in town and do all their business, Hiawassee Inn takes them back to the trail for free."

Under the community proposal, Outreach education would continue, and the libraries in both Hiawassee and Young Harris also would continue to work with hikers providing computer time and other resources as needed.

"This can be truly exciting for our community," Carnes said. "In March and April when things are slow and boring for businesses, here is a way to get an economic impact during a time of the year when we need an economic impact."

"There's no doubt that once this is done, it will have a significant local impact on the local economy," Carnes said.

"Our library is already named a Trail Friendly Library. It's time to let hikers know they can come here and get lots of help."

## 3rd graders build Gingerbread Village



The 3rd Grade class at Towns County Elementary School carried on a tradition of being invited by Brass-town Valley Resort to deco-

rate Gingerbread Houses as part of its Christmas Decorations. You can see them on display through the Christmas season at the resort.

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## S.A.F.E. Thrift Store reopens

We are proud to announce that the SAFE Thrift Store has reopened in Blairsville! Our new store is conveniently located in Victoria's Center, 3196 Hwy. 515E, next to the theater and bowling alley. We've been working hard in moving and setting up our new location, and would like to invite everyone to stop by and see what we have to offer. We have new clothing, gently used clothing, and a large selection of Christmas decorative items. The store is now able to accept donations again, so please keep the SAFE Thrift Store in mind when you have clothes or other items to give away. We especially need furniture donations to fill up our new furniture room. Please call 706-781-3451 if you have any questions.

S.A.F.E. (Support in

Abusive Family Emergencies, Inc.) operates two facilities, our 15-bed domestic violence shelter and office as well as the Enotah Child Advocacy & Family Visitation Center. All of the profit from our stores (the SAFE Thrift Store in Blairsville and the SAFE Again Thrift Store in Young Harris, 706-896-1700) is returned directly to our operating budget to fund these facilities and all of our services to the community. We also provide your donated clothing, furniture, and household items at no cost to clients accessing our services who are in need. Help us continue our work by supporting our thrift stores, and remember that all your donations are tax deductible. Both stores can receive donations every day except Sunday from 10 to 4:30 (stores close at 5). NT(Dec1,A1)SH