

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 89 Number 32

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

## Dr. Berrong: School renovations are on schedule

By Mark Smith  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The renovations at the middle/high school building of Towns County Schools started right on time, immediately following the end of the 2017-2018 school year in May.

Due to the renovations, students will return two weeks later than originally planned for the 2018-2019 school year, Facilities Director Roy Perren said, noting that the system changed the upcoming schedule to accommodate the massive construction project.

It was necessary, he said, to give the contractor the time he needed to get the job done.

School staff and some students used the week after

school let out to move the furniture, chairs, desks and other items out of all the classrooms.

Everything had to be indexed, labeled by classroom location and brought to the gym and cafeteria.

At this time, the drop ceilings have all been removed on one side of the building, exposing the wiring and old ductwork, while the roof is being replaced on the other side of the building. This way, said Perren, workers aren't working directly above and below each other.

It's a balancing act, he said, for the interior workers to finish rerouting the ductwork and installing the new HVAC

units on the one side, at the same time the roof workers finish replacing the roof on the other side.

The roof workers sometimes even work through the night, which is not surprising since much of the roof work is done with hot tar.

Perren explained the steps of the roof replacement, saying that, first, they put down a double layer of insulation that is then covered with tar. Then, a layer of felt is put down. Finally, a membrane is installed over the whole thing.

"It's called a multi-ply roof, and it has a 25-year warranty," said Perren, to which School Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong added, *See Renovations, Page 8A*



Workers getting the new roof on the main building of the Towns County middle and high school. Photo by Mark Smith

## Young Harris receives audit report, property donation

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

The Young Harris City Council heard good news during the presentation of its 2017 city audit report in the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 5.

That evening, Marvin Chance of the accounting firm R.L. Jennings and Associates presented the year ending Dec. 31, 2017.

Notably, the city received a "clean opinion," which is the best achievable result of a municipal audit.

"It's technically called

*See Young Harris, Page 8A*



Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby smiling in the June 5 regular city meeting. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Hiawassee to host movie night for Moonshine Cruiz-In

By Novak  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Hiawassee City Council and Mayor Liz Ordiales are planning a movie night on Wednesday, July 11, to welcome those involved with the upcoming Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

This year's Cruiz-In runs from Thursday, July 12, through Saturday, July 14, and is expected to bring in over 600 cars and their owners to the county.

Mayor Ordiales and the council went over these plans

*See Hiawassee, Page 8A*



The Hiawassee City Council during its June 5 regular city meeting. Photo by Mark Novak

## Ordiales excited for Hiawassee Mayors Park

By Mark Novak  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Over five years in the making, the Hiawassee Mayors Park is nearing completion.

The boat ramp and parking areas are already finished, and the bathrooms and dog park are well underway.

"We hope to finish within the next month," said Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales. "Everybody has been working very hard to get this project completed so we can move on to the next one."

The project started under former mayor Barbara Mathis, and Ordiales picked up the ball and is seeing the project through to completion after obtaining up to \$100,000 in state grant money to assist with the cost.

"The grants come from the state of Georgia with a 50/50 match, so we are working to keep the cost to a minimum and get the most for our money," said Ordiales. "The dog park,



Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales sitting outside the new restrooms at Hiawassee Mayors Park. Photo by Mark Novak

picnic benches, picnic tables and the trails are all part of the grant."

Added Ordiales: "The bathroom should be complete within two weeks and everything should move quickly from there."

Working with the Tennessee Valley Authority

and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the boat ramp and boat trailer parking were completed last year.

"Everything will have handicap access," said Ordiales. "The bathrooms, the pavilion will all be connected by handicap accessible walkways," *See Ordiales, Page 8A*

## Enotah CASA helps abused, neglected children

By Mark Novak  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

CASA volunteers are Court Appointed Special Advocates who guide children through legal processes when they get stuck in bad situations and can't speak for themselves.

Liz Ruf is the board chair for Enotah CASA, and she spoke on the duties of CASA volunteers in the weekly meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers on June 8.

Enotah CASA serves Towns, Union, Lumpkin and White counties, and the volunteers help abused or neglected children while saving the counties large sums of money in court-appointed guardian fees.

"We are a group of citizen volunteers who are trained to speak for children who are in foster care, those children that were removed from their homes due to their parents' neglect, abuse or inability to care for (them)," said Ruf. "So, when the



Enotah CASA volunteer Liz Ruf in the June 8 meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers at Sundance Grill in Hiawassee. Photo by Mark Novak

state removes a child from their home for one of those reasons, a CASA is assigned by the juvenile judge to speak for the child's needs and best interests of the child.

"The CASA takes 30 hours of classroom training and then observes in court for 10 hours before they receive their

certification." For 2017, there were 141 children in the foster care programs of Towns and Union counties, and only 30 to 35 volunteers to assist them.

CASA has saved the two counties over \$208,000 in legal *See CASA, Page 8A*

## Board of Education talks school budget, contracts in work session

By Mark Novak  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Members of the Towns County Board of Education once more touched on the 2018-2019 school budget, this time in their June 7 work session.

The board was expected to approve the final budget in

their regular monthly meeting on June 11, which occurred after press time.

In the June 7 work session, the board expressed a number of minor budgetary concerns, which School Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong researched and brought back to the table before the board voted on

Monday.

The board also discussed the vendor list for the school nutrition program in the work session, and it, too, was expected to receive a vote in the regular meeting that occurred after press time.

Dr. Berrong went over *See Board, Page 8A*



The Towns County Board of Education with School Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong, center. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Suspects arrested in Brasstown Valley Resort theft

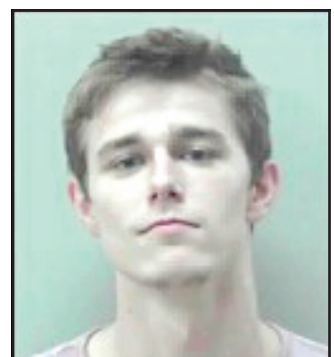
New Special  
Towns County Herald

On Tuesday, May 27, Towns County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to Brasstown Valley Resort in Young Harris in reference to a theft of a 2005 Toro ATV Workman valued at \$15,000.

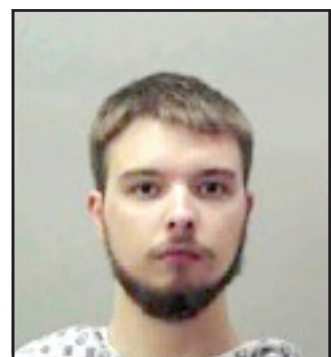
Two days later, on Tuesday, May 29, TCSO Deputies and Investigators recovered the stolen Toro ATV Workman in a wooded area off of Gumlog Road in Young Harris.

Upon further investigation of the circumstances surrounding the incident, investigators arrested the following four suspects on felony theft by taking charges:

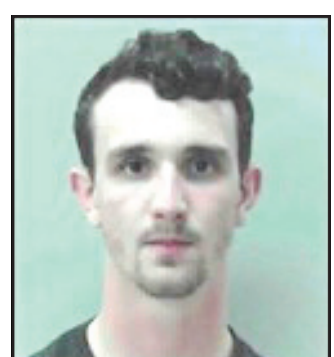
Gregory William Greene, 19, of Young Harris; Michael Brett Davis, 20, of Young Harris; Morgan Dakota Smith, 19, of Hiawassee; and Tyler Wade Persall, 18, of Young Harris. *See Theft, Page 9A*



Gregory Greene



Michael Davis



Morgan Smith



Tyler Persall

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Blue Ridge 1,687.35  
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FREE Food Distribution  
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Thurs. June 21st  
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GET YOUR SMOKEY ON  
at Brasstown Bald  
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