

Towns County Herald

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Local patriots remember the fallen on Memorial Day

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Assistant Editor

There is no way to repay the debts owed to the brave American military men and women who have paid the cost of freedom with their lives.

However, patriotic citizens can honor them by recognizing their noble sacrifices on the one day set aside each year specifically for their remembrance – Memorial Day.

Fortunately, this area is one of those increasingly rare places where fallen heroes, veterans, active duty servicemembers and reservists are honored on a regular basis.

And Towns Countians turned out in force for the May 28 Memorial Day Service, which was relocated from the Veterans Memorial Park to the Civic Center due to rain.

Vietnam Veteran Al Lipphardt served as the keynote speaker for the ceremony. Lipphardt is a State Inspector with the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of Georgia, and he's a candidate for the office of national VFW Commander-in-Chief.

"This, as you know, is not a happy day," said Lipphardt. "It is a thankful day, but it's not a happy day. So, we do have mixed emotions. We are saddened that we are recognizing those who have died in service to this nation."

"They answered the final call, gave the last full measure of devotion to you and I so that future generations could live. But by the same token, we thank them and honor them for that service."

Of the many topics Lipphardt mentioned that Memorial Day Monday in Hiawassee, he came back time and again to the need for

the country to look after its veterans, citing Agent Orange and Gulf War Syndrome.

"I want to recognize Richard Rogers, a member of my VFW Post, and I want to recognize Norman Propes, another Vietnam Veteran," said Lipphardt. "They were killed in Vietnam – they didn't die until about two years ago."

"Now, how can that be? How can they have been killed in Vietnam, but they didn't die until a couple years ago? It's called Agent Orange. There are hundreds of thousands of veterans today who are suffering the effects of Agent Orange."

Continued Lipphardt: "The (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs) has been very slow to recognize Agent Orange. They finally came around. There's a lot of presumption to Agent Orange."

Lipphardt said that

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Retired U.S. Army Capt. Al Lipphardt was the keynote speaker during the Monday, May 28, Memorial Day Service at the Towns County Civic Center.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

MECHS Union County site graduates 21 seniors

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

BLUE RIDGE – The Mountain Education Charter High School held a combined graduation ceremony for the Union, Fannin and Gilmer sites at the Fannin County High School Performing Arts Center on Thursday, May 24.

Of the 64 graduates from the three combined sites, Union site graduates accounted for 21 of them.

Both Union and Towns students attend the MECHS Union site.

Lexus Walden from the Fannin County site was 2018 valedictorian, and Dakota Skiles from the Gilmer County site was salutatorian.

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MECHS Union Site Director Roy Perren with 2018 graduate De'Anna Underwood.

Photo by Mark Smith

Development authority a priority for Hiawassee

By Mark Novak
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales is seeking to hire a person to head up a new downtown development authority as part of the city's Comprehensive Plan.

Ordiales gave an update on the plan at the Hiawassee City Council work session on May 21.

"As a matter of fact, I'm speaking with somebody right after Memorial Day who is currently an economic development person," said Ordiales.

The Comprehensive Plan includes numerous items, such as developing an economic plan, securing loans to update the

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Hiawassee City Council Members Kris Berrong and Anne Mitchell in their May 21 council work session.

Photo by Mark Novak

Towns County first responders replace child car seats on square

By Mark Novak
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Hiawassee Police Chief Paul Smith and first responders from around the area assisted motorists on Saturday, May 26, with the proper installation of child safety car seats, in many cases replacing old seats at no charge.

Lights from a Hiawassee Police cruiser shined during the event on the Hiawassee Town Square that Saturday, alerting motorists to a child seat safety check.

"Today, we're checking car seats for everybody in the area or anybody that's passing through," said Chief Smith. "If they have a car seat that's expired, replaced or recalled, we're replacing it for them."

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Hiawassee Police Chief Paul Smith with Travis Gibson and Jackie Townley on Saturday, May 26.

Photo by Mark Novak

Sheriff aims to keep Bell Mountain fun and safe

By Mark Novak
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton is concerned with the safety of the public when it comes to graffiti on Bell Mountain.

The sheriff expressed recently that he's hoping to work with the public and utilize the new cameras at Bell Mountain Park to stop graffiti enthusiasts from painting on the mountain and the platforms.

"When the county opened that park, they allowed people to continue to paint on the rocks," said Sheriff Clinton. "People were painting on the platforms, which they were never supposed to paint on."

"To add insult to injury, things that were getting painted on the rocks were very vulgar, racist things, vulgar things that I wouldn't want to explain to

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Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton on top of Bell Mountain with one of the new cameras to deter people from spray painting in the park.

Photo by Mark Novak

Towns County Farmers Market open for business

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Saturday, May 26, marked the beginning of market season for local farmers, as they gathered to open the Towns County Farmers Market for the summer.

These farmers and other fine folks have made it their passion to produce fresh, homegrown fruits, vegetables, plants and various assorted goods and wares.

Some of the vendors spend up to six hours a day working with their farms, while others build birdhouses and more to bring to the market on Saturday mornings.

"I usually start all the farming and production as early as March," said plant vendor



The Towns County Farmers Market is open for the season, so come on down every Saturday morning this summer to get some fresh produce.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Craig Pietz. "The farming acts as a full-time job that needs constant care."

Vendors at the market make it their mission to provide

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McConnell, Rouse finish on top

News Special
Towns County Herald

The initial year of the Towns County Middle School Future Business Leaders of America Chapter brought historical achievements.

Four seventh grade students – William McConnell, Abigail Pate, Clayton Rogers and Layne Rouse – competed in two categories against students statewide.

Abigail Pate competed in the FBLA Creed Speaking Contest.

William McConnell and Clayton Rogers competed in the Business Communications contest, and William McConnell and Layne Rouse competed in the Keyboarding Applications contest.

These contests are competed in solely on a volunteer basis, and the

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Layne Rouse and Will McConnell finished Second and First Place respectively in Keyboarding Applications at the FBLA State Leadership Conference.

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Lake Levels
Blue Ridge 1,687.74
Chatuge 1,926.15
Nottely 1,777.51



Book, Media and Bake Sale
Towns County Library Begins May 31st

Towns County Class of 1955 REUNION June 2nd
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Lake Chatuge Boating ADVISORY
Watch for Debris in the Water

BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP
JUNE 7TH
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