

# Homegrown...from Page 1A

The final band to take the stage that evening was local favorite Steven Phillips & Midnight Express. Phillips engaged with his audience in

between songs, entertaining folks with stories and memories of growing up in the area.

All in all, the event was a great success for the

Towns County Football and Softball Programs, and by the end, attendees were already looking forward to next year's concert.



Local favorites Steven Phillips & Midnight Express were one of three acts to volunteer their musical talents for the Homegrown Concert last week.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener



Summer Rahn of Towns County High wowed audiences with her performance of an original song during the Sept. 13 Homegrown Concert benefiting her fellow student-athletes.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

# School Board...from Page 1A

years Berrong has been superintendent, the board office has been able to establish a growing general fund while renovating school facilities to give students and the community the best facilities possible without raising the millage rate, Berrong said.

Also in the Sept. 9 meeting, Union County Middle School student and former Towns County student Noel Hyatt presented an athletic donation in the sum of \$662 to the Towns County Middle School Athletic Department.

Hyatt attended Towns County Middle School last year before transferring to Union County this year. For a school project, Hyatt put together a fundraiser, raising over \$1,300 to split between the athletic departments of both middle schools.

"I play a lot of sports, so I decided to do this fundraiser to help out the kids that couldn't afford to play sports," Hyatt said. "This can help kids buy equipment and registration fees."

To raise the money, the young philanthropist organized a group of 18 sponsors and local churches to help her make T-shirts to sell for \$25 that read "Support Your Local Athletes."

In other business, following a discussion of the "Great Promise Partnership" with Melissa McConnell – the system's Career, Technical and Agriculture Education director

– board members unanimously approved the program for use at Towns County Schools.

The Great Promise Partnership will work in conjunction with the school's Work-Based Learning Program at the high school, helping underprivileged kids in jeopardy of dropping out of school, Berrong said.

As part of the program, students are provided with a community mentor who works with them in finding a job. The mentor will also provide academic support and help students to stay on track for graduation.

Furthermore, McConnell talked about the CTAE Program at the high school and how it benefits the students.

Courses available through the CTAE Program prepare students for college and/or the workforce by teaching them skills and knowledge to use after high school, McConnell said.

CTAE offers pathway courses for students who have an interest in certain fields of work, and after finishing three courses, each CTAE student is considered "a Pathway Completer," she said.

McConnell also brought three senior CTAE students to speak with the board about the opportunities the program has afforded them.

HOSA – Future Health Professionals President Sophia Shook, Future Farmers of America President Zach



Future Farmers of America President Zach Mullins spoke about the importance of the CTAE curriculum in the schools at the Board of Education meeting last week.

Photo by Chad Stack

Mullins, and FBLA President Corrina Luckenbach expressed how much the CTAE programs have helped them to establish career goals after high school.

Students who are taking CTAE courses also compete in regional, state and national competitions, and Towns County High is one of the top schools in the state every year, McConnell said.

Board members will meet at the board office for their monthly work session on Monday, Oct. 7, at 7 p.m., and for their regular meeting on Monday, Oct. 14, at 7 p.m. in the school auditorium.

# Elections...from Page 1A

City voters reached an internal agreement to merge with Macedonia, and resident Lloyd Massey, one of Tate City's two precinct managers, contacted Nichols toward the end of August to inform her of the decision.

Even with approval by Tate City voters, the decision to close the Tate City Precinct for consolidation must wait until official notice has been given to all county residents, Nichols said.

The Towns County Board of Elections will soon be running a notice in this newspaper – the legal organ of the county – to inform the public of the consolidation of the Tate City and Macedonia precincts.

After at least 10 days have passed following the initial publication of the consolidation public notice, the board plans to vote on Nov. 13 to consolidate the two precincts into one at Macedonia Baptist Church, with consolidation to be effective immediately.

Closing the Tate City Precinct will leave the historically four-precinct county with three remaining precincts: Hiwassee, Young Harris and Macedonia.

Also during the Sept. 11 meeting, the board spoke about the cancellation of the Hiwassee General Election that was to be administered by the county on Nov. 5.

"The election has been

canceled due to the fact that all of the people that ran for office are unopposed," Nichols said.

Nichols also discussed the upcoming fluoride referendum that will be appear on the ballot in May of 2020 to allow the public to vote on whether to add fluoride to the city's drinking water.

Because the city does provide drinking water to Towns County, the fluoride referendum will need to be held countywide, Nichols said.

The Towns County Board of Elections and Registration is still awaiting delivery of the new voting equipment and training schedule ahead of the 2020 presidential election, which will feature several big local races as well, including for the offices of commissioner and sheriff.

# Historical Society...from Page 1A

Ensley, who related what it was like growing up in Jacksonville, a small town between Young Harris and Blairsville on the Towns County side.

He shared with attendees memories from his youth spent in Jacksonville, and his presentation included a slideshow of old pictures from his childhood when he lived there.

Ensley went on to teach Georgia history in Union County, and he is a lifelong and ardent supporter of local historical endeavors.

He served as a member of the Union County Historical Society Board, and he continues to lead the long-running Friday Night Concert Series at the Old Courthouse in Blairsville.

Also in the meeting last week, Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw discussed the status of the renovations

at the Historical Society's headquarters inside the Old Rec Gym in Hiwassee.

"We're just about finished," Bradshaw said. "I know it's taking a long time, but we're using a lot of detainee labor down there, and I'm very excited about it."

"We've got all new LED lighting put in, and we got all new ceiling tiles put in. We've got paint left to do, and we're going to try and get the painting done this week. It's getting very close to being finished, I'm really excited."

"I know it's going to be nice. I know this room is working good – thank y'all for your patience. It's saving you guys money doing it the way we're doing it."

Bradshaw is hopeful that all the renovations will be completed by the end of September so the Historical



Historical Society President Sandra Green updated everyone on the society's upcoming holiday plans in the group's Sept. 9 meeting.

Photo by Chad Stack

Society can meet in its regular meeting place at the Old Rec Gym.

In other business, Green discussed the upcoming Historical Society officer elections.

"A nominating committee will be appointed in October," Green said. "A slate of nominees will be presented in November. Voting will be at the December meeting."

The Historical Society will meet again on Monday, Oct. 14, at 6 p.m. at the Civic Center unless the renovations are finished at the Old Rec Gym by that time.

# 9/11 Ceremony...from Page 1A



Last week's commemorative 9/11 ceremony was jointly coordinated by Hiwassee Mayor Liz Ordiales, Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw and Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

as a nation as one community, and let's remember."

Following Gibby's remarks, McConnell Memorial Baptist Church Associate Pastor Danny Byers gave the invocation for the ceremony, and the North Georgia Honor Guard presented the colors with musical accompaniment by members of the Appalachian Saint Andrew's Pipes & Drums.

Hiwassee Mayor Liz Ordiales led the Pledge Allegiance, and Summer Rahn of Towns County High performed a stirring rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Fire Chief Harold Copeland also spoke during the memorial event, going over the number of casualties during the attacks 18 years ago and the meaning of 9/11.

He said the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks brought several words to mind when contemplating the national spirit afterward, including pride, patriotism, family, love, brotherhood and courage.

"When you think about the price of patriotism, you know, just a couple of days after this happened, you couldn't find an American flag nowhere, they were all sold out – you couldn't find a flag," Copeland said. "They were lining sidewalks all over the country. People had them on their vehicles, in their yards, everywhere."

After Copeland's speech, he rang the bell on the square to memorialize the 71 law enforcement officers and



Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland spoke on the meaning of 9/11 at the memorial ceremony last week.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

343 firefighters killed, the 125 people who died at the Pentagon, and the more than 2,600 people slain at the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center.

Commissioner Bradshaw and Sheriff Chris Clinton also spoke during the ceremony, reflecting on the occasion by remembering what they were doing and where they were that tragic day.

Towns County School Resource Officer Donnie Jarrard delivered remarks as well, kneeling after his speech and asking for the community to join him in passionate prayer.

The guest speaker during Wednesday's event was Macedonia Baptist Church Pastor Wade Lott, who talked

about his memories and the feelings he experienced that day and thereafter.

He touched on the anger and the sadness he felt for all those who had lost their lives, but he expressed his optimism also, saying that the day after the attacks, on Sept. 12, 2001, contained some of the finest moments in this country's history.

After the attacks, Lott said the country acted largely with unified spirit, with military enlistment going up and everyone coming together to support each other.

Rahn closed the ceremony last week with a heartfelt performance of "God Bless America."

# LandFest...from Page 1A



Joe Bonsall, Duane Allen, William Lee Golden and Richard Sterban of the Oak Ridge Boys performing at the 2019 Dailey & Vincent LandFest at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Photo by Derek Storm



Gospel music group the Primitive Quartet of Candler, North Carolina, performed at the Dailey & Vincent LandFest on Thursday, Sept. 12.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

since I retired a few years ago, and I love to see Dailey & Vincent in concert," Crawford said. "I've seen them more times than I could probably count now, but this is my first time coming to this particular event and venue."

Added Crawford, "I am having a wonderful time here and the scenery is absolutely beautiful. Maybe I'll come back around next year."

Opening things up, the first night concerts were focused on the inspirational messages of Gospel music.

"We wanted to make Thursday night about Gospel and about Jesus Christ," Darrin Vincent said during the show. "Everyone up on this stage believes in Jesus Christ as their savior, and we believe in the Bible and we believe in America, and these guys believe it, live it and sing it."

Each of the groups that took the stage talked with the crowd and told jokes between song sets to get the audience ready for the main event, which was Dailey & Vincent.

When the group came out, the crowd went wild with cheers, even throughout the first few chords of their opening song.

"I think I lost my voice in there a little bit," Crawford said. "I was shouting and yelling at them from my seat, but it was a lot of fun."

"I always get this way when I watch them play. I just love the group, and they mean a lot to me and what I have experienced in my life."

because of how distant people have become from it.

"I think it was really great for them to do the Gospel like they did," Rayfield said. "I just see a lot of big groups stepping away from that kind of stuff, but we need it to be sang and played more now than we ever have."

"A lot of venues just don't play Gospel music anymore and I am so thankful that this venue supports it, and the people around this area want to keep that music alive, because we need to hear it."

While the LandFest ended on Saturday, there are already plans to bring it back in 2020 with a larger show.

The 2020 LandFest will take place between Sept. 17 and Sept. 19, and more details can be found online at GeorgiaMountainFairgrounds.com.