

Cherry Log man faces voter fraud allegation

By Glenn Harbison
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The Georgia Election Board has accused Brian Keith Pritchard, 56, of Cherry Log, of voting while serving a felony sentence.

Pritchard's case was one of 35 sent by the board February 10 to the state attorney general or local district attorneys for prosecution, according to a press release from Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger.

A week later the board referred 24 more cases for prosecution.

Pritchard's current LinkedIn profile identifies him as the owner of Fetch Your News.

A spokesman for Raffensperger's office said Pritchard moved to Georgia in 2008 and registered to vote in Gilmer County. Between registering and 2014, he voted in 14 elections.

When the Gilmer County election board learned of his felony probation sentence from a case in Pennsylvania, his name was removed from the voter rolls.

The spokesman said that at the time the district attorney deferred action on the case until the state election board took action.

Pritchard's case was opened before the election



Brian Keith Pritchard
board in May 2016.

Appalachian Judicial Circuit District Attorney B. Alison Sosebee said Friday she has not received any information from the attorney general in regard to the case. In fact, she learned of the election board decision through the Secretary of State's press release.

Court records from Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, show Pritchard pled guilty to a trio of charges in May 1996.

Those charges included two counts of Forgery-After Writing, and one charge of Theft By Failure to Make Required Disposition Funds.

The court records show Pritchard was ordered to pay

\$33,340.00 in restitution and \$289.64 in court costs. He received probation under a migrated sentence.

In June 2011, a bench warrant for failure to appear was issued for Pritchard, which was lifted and closed the next month.

"Election fraud is not tolerated in Georgia. When there is evidence of it, the people responsible face prosecution," Raffensperger said in a statement. "Georgia has multiple safeguards in place that allow our team of investigators to discover fraudulent voting. They worked to catch the wrongdoing in these cases, and they maintain the security of Georgia elections."

Among the cases bound over for prosecution February 10, including Pritchard's, were four incidents of felons voting or registering to vote, four cases of non-citizens voting or registering to vote and one case of misplaced ballots during the 2020 general election, which didn't change the outcome but did affect the total. Also bound over for prosecution were canvassers for two organizations trying to register people to vote, including one who allegedly submitted registration applications they knew were false.

Towns County Retired Educators 2021 Education Scholarship

Towns County Retired Educators Association (TCREA) is committed to excellence in education for Towns County and is pleased to announce the availability of a scholarship for Towns County college students to help them further their academic careers and fulfill their potential.

College students who are legal residents of Towns County currently enrolled in an accredited education program who will be at least a junior in the 2021 academic year and have at least a 3.0 GPA are eligible for the TCREA Emerging Educators Scholarship. The amount of the scholarship varies by year; for 2021 the scholarship is \$1,000.

For more information or to request an application for the TCREA scholarship, please send an e-mail to TCREA.SC@gmail.com. Applications are also available at the Towns County Board of Education Office. Completed applications for TCREA scholarships should be mailed to the address on the application form or e-mailed to the TCREA.SC@gmail.com and must be received by April 16, 2021, to be considered. The TCREA scholarship will be awarded at the annual TCREA banquet in May.

Hiawassee...from Page 1A

It's been nearly a year since city meetings transitioned online to maintain public safety, though some community members have been asking when meetings with City Hall attendance will return.

"Nobody wants to have in-person meetings more than me, trust me," Ordiales said. "But we don't have room for it. We can't accommodate more than three people in here and keep social distancing."

In other news, the city is planning to build a new Water Department Building, which will provide the department with more space and a better building to operate in that includes offices and an area to clean equipment.

"We had budgeted last year \$50,000 for this project," Ordiales said. "I think we will probably be able to do it within \$47,000. The concrete alone will be \$13,000, and the building will be \$14,000, then you have all the gadgets that

go in it."

Added Ordiales, "I want to get it ordered because prices are going up like crazy on this stuff. We need to get that ordered as soon as possible. It will take at least 12 weeks before we get it, which is good, because it gives us time to get the slab down and the plumbing and all that."

Another project in the works is the addition of a generator for the lift station located between State Farm and Mountain Realty on Main Street.

"It is probably the most important lift station that we have because it moves all of the sewer from the school that works its way over here to the plant," Ordiales said. "That is also the only lift station that does not have a generator, which is crazy, because when the power goes out or electrical fails, there is just nothing to help it."

"Janet Allen (of Mountain

Realty) has graciously given us permission to put a generator there, and the cost of the generator is \$43,737. We have budgeted for that \$20,000, so we will need to get (the rest) from the operating fund, which we have - it's not a problem."

The council also discussed a couple of projects totaling \$60,000, one to repair the old roof at City Hall and the other to fix some storm damage from last year on the Hiawassee Town Square, including the replacement of lights.

Additionally, the city plans on purchasing a new Hiawassee Police Department cruiser for \$26,900, with \$17,000 budgeted and the remaining to be picked up by sales of the old cruiser and a car seized after a drug arrest.

Each of the above projects and purchases were expected to be approved in the March 2 regular city meeting that occurred after press time.

ORO Arrowhead...from Page 1A



The Feb. 27 premiere of "Oro Arrowhead" enjoyed an overwhelming show of local support at VIP Fieldstone Cinemas.
Photo by Jarrett Whitener

spicing things up a bit.

"It is an exciting movie, and there are no bad words in it or anything dirty," Rahn said. "People get punched, kicked, hit and killed, but there is nothing dirty and no nasty dialogue. But boy are there some mean people in this thing. It is a great mystery."

"(Basically) the Indians discovered gold in Dahlonega, then got removed and hid a golden arrowhead that has powers, and nobody has known about that for about 200 years. There is a mean woman, and she is trying to find it, and that is the whole concept of the film."

The Red Carpet Premiere was a major success for those involved, with the event preselling over 200 tickets before the evening even arrived.

Producer Scott McClannahan found the project to be exciting and was happy to see such a high level of local support as he and Rahn shot the movie.

Locations featured in the film include places near Downtown Hiawassee, Trackrock Campground and

Enota Mountain Retreat.

"We did our first movie together around 2009," McClannahan said. "We have probably done around 15 to 20 movies together since then, and to me, the thing about being the producer and also the director of photography is, it started out as a passion project."

"The two of us have been in production companies for years and years; we love doing this stuff. We started planning this thing and location scouting and talking to the businesses, and it was amazing having all the pieces come together and have this much support from this community."

Actress Amber Kennessen is a Blairsville native who plays a relative of the main character in "Oro Arrowhead," and she will be appearing in another locally filmed Rahn production called "Home By Sunday."

She left the community to attend college and raise a family, so being able to return to the North Georgia Mountains and shoot here has been a thrill for her.

"We filmed for about a year, and I have five kids, so that is crazy to manage,"

Kennessen said. "I have a really awesome support team, because I have to film overnight and work for 16 hours, and it can be a lot."

"This is so close to my hometown that it is just astronomical that I am standing here right now."

With so much excitement and praise for the finished product, Rahn said he has no plans of slowing down, expressing hopes to release another film this year and begin shooting yet another project in June.

"We have another one coming up called 'Home By Sunday,'" Rahn said. "So, in about two months, we will be doing this again. That is already done, and we are just finishing up on that."

"From concept to now is about a year to do it. We spend time to write the script and rehash it and work with it."

"Oro Arrowhead" will be playing at VIP Fieldstone Cinemas through Thursday, March 4. For more information on films produced by Bill Rahn, visit www.tri-rahnpictures.com.

March Garden Chores from your Master Gardener Extension Volunteers

Have your garden soil tested. Your County Extension Agent has soil test bags and instructions. If your soil test indicates that you need to add lime, it needs to be added two to three months prior to planting your garden.

Complete all major pruning by mid-March. Maple trees bleed sap when pruned now, it's better to wait until late April. Do not prune spring flowering shrubs like forsythia and quince until after they have bloomed or you will not get any blooms this year. Only prune crape myrtles if needed, removing any suckers, cross branches and dead branches. Prune roses back to about half their present size before buds break and began fertilizing as buds break.

Divide overgrown hostas, daylilies and other perennials and ground covers as needed when you see the leaves unfurling above ground. Start planting cool season vegetables in late March - carrots, radishes, lettuce, collards, English peas, spinach, and beets. Warm season vegetables like tomatoes, peppers, corn and okra should be planted after the soil temperature warms up and the danger of frost has passed.

Dig up the new flowerbeds you plan to plant this spring when the soil is not soggy and mix in plenty of organic matter. Start vegetable and summer annual seeds indoors. Your seedlings will be ready to transplant into your garden after the soil temperature warms

up in six to eight weeks.

Planting the same vegetables in the same spot in your garden year after year can lead to an accumulation of insects and or diseases in your soil. To avoid this problem, rotate your crops. Fertilize trees and shrubs following label instructions in March and follow with an application in early May and early June.

Repot root bound houseplants before moving them outdoors in warm weather and begin fertilizing them at half the recommended strength. Rejuvenate the pansies you planted last fall by fertilizing them with a water-soluble fertilizer as the temperature warms up. English ivy can be very invasive. Good groundcover substitutes include ajuga, mondo grass and creeping raspberry.

Set your lawnmower blade on its highest setting and cut back liriope before new growth begins, being careful not to damage the crown of the plant. Avoid mixing freshly cut daffodils with other flowers in arrangements because they produce a chemical that injures blooms. Place daffodils in another container for a day after cutting, then rinse the stems before arranging.

Cut back your butterfly bush to half the size you want it to become this summer. Plant bare-root roses in soil that contains organic matter that has been thoroughly tilled. Sharpen or replace lawn mower blades if you have not already done so.

Spring bulbs should be fertilized as flowers fade. Remove foliage only after it begins to fade. Fertilize spring bulbs with a 10-10-10 fertilizer (one pound of fertilizer per 100 square feet of flowerbed).

To help control weeds in your garden, apply a two to three-inch layer of mulch.

Pull mulch at least six inches away from tree trunks to prevent soggy conditions and possible disease or insect damage. Sprinkle crushed eggshells around plants susceptible to slugs and snails, especially hostas.

Lift stepping stones that have sunk below grass level. Spread sand in the low area and replace the stepping stone. Be on the lookout for summer bulbs at your favorite garden center. For better selection, buy them when they become available but do not plant them until late April or early May.

Clean leaves and other debris from ponds and water features. Plant clematis and other vines and put out hummingbird feeders. Plant broadleaf evergreens and prune evergreen shrubs back to a manageable size before new growth starts.

If you want flowers on your cactus, plant it in a small pot. Most cactuses bloom sooner if rootbound. Purchase azaleas when they are in bloom so you will be sure of the color you are buying.

Jo Anne Allen
Master Gardener
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