

# Howard and Townsend speak to Rotary Club

The Lake Chatuge/Hiawasse Rotary Club held its weekly meeting on Tuesday, August 4th and enjoyed a presentation from two representatives of Hamilton Gardens, Executive Director Grace Howard and President of the Board Carol Townsend.

Ms. Howard explained how the gardens first opened in 1981 with a sizable donation of rhododendrons and native azaleas from the collection of Hazel and Fred Hamilton. The Gardens are located on property granted in perpetuity to Towns County for the purpose of establishing a county park. In February, 2016 management and operations of the Gardens was assumed by the nonprofit, Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge, Inc.

In January of 2019, being mindful of a primary goal to “restore, preserve, and enhance” the Gardens, the Strategic Plan for the Gardens was completed, identifying five key strategies: 1) Guarantee Hamilton Gardens for future generations, 2) Foster partnerships and community commitment, 3) Create environmental and educational programs, 4) Develop Hamilton Gardens as a year-round destination, and 5)



(L-R): Grace Howard and Carol Townsend

Establish Hamilton Gardens as a fiscally sustainable organization.

Solid progress has been made on all of these goals, but Ms. Howard stressed that the Gardens are funded almost entirely by contributions from individuals, businesses, and other organizations, and fundraising and sponsorships remain critical to the future of the gardens.

Ms. Townsend then dis-

cussed several projects, both underway and planned, to continue to improve the Hamilton Gardens experience, including the completion of a new wilderness trail in conjunction with Mile High Hikers, an improvement of the grassy area beneath the Paris pavilion, sponsored by Ms. Peggy West, a new entry bed to the Gardens, sponsored by the Lake Chatuge/Hiawasse Rotary Club, and a new spiral herb garden. She also discussed developing plans to partner with neighboring greenhouses to be able to expand plant sales to seasons other than the spring. She reviewed upcoming lectures and outdoor musical events at the gardens, which are routinely listed on the web site, hamiltongardens.org.

Local Rotary President John Scott expressed the club’s appreciation for not just the enlightening presentation, but also for continued use of Hamilton Gardens’ Paris Pavilion, a wonderful covered outdoor site for Rotary’s weekly meetings during the pandemic. In other business, Mr. Scott officially kicked off the sale of tickets by Rotarians to the annual Reverse Auction event, to be held virtually this year on November 7th on both Facebook Live and Zoom.

Lake Chatuge/Hiawasse Rotary is one of more than 35,000 Rotary Clubs around the world, with more than 1.2 million members. Locally, Rotary financially supports many local organizations and engages in service projects throughout the year for the benefit of the community.



**Meet Me  
at  
The Market**  
**Mickey Cummings  
& Kristy Peney**

This week we expect to have the following items at the Union County Farmers Market: yellow squash, cucumbers, zucchini, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet corn, Bell pepper, poblano pepper, jalapeno pepper, cubanelle pepper, Green beans, okra, field peas, potato (red, gold and white skinned), lettuce, apples, blueberries, and muscadines. Also, there are many varied crafts as well as nursery plants and baked goods.

This past week we visited 7 M Farms and found many fields of produce, but, the most interesting aspect of 7 M is the green house operation. In their green houses we found tomatoes and cucumbers that are expected to produce a crop until sometime

around Christmas. The crops are special varieties which are suited to green house production and will continue to produce until late in the year. Their production methods are quite fascinating. So, stop and meet the folks from 7 M Farmers in Building A, stalls 11, 13, and 15.

Also, we wanted to give everyone a heads up regarding our Tractor Parade. In an effort to keep the public safe during these troubling times the Market will cancel our annual Tractor Parade scheduled for Labor Day weekend. We hate to cancel this event. However, the event draws to many people many of which are elderly. So, let us pray for a speedy end to this virus and a return to normal conditions. NT(Aug12.29)CA

# Hiawasse Council...from Page 1A

a vaccine first quarter of 2021.

“They’re making big progress, but even by the time they get it produced, approved and distributed – first quarter of 2021.”

Towns County recently passed the 1-percent rate of local infection, meaning that 1 out of every 100 residents had tested positive for COVID-19. By press time, only one local person was recorded as having died from COVID-19, a 53-year-old woman with underlying health conditions.

Also Aug. 4, council members approved a rather sizable intake repair of \$239,274 at the Water Treatment Plant.

“What they have to do is bring in a barge big enough to put a crane on to then lift up that whole intake 12 feet and replace/fix the bottom of it,” Ordiales said. “The replacing and the fixing is only \$10,000 – the barge is \$229,000.”

Added Ordiales, “We’ve been working on this for a month. We can’t find anybody who does this type of work. And the reason we were able to do it kind of quick is, they’re building a bridge in Gainesville. So, that barge and all of that equipment is already in Gainesville, and they can bring it up here.”

In other business, the council voted to extend the city’s sewer service moratorium for three months, and council



Al Fickle took the Ethics Board oath in the Aug. 4 Hiawasse City Council meeting, as administered by City Attorney Thomas Mitchell. Photo/Screenshot

members held a first reading of a measure to allow the council to streamline the process of adopting ordinances.

Such a measure would enable the council to conduct the business of the city faster by, on a case-by-case basis, holding first and second readings in a single meeting instead of weeks apart in separate meetings.

The city entertained such a measure last year, though there was some pushback at the time that doing so would limit the chance for public feedback.

As previously reported, the proposed ordinance is intended to expedite business that has been previously

discussed with the full knowledge of the public, requiring the entire council to be present and unanimous in consent to approve ordinances quickly.

Council members will review the ordinance for discussion in their next work session, with a second reading and adoption to potentially take place in the September regular meeting.

Ordiales announced that her appointee on the city’s Ethics Board, Susan Phillips, had moved, so she was appointing Al Fickle to fill that vacancy. He took the oath that evening as administered by City Attorney Thomas Mitchell.