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King Cove and Gumlog to close on March 12

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Assistant Editor

The Georgia Department of Transportation will be closing the SR 66 entrances to King Cove Road and Gumlog Road on Monday, March 12.

These entrances will be closed for no more than 210 days for construction of the new Brasstown Creek Bridge.

Residents who live on King Cove Road will use Crane Creek Road as a detour, which is available off SR 66.

People who live on Gumlog Road will have a slightly longer commute, as those traveling from Gumlog to town will need to take Barnard Road, which becomes West Road in North Carolina.

Folks should follow West Road until it dead ends into Young Harris Road, and follow

that south into Georgia.

Coming from town, follow SR 66 into North Carolina, and take a left onto West Road.

The detour for Gumlog residents is right around four miles at most.

Having been in service since 1940, Brasstown Creek Bridge is simply an old bridge and ready to be replaced. Construction on the new bridge began late last year with grading and relocation of utility lines.

The new bridge is being built just west of the old bridge, and it will be higher and offer better sight distances for those turning off Gumlog and King Cove roads in the future.

"It'll be all realigned, especially King Cove, not so much King Gum," said GDOT Project Manager Daniel Freeman. "The alignment

of King Cove is pretty much going to be the same, but Gumlog will be a little different configuration, safer. It's for the good of Towns County. It's going to be better."

Later this year, GDOT will also close Crooked Creek Road for several months. And though the project timing on that leg of the project has yet to be determined, it won't happen until after King Cove and Gumlog roads open back up.

"It's probably going to be coming up either this fall or possibly winter," said Freeman.

Interested residents can find Freeman inside the GDOT project trailer, just north of the construction site on SR 66.

Local leaders and first responders have expressed concern over the street closures, which will add between 13 and
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Photo by Shawn Jarrard
A GDOT sign warning passersby on SR 66 in Young Harris that Gumlog Road and King Cove Road will be closing on March 12, 2018.

Deadline draws near for Towns County homestead applications

By Mark Novak
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

April 1 is the deadline for homeowners to apply for a homestead exemption.

Homeowners who qualify and apply will be eligible for a minimum \$10,000 exemption from the assessed value of their home and land, which will effectively lower a person's tax burden.

"We have several local exemptions," said Towns County Chief Appraiser Sonya Young.

Every new homeowner
See Homestead, Page 6A



Photo by Mark Novak
Michael West, Sonya Young, Rachel Edwards and Ashlee Martin of the Towns County Tax Assessor's Office.

Students shine brightly in seventh annual speech contest

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Assistant Editor

Nobody in attendance for the Seventh Annual Top of Georgia Student Speech Contest envied the job of the judges on Thursday, March 1.

The student talent on display, featuring some of the brightest minds of Towns County, was simply too deep for most of the audience to pick a favorite speaker.

Of course, somebody had to win, and the judges did their best to determine which five students would be receiving the big cash prizes in the end.

The competition lasted for more than an hour, though the 14 students who delivered speeches that evening kept the standing-room only crowd enthralled, and the time flew by.

Towns County 4-H Coordinator Andrew Smith explained some of the educational components of the venture, highlighting the month-long speech



Photo by Shawn Jarrard
Towns County 4-H Coordinator Andrew Smith presenting Larson Church with her prize money for winning the Seventh Annual Top of Georgia Student Speech Contest on Thursday, March 1, 2018.

development and training that took place before the big showcase.

Smith emceed the event, which was a partnership between the 4-H and the Mountain Movers and Shakers, and he praised the efforts of the students following their

individual speeches.

The speeches themselves ran the gamut from the future of agricultural technology to the importance of saving money at a young age, from the benefits of running to the cold hard facts of child abuse, and every

See Speech, Page 6A

Mayor Ordiales: 'We saved 50 million gallons of water'

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Members of the Hiwassee City Council and Mayor Liz Ordiales discussed upcoming projects and a city water audit during the Feb. 26 work session.

Each year, the city conducts a water audit to determine exactly how much water is being used and to figure out the amount of unaccounted for water within the municipality's water distribution system.

Essentially, the audit measures the water system's efficiency.

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Photo by Lily Avery
Hiwassee Mayor Liz Ordiales invited Towns County High School Freshman Peyton Barrett to the Feb. 26 work session to deliver a patriotic speech he'd written.

Towns County School board qualifying ends March 9 at noon

News Special
Towns County Herald

Qualifying for the Towns County Board of Education continues through Friday, March 9, at noon.

The offices up for election are Post 1 in Macedonia, Post 2 in Young Harris and Post 3 in Hiwassee.

Interested residents will need to fill out the appropriate paperwork to qualify for

one of the three seats, and that paperwork is available at the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration office next door to the Towns County Courthouse.

The qualifying fee for a board of education post is \$36.

Qualifying began on Monday, March 5, and will run from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. through Thursday, and from 9 a.m. to noon on Friday, March 9.

The board office will close for lunch between 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. during the week.

The General Primary Election, Nonpartisan General Election and Special Election will be held in conjunction on May 22, and the General Election will be held on November 6.

For more information, residents can also visit the Secretary of State's website at sos.ga.gov.

VSOs donate to baseball team, honor essayist



Photo by Lily Avery
Front L to R: TCHS juniors Trent Bradshaw, Devon Burrell, Andrew Griffin, Seth Fullerton and Coach Shannon Floyd. Back L to R: Maureen Moss, Julie Andrews, Ash Todd, Brandy Creel, Charley Andrews, Bart Rodgers, John Harkins, Robin Halfon, Beth Sullenberger, Brenda Hoyt.

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Representatives of the various Towns County Veterans Service Organizations paid a visit to Towns County High School to present scholarships and an award to students on Tuesday, Feb. 27.

Each year, veteran groups throughout the county demonstrate their community support by extending a helping hand to those in need, especially children.

On Tuesday, this benevolence was once again showcased as representatives from the organizations presented

the high school baseball team with a \$1,000 check to go toward a trip the team is taking to play in Savannah.

VFW Post 7807 Adjutant Ash Todd received an email from Baseball Coach Shannon Floyd in January asking for assistance with the trip, and both Todd and his fellow veterans

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Towns County Herald announces New Cash Countdown Contest - Chance to Win Cash Every Month!

Hiwassee- Cash Countdown is a new contest brought to you by *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald* that offers readers a chance to win cash every month.

No purchase is necessary, and qualifying is easy - simply text the keyword "Georgia" to 71441 to enter. Powered by Direct Connect Mobile Marketing, entrants will receive text offers from *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald* sponsors, but never more than two per week.

A monthly prize of \$100 will be drawn on the last Monday of every month. The monthly prizewinner is not eligible to repeat as a monthly winner.

The following are frequently asked questions concerning the program.

1. What kind of offers will I be receiving?

We partner with local merchants to send you coupons via text message. It's the newest thing, and people love it. We have merchants who have been using this software successfully for more than two years.

2. How do you decide who wins the monthly cash drawing?

Our system will randomly select a winner at the end of each month. As long as you are a current subscriber to Cash Countdown, your number will be in the drawing. No purchase is necessary.

3. TEXT - Who will have my mobile number?

No one! Our software provider, Direct Connect keeps all numbers behind a firewall in a secure database. Your number is not shared with any-

one. Local merchants send us their deals, and we handle the texting. They never see your number.

4. Am I going to start getting spammed?

Absolutely not! Our software provider is FCC compliant, and by federal law, your number cannot be shared.

5. WINNER- If I decide I don't want to participate any more?

"Unsubscribe" never seems to work with email! Unlike email, our short code 71441 is registered with the FCC. By law, we must provide an automated means to unsubscribe to any database. We will never text you more than twice per week, but should you wish to unsubscribe, simply reply with a single word: STOP. You will immediately receive a text confirmation of your removal.

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