

FBLA...from Page 1A

Towns FBLA also received a second-place award in the FBLA Sweepstakes, a trophy given to the chapters who have the most "wins" at region competition. That award was accepted by Advisers Melissa McConnell and Ruth Taylor, and Region Vice President Chase Williams.

Congratulations to all competitors who gave generously of their time and dedicated themselves to representing our chapter with excellence. Your academic preparation and effort is reflected in your success.

The FBLA State Leadership Conference and

Competitions will be held March 12-14 at the UGA Classic Center in Athens. Five additional competitors from TCHS FBLA will be joining these regional winners to compete in straight-to-state events at state level. Good luck, Towns County FBLA!

COX...from Page 1A

After being held at Union County High School in 2015, provides local senior football players one last opportunity to strap on the pads and take part in the final game of their careers.

For some, it's another opportunity to catch the eye of college scouts, and that's what happened to Cox.

"Playing in the game was a great experience," Cox said. "I enjoyed getting to play with other seniors, since that could be the last game for a lot of us."

Following a dazzling performance in the game, where he recorded 15 tackles and returned an interception for a touchdown while playing fullback and strong safety for the East team in a 56-28 victory, Cox caught the eye of Fannin County Head Football Coach Jim Pavao, who was one of the coaches for the opposing West team.

Pavao, who took the head coaching position at Fannin in 2014, was a long-time defensive coordinator at Gainesville High School, where he won a State Championship in 2012 with Clemson's DeShaun Watson at quarterback.

Pavao remains well-respected by high school and collegiate coaches throughout the southeast, and he was so impressed with Cox following the FCA game that he made a

phone call to Point University to set up a visit for the Towns County senior.

"After the game (Coach Pavao) came up to me and told me that I have the potential to play at the next level," Cox said. "He called the coach from Point, and a few weeks later I got a scholarship."

When Cox arrived at Point for his official visit, receiving a scholarship offer on-the-spot was the last thing that he expected.

"They told me that I could (try out) for any position that I wanted to play, which made me happy," Cox said. "It's a nice, small campus with great people, and I wanted to remain in a smaller environment like I am now."

Cox, who plans on majoring in sports management, would like to thank Indians Football Head Coach John Cornett "for always pushing me every day."

"Without him, I wouldn't be where I am right now," said Cox. "I also want to thank my mom and dad for always being there for me every step of the way."

Cox, who was moved from quarterback to running back prior to his senior year, had a breakout performance in the 2016 season opener, rushing for 129 yards and two scores, including an 85-yard touchdown run in a 33-14

victory at arch-rival Hayesville, North Carolina.

He would finish the season with 14 touchdowns while totaling more than 1,000 yards on the ground.

Cox also joins Shea Underwood (Georgia Tech) as the second Towns County representative that has competed in the FCA game before going on to play at the next level.

Cox will join the Skyhawks, who are moving to the Mid-South Conference this fall. The university is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and competes in Division I of the National Christian Collegiate Athletics Association (NCCAA).

The Skyhawks are coached by Julius Dixon, who will enter his second season at the helm in 2017.

Dixon began his coaching career at Camden High School (South Carolina), leading the Bulldogs to a Class AAA State Championship. He also coached at his Alma Mater Furman University from 1994 to 2006 as defensive line coach, and later as the defensive backs coach.

His Paladins won three Southern Conference titles, appeared in six NCAA Playoffs, and finished as the 2001 NCAA Division I-AA national runner-up.

He also coached at Presbyterian, Savannah State and Reinhardt.

Collins...from Page 1A



Congressman Collins had a nice chat with the president and vice president about his home state of Georgia.

that we've talked about now for several years."

Having a president who is willing to sign legislation passed by a Republican majority is refreshing for Collins and his colleagues, and he sees the coming days of President Donald Trump's administration as a chance to turn back "eight years of overreach and government leaving behind the hardworking taxpayer."

Collins met with President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence at a Republican retreat last Thursday, Jan. 26, and he spoke with the leaders of the executive branch about his home state as well as something they could all celebrate – putting America first.

And though the congressman is delighted to be working in an arena suddenly free of many of the obstacles he faced during his first term under Barack Obama, he realizes that the momentum he's currently riding has hit many of Washington's elite like a tidal wave.

"I think there's still some shock in D.C. at this point, among many who sort of liked it the way it was and were very happy with government solutions," said Rep. Collins. "Those folks are very disturbed right now, and we saw that acted out in many ways."

Added Rep. Collins: "We have the House, which we've had now for six years, and we maintained control of the Senate, but we also have a president who is actively engaging Congress. He's already had meetings in the first week with a bipartisan delegation from both the House and the Senate."

"This is a president who actively wants to engage Congress, and understands that the legislative process has a vital role and place, whereas the other administration simply stayed at the other end of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., and basically pitched a temper tantrum when

they didn't get their way.

"So, I think this is going to be a big change in the culture in Washington, that you have a president who is actively involved and wanting to be a part of the legislative process."

Another reason the current political environment carries so much promise for Collins is that, for the first time in years, he and his fellow Republicans can act on their conservative principles with realistic expectations of having those principles translated into laws of the land, such as the recent pro-life bill Collins co-sponsored that makes permanent the Hyde Amendment.

And while major news outlets around the country were quick to criticize Trump's inauguration speech, Collins, who was there for the ceremony, had a different take on the speech and the inauguration in general.

"It was an interesting time, seeing people come out," said Rep. Collins. "Hearing the president's rather short, straightforward inauguration message was refreshing – it was sort of, let's just get to work. I think for many Americans, they would rather hear, 'Let's get to work,' instead of the grandiose speeches of high thought, which are always a part of discourse, but just simply saying we're going to put America first, we're going to put (first) the ideas of American business and tax reform to help a healthy economy to help hardworking taxpayers."

Another way Rep. Collins hopes to give back to his constituents is through the upcoming repeal of the Affordable Care Act, which the congressman believes will empower states and businesses "through a health care plan that is not government mandated."

"I've had many folks in the 9th District say, 'Look, I'd hire two or three more people,



U.S. Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia's 9th Congressional District

but I don't want to go over the 50 threshold,' or, 'I can't afford the new health care or the new regulations.'"

From tax reform to stripping Obama-era rules regulations, Collins says that he and his colleagues will be working hard to shore up small businesses and ultimately help them to grow, for the betterment of their districts as well as America.

"I think the folks up in Union, Towns, and really all throughout the 9th District, can look forward to a more pro-taxpayer (environment), and just looking out for the folks that get up every morning and want to go to work, and want to raise their families – want to do the things that are part of that American dream."

"If they wanted to start a business, they'd have access to capital at the banks, and re-doing it to where it's more focused on everyday Americans doing what we do best, and that is to continue to make this country the bright and shining light that it is around the world."

Meeting...from Page 1A

and the councilmembers in turn asked questions of those in attendance, resulting in several potential adjustments to ordinances that will likely be adopted in the Feb. 7 regular meeting.

The robust turnout reflected the robust engagement of public policy, as concerns were heard and made note of, and the discourse remained civil and productive.

Councilwoman Anne Mitchell led the conversation around the upcoming alcohol ordinance, Councilwoman Liz Ordiales doubled up with presentations on the proposed derelict and blighted building ordinance and ethics ordinance, while Councilwoman Rayette Ross handled the derelict and blighted building ad valorem tax ordinance and Councilman Kris Berrong led the discussion on the sign ordinance.

The presentation lasted nearly two hours, and the information covered was substantial, though the following report contains some of the highlights from each of the ordinance presentations.

As passed by referendum back in November, the City of Hiwassee is making several important changes to the alcohol laws on the books.

When the ordinance passes next week, residents can expect to be able to buy beer and wine in a retail setting on Sundays between the hours of 12:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. Also, the city will be able to license restaurants to sell liquor by the drink seven days a week.

The council believes that Hiwassee voters made the correct choice in bringing liquor by the drink within city limits, as they hope the city becomes more desirable to bigger restaurants.

One example of the democracy in action that evening was when Mitchell asked what people thought about prohibiting brown-bagging.

The act of brown-bagging was prohibited in that version of the ordinance, though public opinion in the hearing leaned toward favoring restaurants being able to decide the issue.

Mitchell made a note to speak with the city attorney, and it's plausible that brown-bagging will be left up to restaurants when the ordinance comes before a vote on Tuesday.



Each city council member present during the public hearing presented one of the five ordinances to be adopted in February. As this photo of Hiwassee Councilwoman Anne Mitchell shows, the meeting featured a relaxed atmosphere and more exchange with the public than usual.



Councilwoman Rayette Ross fields a comment.

been vacant and used for drug activity; being occupied and used for illegal organized crime or criminal enterprises; or being abandoned with unsanitary and unsafe conditions.

The ordinance lays out how a property goes from complaint against it to rectifying the conditions of said derelict building, the enforcement of which will be done by an agent of the mayor, with the property owner being responsible for costs incurred if found out of compliance.

Another way the city hopes to control derelict and blighted buildings is through the passage of an ad valorem tax of seven times the city millage, to impose penalties against violating properties in an effort to persuade compliance.

The purpose of the proposed sign ordinance is to allow businesses to promote themselves while maintaining an aesthetically pleasing environment through

regulation of location, size, placement and certain features of signs.

The ordinance provides the definitions of 17 signs, and spells out in detail how applicants can go about obtaining signs for their businesses.

Finally, Ordiales discussed the ethics ordinance, which is modeled mainly after the suggested wording in the Georgia Municipal Association's example ethics ordinance.

The ordinance is all about strict avoidance of conflicts of interest for city officials, and will establish a board of ethics to adjudicate alleged violations of the ethics ordinance.

Councilwoman Ordiales prepared the extensive PowerPoint presentation used in the special meeting on Jan. 26.

For more information on these ordinances, contact Hiwassee City Hall.

Bradshaw...from Page 1A



Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw met with the Towns County Historical Society on Friday, Jan. 27, to turn over the keys to the Old Rock Jail. The historical society meets the second Monday every month at 5:30 p.m. in the Old Rec Center. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

offices that needed to take place beforehand.

The Towns County Board of Elections had been occupying the old jail for some time and needed to find a place to move, but the proposed idea of moving the board into the courthouse fell through due to strict laws regarding board placement.

Before Commissioner Bradshaw came into office, the commissioner's office was scheduled to be moved to the Towns County Civic Center to create more space for the staff and the commissioner. When plans for the elections offices could not be fulfilled as originally thought, Commissioner Bradshaw formulated a new arrangement.

To the great relief of the historical society, the Old Rock Jail would remain in their safekeeping; however, the commissioner's office would not be moving. Instead, the board of elections would take the spacious quarters available inside the civic center, something for which the board and its employees are abundantly grateful.

Members of the board of elections, historical society members and the commissioner's office gathered together last Friday with great anticipation – finally the wait was over and the enjoyment of the new spaces could begin.

"This is a dream come true for us because it is one of the few old buildings that we have left in the town," said

Sandra Green, Towns County Historical Society President. "We're a lot better at tearing down than we are preserving. We're so excited about this. It's the only place in Hiwassee that's on the National Historic Registry."

Although this was Kendall's project, Commissioner Bradshaw handed the keys to Green with equal enthusiasm in being able to preserve one of the county's most prominent historical sites.

"This is a historical day for Towns County that Mr. Kendall gave this jail to the historical society," said Commissioner Bradshaw. "We appreciate him doing that. I'm very excited. I can't wait to see what it's going to look like when they're finished with it."

Many of those present shared fond memories of the jail, reminiscing on past sheriffs and family members who worked in the rock jail. Diris Howell Farmer even spoke of her deceased husband Lamar's birth at the jailhouse in the early '40s, explaining that she is glad the life within the walls of the jailhouse will be preserved.

The historical society has many plans for the Old Rock Jail and cannot wait to begin organizing and moving in historical artifacts. When first given the jail, the society created a proposal as to what it planned to do with the facility once granted access. The proposal is

as follows:

"The Towns County Historical Society, Inc., proposes using the Old Rock Jail on a permanent basis as a museum of local history and a research center for those wishing to delve into their family history."

"The Society would keep the Old Rock Jail, along with the adjacent Presley Post Office, open a fixed number of hours each week so that the public can enjoy these historic buildings. We envision the majority of the Old Rock Jail being set up as a museum of local history similar to the museums in all of our neighboring towns."

One room would also be set aside as a research center containing old records, files and information concerning local families. We feel that a museum and research room would be beneficial for both current residents of Towns County and those whose families formerly lived in the area."

The Old Rock Jail functioned as the county jail from 1936 to the early '70s until the jail was deemed unsuitable and a new one was constructed. The building was renovated in 1980 and used by the City of Hiwassee as the location for city hall. Since that time, the building has been used for various purposes, such as the board of elections in recent years. In 1985, the Old Rock Jail was added to the National Register of Historic Places.