

Towns County Herald

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Towns County Indians win 8-A Region Championship

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald Staff Writer

It has been 46 years since the Towns County High School Indians varsity basketball team won their only region championship in basketball in 1975, but the second championship arrived last week when this year's edition of the Indians swept past Commerce and Lincoln County in Commerce for the 2021 Region 8-A Public Championship.

This year's Indians had already won the regular season region championship with an 11-1 record within the region and placed the icing on the cake with the dual championship performance. The championship victory last week also provided them their 20th victory

of the year for a 20-3 record, with this also being the first such occurrence since the 1975 team compiled a 24-4 record. The most recent Atlanta Journal and Constitution rankings place the Indians in sixth place in Class A Public but perhaps in line to move up following the impressive region tournament championship.

With the region championship victory, the Indians earned the right to host their first-round game in the Class A Public State Tournament against Manchester, the fourth seeded team from Region 5, on Wednesday of this week at 5 p.m. Fans planning to attend the game can purchase tickets at www.townscountyathletics.com. If victorious against See *Indians, Page 3B*



On Friday, Feb. 19, the Towns County Indians defeated Lincoln County in Commerce to become 8-A Region Champs. Next stop? The state tournament. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Bradshaw, Henderson declare 'Second Amendment Sanctuary'

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald Editor

On Tuesday, Feb. 16, Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw and Sheriff Ken Henderson jointly signed a resolution declaring Towns County a "Second Amendment Sanctuary."

The goal of the resolution is to announce, loud and clear, that the commissioner and sheriff are serious about maintaining their elected official oaths to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America.

In doing so, they are also officially criticizing efforts to restrict or impede people's Second Amendment rights to keep and bear arms, like Senate Bill 281, which was filed in the Georgia General Assembly during the 2019-20 Legislative



Sheriff Ken Henderson and Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw showed their utmost support for the Second Amendment in last week's county meeting. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

magazine capacity limit; and made all gun show transactions subject to the National Instant Criminal Background Check See *Sanctuary, Page 6A*

Barrett signs with YHC Soccer, earns piano, academic scholarships



TCHS Senior Peyton Barrett signed last week to play soccer with Young Harris College. Supporting him here: Rollie Thomas, Timothy Barrett, Brody Barrett, Corrina Luckenbach, and Amy Barrett. Photo by Chad Stack

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald

Towns County High School Senior Peyton Barrett put pen to paper on his college of choice last week, signing with Young Harris, college

play varsity soccer. Joining him in the school Media Center for the Feb. 15 signing ceremony were his father Timothy, mother Amy, brother Brody, girlfriend Corrina Luckenbach, and Indians Head Coach Rollie

Thomas. The Indian striker will be following in the footsteps of his sister Brooke, who went on to play soccer at Georgia Southern University in 2018, and he feels incredibly blessed See *Barrett, Page 6A*

Johnson lived life of faith, served others as true patriot



Chaplain Richard Hoibraten presented Marilyn Johnson Sardella with her father Bud Johnson's flag in his Feb. 15 memorial services. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald Editor

YOUNG HARRIS – Retired U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Quartermaster Clarence "Bud" Eugene Johnson received full Military Honors in a graveside memorial gathering of his family, friends and fellow

veterans at the Woods Grove Baptist Church Cemetery on Feb. 15. Johnson died on Jan. 1 at the age of 98. Prior to his death and due to his advanced age, he had made sure to deliver handwritten instructions to six of his closest relations detailing precisely how he wanted his

memorial services to go. And those services were carried out faithfully for the beloved local veteran on President's Day, just four days shy of the 76th anniversary of the Battle of Iwo Jima, one of the most famous military battles in American history. See *Johnson, Page 6A*

Fairgrounds wins best rodeo award, aims high for 2021

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald Staff Writer

Despite COVID-19 causing one cancellation after another in 2020, the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds persevered with several outdoor community events, even hosting the inaugural Hiawassee Pro Rodeo while taking appropriate precautions.

Held last June, the Hiawassee Pro Rodeo welcomed thousands of enthusiasts from around the Southeast for a bucking good time, becoming one of the most talked-about local events of the past year.

And because of the rodeo's success, the Fairgrounds has received an award for having the "Best New Outdoor Rodeo" in 2020.

Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said See *Rodeo, Page 6A*



Calf roping was just one of the many thrilling events on display at the inaugural Hiawassee Pro Rodeo June 26-27, 2020. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Second-shot mass vaccine clinic set for Friday, Feb. 26



By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald Editor

BLAIRSVILLE – More than a thousand people's COVID-19 vaccine plans got put on hold last week, as winter weather-related vaccine shipment delays forced the Health Department to reschedule its second-shot vaccination clinic from Friday,

Feb. 19, to Friday, Feb. 26.

The rescheduled clinic is a follow-up mass vaccination for the 1,050 people from Union and Towns who received their first shot of the two-dose vaccine in a Jan. 22 mass clinic sponsored by the Union County Government, local Emergency Management Agency and Rec Department.

Time and location for the rescheduled clinic will remain the same: 8:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. at the Union County Sports Center on 519 Industrial Blvd, with appointment holders

being asked to report at their originally assigned times on Friday, Feb. 26.

"We apologize for any inconvenience caused by the rescheduling," District 2 Public Health said. "The unprecedented winter weather across our nation and the tight shipment schedule of vaccine are conditions beyond our control."

Second doses of the Moderna vaccine are supposed to be administered four weeks after first doses, but according to the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention, it is OK to wait an extra week to get the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

"The second dose should be administered as close to the recommended interval as possible," per the CDC. "However, if it is not feasible to adhere to the recommended interval and a delay in vaccination is unavoidable, the second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine may be administered up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose."

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris took to Facebook on Thursday, Feb. 18, to notify people about the shipment being delayed due to weather issues, and he reassured residents with appointments that they will have access to their vaccines.

"Please remember to bring your vaccination card," Paris said. "We are very sorry and disappointed for the inconvenience. If for some reason you cannot make (Feb. 26), please call our local Health Department at 706-745-6292.

You could try this week or early next week."

Regular Health Department vaccination appointments are ongoing thanks to locally stored supplies, with the mass clinic having been interrupted due to the large supply needed to host the event, Public Health Information Officer Dave Palmer said.

And Union County is not alone in the interruption; vaccination efforts across the country have been impacted by See *Vaccine, Page 3A*

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