

Towns County Herald

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69th Annual Georgia Mountain Fair kicks off

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Come one, come all, to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds this weekend to celebrate mountain heritage with local historical attractions, live concerts, an annual parade, the ever-popular beauty pageant and many more fun activities for families to enjoy.

For the 69th year running, the Georgia Mountain Fair lives up the North Georgia Mountains for nine-days of family-friendly fun and entertainment starting Friday, July 19, and running through Saturday, July 27.

This year, the Fair is hosting the Disc-Connected K-9s Frisbee Dog Team, which will have three shows daily Monday through Saturday starting at 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

There will be a poodle dog show this year too, as

Michelle's Magical Poodles will offer performances July 19 through July 22.

"We also have several new food booths with a verity of food," Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said. "And we have a new guy that's coming in with wooden toys that he makes."

The booth with the handmade wooden toys will be off to the right inside the Fairgrounds, just before crowds enter the carnival.

"We have several new crafters coming this year," she said. "If anyone is looking for a craft booth, we are still taking applications."

Added Thomason, "They are also going to have train rides for the children, which takes them all through the Fairgrounds."

Every year, a large part of the local Fair is the nine days of music concerts, including

country, bluegrass and gospel music groups playing two shows a day.

And this year's lineup is sure to excite fans of tunes originally popularized in the region, including those from artists like Pam Tillis & Family, Neal McCoy, Ricky Skaggs, and Jim Wood and the Georgia Mountain Fair Band, just to name a few.

Also new this year, "The Spinners," a legendary American rhythm and blues vocal group formed in the 1950s, will make their first local appearance on Wednesday, July 24, along with "High South."

As usual, the carnival will open a day before the Fair, on Thursday, July 18, at 5 p.m., and there will be a new ride available this year, Thomason said.

On opening day Friday and every day of the Fair, See Fair, Page 8A



Carnival rides are always a popular attraction at the annual Georgia Mountain Fair. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

School board welcomes Stephanie McConnell as second appointee of 2019

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Board of Education appointed new Board Member Stephanie McConnell in the July 1 school board meeting.

Once her paperwork is accepted by the state and she has undergone the necessary training, McConnell will swear in and her appointment will become official, perhaps as early as next month.

She is replacing former Board Member Laura Banister, who resigned in June to take a teaching position at Towns County Elementary, effective July 1.

Many people will know McConnell from her work as a local attorney in Hiwassee, where she also served as city attorney for years while former



Stephanie McConnell

Mayor Barbara Mathis was in office.

She is the daughter of Robert Williams, who recently won re-election to his second consecutive term on the school board before having to resign in April after moving out of the

Macedonia District.

Brandon Grimsley was appointed to the seat vacated by Williams shortly thereafter, and following Banister's resignation last month, the board needed to fill her vacant seat as well.

Upon learning of the open seat, McConnell reached out to the board office to express her interest in becoming a member.

"The board discussed it, and Stephanie McConnell sent an email saying that she was interested, and the board felt she would be a great fit," said School Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong.

McConnell's ties with the school system run deep. She and her husband, Richard, are graduates of Towns County High, as is her eldest son, Nicholas, who graduated

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Club 66 to hold Missing in America Project fundraiser in Young Harris

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer



Club 66 Veterans and Associates, Inc. is a local non-profit organization that helps both veterans and the community, and it will be hosting a Missing in America Project fundraiser at 2641 State Highway 66 in Young Harris on Saturday, July 20.

Kathleen Little is

heading up the fundraising effort for Club 66, and she said the building where the event will take place used to be an old VFW hall and is located right near the Georgia/ North Carolina state line on the Georgia side.

The festivities will begin at 12 p.m. on Saturday, with a blessing of the event by a chaplain or pastor. Several tents will be set up outside with table and chairs.

"We will be having Boston butts provided by Rib Country at \$8 a plate," Little said. "To start with, we are having raffles throughout the entire day for door prizes. We have a brand-new grill that we'll be selling tickets for. We're doing a 50-50, of course."

"We have event T-shirts that we're going to be selling.

We've collected 25 sponsors for the event, and their names are going to be on the back of the shirts. And the front, of course, is going to have the MIAP logo on it."

It's basically going to be an all-day event, Little said, adding that a representative from MIAP is scheduled to give a presentation during the event.

The mission of the MIAP, otherwise known as the Missing in America Veterans Recovery Program, is "to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed remains of American veterans through the joint efforts of private, state and federal organizations," according to MIAPUS.

Literally thousands of American veterans have died destitute and forgotten, some in the very country. See Club 66, Page 8A

Oliva: Elections Board 'a little bit in the dark' regarding 2020 elections

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Members of the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration discussed developments related to the voting process in Georgia at their regular bimonthly meeting on Wednesday, July 10.

Several lawsuits have been filed following the 2018 election in which then-Secretary of State Brian Kemp oversaw much of an election that he was a candidate in against fellow candidates Stacey Abrams and Ted Metz.

Because the Secretary of State's office has apparently been tied up with lawsuits, there's been very little information about what sort of voting machines will replace those used in 2018 and whether or not paper ballots will be instituted.

"We don't know what's going to be different," said Elections and Registration Supervisor Tonya Nichols.

"We're supposed to be getting new election equipment, but that's still up in the air because



Janet Oliva

of all the lawsuits. Nothing has been finalized."

Board Member Betsy Young Nichols in the meeting if the State Election Board had started any work with the new machines.

"The phasing that was supposed to begin, because of all the lawsuits that are going on, that's been halted,"

Nichols said. "So, we have absolutely no idea what we're getting, when we're getting it, when training is supposed to begin - nothing."

"I don't even think they've announced the vendor of who is going to be supplying the machines because of everything that's been going on because of all the lawsuits, so we're at a standstill."

Nichols said the biggest recent announcement was that the new machines would not be allowed to be left onsite overnight without a guard, though there's nothing in writing yet, as the rules haven't been published because the new equipment hasn't come out.

Oliva said she and Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw traveled to Tate City in June to brief residents there on any upcoming changes.

"We didn't have a whole lot to tell them because we don't know at this point," Oliva said. "We're not really sure,

See Elections, Page 6A

Community says 'thank you' to veterans in Heritage Day celebration

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Historical Society on Saturday local veterans on Saturday, July 13, during the society's Fifth Annual Heritage Day Celebration at Heritage Park.

Historical Society members, the Friendship Baptist Church Youth Group, Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw and members of the community came together Saturday to say, "Thank you for your service," to all veterans of Towns County.

Kris Phillips, who is involved with the Towns County Time Capsules historical project, opened the ceremony Saturday by thanking all the active service men and women and all the veterans who served for the freedoms and rights Americans enjoy today.

"We are honored to have so many great veterans that live in our community," Phillips said.

During the Heritage Day celebration, Bradshaw addressed the veterans and



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7807 Cmdr. Mel Halfon, local veteran Danny Barrett and American Legion Post 23 Cmdr. John Harkins at the 2019 Heritage Day on July 13. Photo by Chad Stack

their families, acknowledging them for all they have done and all they continue to do in the community.

Bradshaw said it meant the world to him that so many veterans want to live in Towns County.

"This community is so rewarding and refreshing, and it's a reminder to all of the people that have worked so

hard to keep America free and safe," Bradshaw said. "I'm very thankful, and I'm very grateful to be able to be a part of it, and it's very special for us to get to know our veterans and get to hear their stories."

"As time goes on, these stories get forgotten unless they're written down, and the Historical Society and See Veterans, Page 8A

July Term 2019 Grand Jury Indictments

The following individuals were indicted during the July Term 2019 of the Towns County Grand Jury:

Steven Charles Reeve, two counts child molestation; sexual exploitation of children.

Peter Paul Hohmann, rape.

James John Falvo, aggravated assault; aggravated battery.

Vladimir Sanaev, two counts obstruction of an officer.

Warren Keith Hedden, aggravated assault on a peace officer; possession of a firearm

during the commission of a felony; pointing a gun or pistol at another; five counts possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Gregory Wayne Israel, terroristic threats (felony); terroristic threats (misdemeanor); disorderly conduct.

Peter Crawford Tiger, entering an automobile.

Wesley Austin Jones, making a false statement; driving under the influence (less safe) (alcohol); failure to maintain lane.

Dewey Woodrow Carver, three counts sale of

methamphetamine.

Daniel Scott Carver, three counts sale of methamphetamine; possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects; speeding.

David Lamar Lovell Sr., two counts possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

James Paul Weaver, sale of methamphetamine; illegal use of a communication facility; possession of methamphetamine; recidivist (aggravated stalking, aggravated assault, possession of a firearm by a convicted

felon).

Bobbie Leann Saxon, possession of methamphetamine.

Travis Edward Brown, possession of methamphetamine; possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony; possession of a firearm by a convicted felon; recidivist (five counts breaking and entering, two counts possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, two counts second degree burglary).

Cristin Elise Stinchcomb, possession of See Indictments, Page 6A

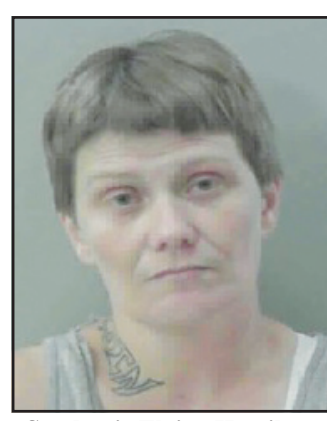
Sheriff's Office finds fugitive hiding in Hiwassee home

News Special
Towns County Herald

The Towns County Sheriff's Office received information on July 9 that a subject with warrants for multiple surmounting law enforcement agencies was hiding out in Towns County.

Acting on the information received, deputies searched a Hiwassee home and located the fugitive hiding in a closet within the residence.

The female suspect was See Hamilton, Page 8A



Stephanie Elaine Hamilton

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