

Eclipse...from Page 1A

Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The total eclipse will end near Charleston, South Carolina at 2:48 p.m. EDT. From there, the lunar shadow leaves the United States at 4:09 EDT. Its longest duration will be near Carbondale, Illinois, where the sun will be completely covered for two minutes and 40 seconds.

Observers outside this path will still see a partial solar eclipse where the moon covers part of the sun's disk. This celestial event is a solar eclipse in which the moon passes between the sun and earth and blocks all or part of the sun for up to approximately three hours, from beginning to end, as viewed from a given location. For this eclipse, the longest period when the moon completely blocks the sun from any given location along the path will be about two minutes and 40 seconds.

In Hiwassee and Young Harris, totality will last approximately two minutes and 20 seconds beginning at 2:35 p.m. with the partial phase lasting until approximately 4 p.m.

A total solar eclipse occurs somewhere on earth once in every 18 months on average. In any one location, a

total solar eclipse is very rare, occurring on average once every 375 years. The last time the contiguous U.S. saw a total eclipse was in 1979. The last time Towns County saw a total eclipse was in 1506. And the next time Towns County will see another total eclipse will be 2591.

"We're going to see a huge influx of people coming into the area and passing through," said Candace Lee, Towns County Chamber of Commerce President. "We're as close to the line as the people right on the line, as far as the length of time we'll be able to see the eclipse. We're only about nine seconds short of the longest viewing time.

"There's going to be a lot of people that are traveling and hopefully a lot of people will be stopping here for it as well, we already have a lot of reservations from people from all over."

To celebrate what may very well be a once in a lifetime experience for most of us, the Towns County Chamber of Commerce and Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge are co-hosting a Tailgating Party in the upper parking area at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. The hosts are encouraging families to bring tents, lawn chairs, picnic lunches, etc. and plan to spend the afternoon at

the Fairgrounds.

Steven Phillips and the Midnight Express band will be performing; hot dogs, chips and drinks will be available as well as something sweet for dessert, and there will be lots of fun and games for kids. The cost to attend is \$5 per carload, which includes two pairs of eclipse glasses, provided courtesy of The Glass Doctor of Hiwassee.

"We're hoping to also do a live stream of the eclipse from NASA on a large screen as well," said Lee. "This is for anybody, open to the public. We already have the eclipse glasses now so they are now available for purchase at the Chamber for anyone who wants to go ahead and buy them for \$1 a pair."

On hand to keep everyone up to date on the progression of the eclipse will be astronomy expert, Michael Covington of the Atlanta Astronomy Club. Covington will give a "play-by-play" of the 2017 Great Solar Eclipse. And, thanks also to Lake Chatuge Lodge for their support of this event as well as the Towns County Commissioner's Office.

If any local business, church or organization would like to participate with a food booth, activity for children or as a sponsor, please contact Candace Lee or Crystal Wagner at the Towns County Chamber at (706) 896-4966.

Warrants...from Page 1A

warrants have started to fall off due to a four-year statute of limitations that counts from the date a crime was alleged to have been committed.

Arrest warrants will continue to drop off as Gowder and Heaton remain unindicted.

All 18 arrest warrants related to these cases in Towns County have exhausted themselves due to the statute of limitations.

As previously reported, Gowder and Heaton's criminal cases came up in Feb. 27 administrative sessions at the Cherokee County Courthouse in Murphy, resulting in both Gowder and Heaton receiving June 26 continuance dates for future administrative sessions.

Heaton and Gowder were arrested in North Carolina on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, following indictment by a Cherokee County, NC, grand jury, both for five counts of trafficking in opium or heroin, and five counts of obtaining a controlled substance by forgery, according to Cherokee County, NC, Sheriff Derrick Palmer at that time.

Previously, Gowder and Dr. Heaton received 2016 continuances in their North Carolina cases from March 28 to April 4, then from April 4 to July 11, and from July 11 to Nov. 7.

On Nov. 7, Gowder received a continuance to Feb. 27, 2017, while Heaton

got a Jan. 3, 2017, court date to appear in front of a North Carolina Superior Court Judge.

The result of that Jan. 3 appearance was a continuance for Heaton to a Feb. 27 administrative session, the same day as Gowder, and the two appeared again for administration sessions last week.

Heaton and Gowder were arrested in Union County on Feb. 4, 2016, Gowder for three counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, one count of conspiracy; and Heaton for 40 counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances, one count of conspiracy.

Dr. David Gowder, Mike's brother, was also arrested for 36 counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance and seven counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances. Three other Gowder family members were arrested in connection with the incidents in question.

When asked at the start of the year about these cases in Union County, which had not appeared by the January Term 2017 Indictments of the Union County Grand Jury, Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley told the North Georgia News and Towns County Herald to check back after the second

meeting of the January Term 2017 Grand Jury, to be held in April.

Gail Gowder, Virginia Lou Harkins, Jamie Harkins and David Gowder were indicted in that April session, but Mike Gowder and James Heaton were not.

"In addition, there remains pending investigations regarding Mike Gowder and Dr. (James) Heaton," said Langley in April. "We expect those to be later presented to grand juries, either in this county or in White and Towns counties, because that case involves allegations in all three counties."

Langley said following the April indictments that Gowder and Heaton's cases would likely be presented to grand juries "in one or more of those counties within the next three months."

The scope of the investigation conducted by the Union County Sheriff's Office dates to when Dr. David Gowder was arrested in Fannin County on April 1, 2015 - when Union County became involved in the investigation - up to and beyond the February 2016 arrests of David Gowder, four of his relatives and Dr. Heaton.

Agencies involved in the investigation at the time of the Union County arrests were the DEA Tactical Diversion Squad, the DEA Digital Forensics Lab, the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency, the Union County Sheriff's Office, and the Cherokee County, North Carolina Sheriff's Office.

Army Veteran James (Jim) Forrest received Quilt of Valor

By Anna Stone

It was an honor for Anna Stone and Diane Simonsen of the Misty Mountain Quilters Guild to award a Quilt of Valor to James Forrest on June 17, 2017 at Union County Nursing Home. Surrounded by family and friends, Mr. Forrest happily talked and smiled throughout the ceremony.

James Forrest enlisted in the Army on July 22, 1952 in Cleveland, OH. He was in the Army for 2 years, 11 months and 6 days. He went through basic training in Fort Knox, KY. For most of his time in the Army he was stationed in Wiesbaden, German. He was discharged from Fort Sheridan in Illinois on July 7, 1955. He was awarded the Army of Occupation Medal, National Defense Service Medal and a Marksman Medal.

James Forrest was born in Russell, OH, in 1933. He is survived by one daughter, Debbie Thomas, and two sons, Stuart and Cameron Forrest. He liked to travel and lived in Ohio, California, Pennsylvania, Idaho and North Caro-



Army Veteran James (Jim) Forrest receives a Quilt of Valor for his service. Each quilt of Valor is stitched with love and thoughts of honor and respect. Thank you for your service, James Forrest. Rest in peace.

You can nominate a combat veteran for this honor. Visit the Quilts of Valor Foundation's website, qovf.org, to request a quilt. NTJ05/27/CA

Hamilton Gardens presents Let's Get Growing

Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge presents a series of free educational programs for the public as part of its community outreach effort. The first "Let's Get Growing" program will be held on Friday, July 7 at 11 a.m. at the Paris Pavilion, located at the gardens. The topic - "Container Gardening" - will be presented by Silas Brown, Clay County Extension Agent, who will be demonstrating the various container gardening techniques and offering prac-

tical hints. Container gardening is an ingenious way to grow your own flowers, vegetables, and herbs - especially if you have limited space, or prefer patio or deck gardening. Bring a sandwich to enjoy afterward with other gardeners and swap stories. Rain or shine!

"Let's Get Growing" programs will be offered the first and third Fridays of each month, July through September, at 11 a.m., and will cover a variety of gardening top-

ics. Experts in the field will present information for approximately 30 - 45 minutes, and attendees will have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss other gardening topics. The programs are designed for new and experienced gardeners.

Please join us for the first program on July 7. For additional information, call Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge - 706-970-0011.

GMRC career coach returns to Towns County

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Public Library was the place to be Tuesday, June 27, for any area resident in need of assistance with job applications, resumes, any questions concerning career development and higher education assistance.

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission sends out a team member from its Georgia Mountains Workforce Development division with a mobile unit to assist locals at least once every other month.

"We're here to help people with resumes and job searches and online applications," said Micah Thomas, Mobile Unit Training Instructor. "A lot of times people get frustrated with the job application process, how to do it online, and we're here to make that process a little easier."

Outside of assisting with job applications and resume building, the primary focus of the program is tuition assistance for those who want to receive a higher education but are financially unable to do so.

"The biggest thing we do is, a lot of people are interested in going back to school or returning to school," said Thomas. "We generally tell people that, with additional schooling, they can get a better job. So one of the big things I do is talk about the WIOA program. What that is, is a grant-based program that's based on income that allows individuals to go back to school."

The tuition assistance would be available in



Micah Thomas of the Georgia Workforce Development Mobile Unit. Photo/Lily Avery

conjunction with state and/or federal assistance available to an applicant. However, unlike some state and federal assistance programs, this is not a loan that will need to be repaid, but a grant given to the applicant for up to two years.

"Those that qualify are eligible for up to \$10,000 of tuition," said Thomas. "Also, on top of that, the individual would be eligible for additional services. A lot of grants, like the Pell Grant, offer tuition but say you're a mom or a dad and you have kids, just because you have tuition money doesn't mean you have the means to have someone watch your child."

"So, the supported services allow us to come in and provide grant money to help pay for child care, gas money up to a certain point and other things such as that."

Through the tuition

assistance program, qualifying participants will also have access to coverage for the cost of books, supplies or anything related to collegiate education except for housing.

This program is only available for select schools in the region that will accept the grant. These institutes include: Athens Technical College, Brenau University, CDL of Georgia, Chattahoochee Technical College, Daly's Truck Driving School, Emmanuel College, Georgia Driving Academy, Goodwill of North Georgia, Gwinnett Technical College, Heavy Equipment College of Georgia, Kennesaw State University, Lanier Technical College, Northeast Georgia RESA, North Georgia Technical College, Piedmont College, Pioneer RESA, Target IT Training and Mentoring and University of North Georgia.

There are no requirements to receive help from the mobile unit, aside from being in need of a job and feeling comfortable reaching out. The mobile unit serves the following counties: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White.

The mobile unit is open to the public, with no fee or age limit. The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development mobile unit will be at the Union County Public Library on July 25, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

For more information on the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development and the career coach mobile unit, visit www.gmrc.ga.gov.

Council...from Page 1A

vital and important role in the community.

"It's been brought up that lots of people are recommending that we dedicate the boat ramp to Preacher Harold Leford," said Kris Berrong, Hiwassee Councilman. "This came up and the (Towns County Sole) Commissioner (Cliff Bradshaw) spoke to me about it, wanting to know what I think."

"I think he was a man that nobody will ever forget and I think that it would be very appropriate."

More information on the dedication will be publicized at a later date when the details have been finalized.

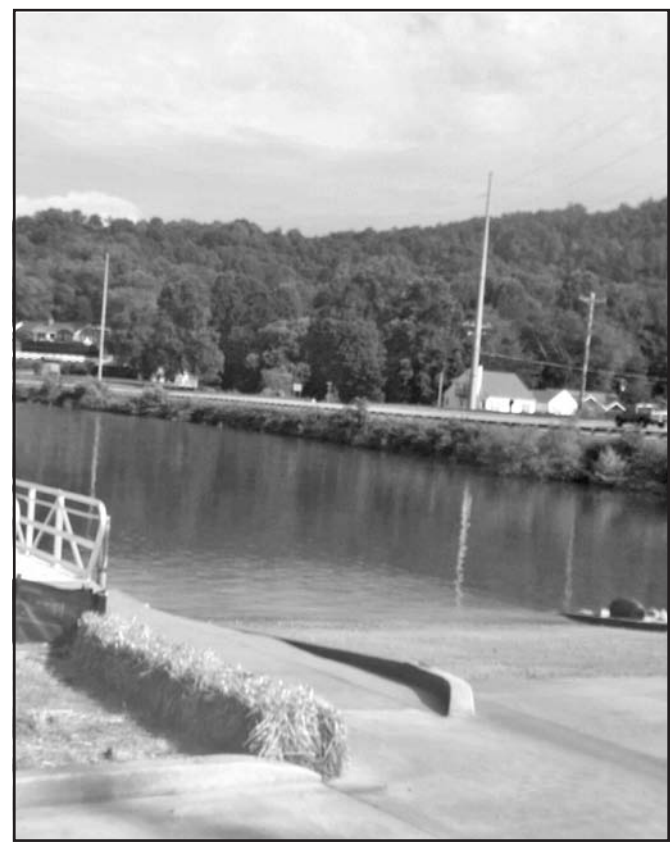
Moving forward with the park, Ordiales has plans for a large, fenced-in dog park, complete with a three-tier fountain and shade for dogs and human companions alike. The dog park will be closest to the sub station, and will feature a partition fence to separate large dogs from small dogs.

Along with the dog park, Ordiales and the council hope to set up benches along the water front and fishing piers as well for residents to relax and enjoy the beauty of Lake Chatuge.

"It's going to be a big chunk of land for the dogs," said Ordiales. "I'm looking at sail shades for shade, so we don't have to wait for a tree to grow to provide shade. There's also going to be parking for the bark park that's separate from the regular parking, so the left side of the park."

"I also want to put a little barbeque station next to the pavilion and bathrooms, and some benches as well so people can sit and look at the lake."

Now that DNR's work is completed, Ordiales hopes to have the park completed by the end of the year, if at



The new DNR boat launch at Hiwassee Mayors Park, with Highway 76 in the background.

all possible. To date, the city has invested \$108,000 into Mayor's Park.

While Mayor's Park has been getting some much-needed attention, so has the Hiwassee Square. Recently, work was done to improve the structure and appearance of the pavilion and around the square. Now the council has begun the planning process for a bathroom on the square, something that many Saturday night music-on-the-square goers are very excited about.

"We want a bathroom on the square," said Anne Mitchell, Hiwassee Councilwoman. "I've already figured out where we would plug into the sewer. We want to do the outside so

that it looks like an outhouse. But we want the inside to be where we can take a pressure washer and hose it down."

The bathroom will be a handicap accessible, unisex bathroom to accommodate all those who frequent the square. At this point, a date has yet to be determined as to when the bathroom will be built and open to the public. Bids for the construction of the outhouse still need to be made and the council will move forward from there.

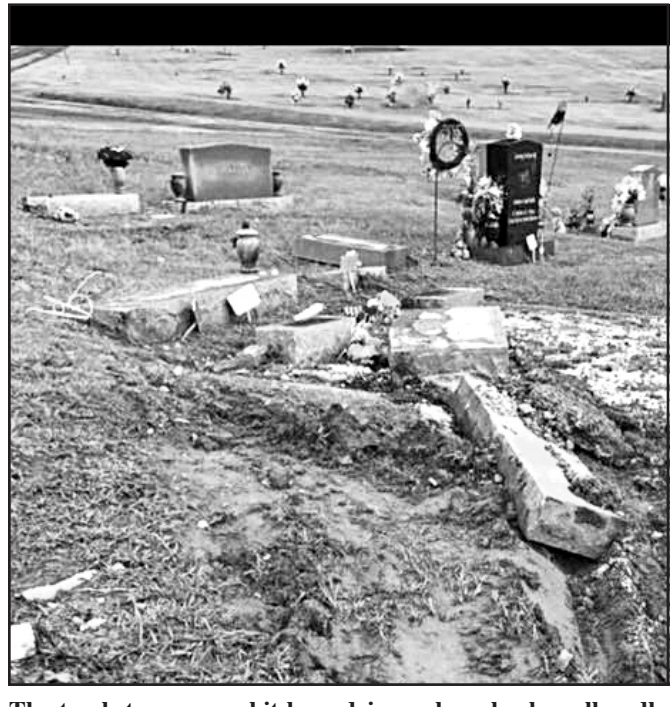
Due to the Fourth of July holiday, the July Hiwassee City Council meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, July 6.

Old Union...from Page 1A

the scene prior to the deputies' arrival. The deputies received information later that the driver was at the emergency room at Union General Hospital in Blairsville, sheriff's reports show.

Upon further investigation, Adair had already left the emergency room in Blairsville. Deputies were able to make contact with the driver on Saturday, June 24, 2017, who they identified as Jared Adair, age 37, of Greensboro, sheriff's reports show.

The driver told authorities that his brakes had failed, which caused him to drive into the cemetery. Deputies charged Jared Adair with one count of leaving the scene of an accident and one count of failure to make notification upon striking a fixed object, sheriff's reports show.



The tombstones were hit by a driver whose brakes allegedly failed. Photo/Andrew Smith