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Enjoy music, pageant, parade & more at GA Mtn. Fair

From Staff Reports
Towns County Herald

Country Music fans rejoice, as chart-topping artists Mark Chesnutt and Tracy Byrd will be headlining this Saturday's musical offerings inside the Anderson Music Hall for the opening weekend of the 71st Annual Georgia Mountain Fair, to run Aug. 19-27.

For those who simply can't wait to get in on the excitement, early birds can attend the always popular carnival that kicks off the day before the Fair on Thursday, Aug. 18, with free admission to rides starting at 4 p.m.

Also on Thursday, the famous Miss Georgia Mountain Fair pageant will debut for its 2022 outing at 7 p.m. inside The Hall, featuring plenty of stunning local talent.

The Fair proper will run nine full days and two weekends

starting Friday, Aug. 19, with all the amazing family friendly activities residents and visitors have come to expect and enjoy over the last seven decades.

From first-rate musical performances to arts & crafts, unique attractions, and plenty of North Georgia Mountain history, the Fair will have it all for over a week of entertainment.

Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason is incredibly excited for what's in store, as the Fairgrounds continues to host community-driven events amid great weather and beautiful mountain views, with dozens of vendor booths and delicious food options at the Fair.

Plus, two brand new attractions are sure to wow crowds this go-round: a new daredevil show from Majestik Spectacular, and an amazing display called the Bananas Der-

by featuring monkeys riding dogs.

"Along with everything, something new we are having this year is the Majestik Spectacular that will have two shows Monday through Friday and three shows on Saturday and Sunday," Thomason said in the run-up to the Fair. "And we have a brand-new Ferris wheel coming."

"We hope everybody comes out to enjoy all of the entertainment and food, and the Pioneer Village will be hosting authentic mountain demonstrations and other exhibits. Jerry Taylor will be playing (antique reel) organs as well."

And folks will want to be sure to attend the historic Georgia Mountain Fair Parade that will be riding through Downtown Hiawassee on Saturday, Aug. 20, starting at 11 a.m., with \$10,000 in prize money available for winners of the an-

nual float design contest.

District 8 State Rep. Stan Gunter will serve as the Grand Marshal for this year's parade, which will augment the already electric atmosphere of the Fair coming to town.

"Last year, we had 33,000 people total come for all nine days, and we are certainly expecting to have more this year," Thomason said. "We want to keep bringing more events and people here to enjoy everything together."

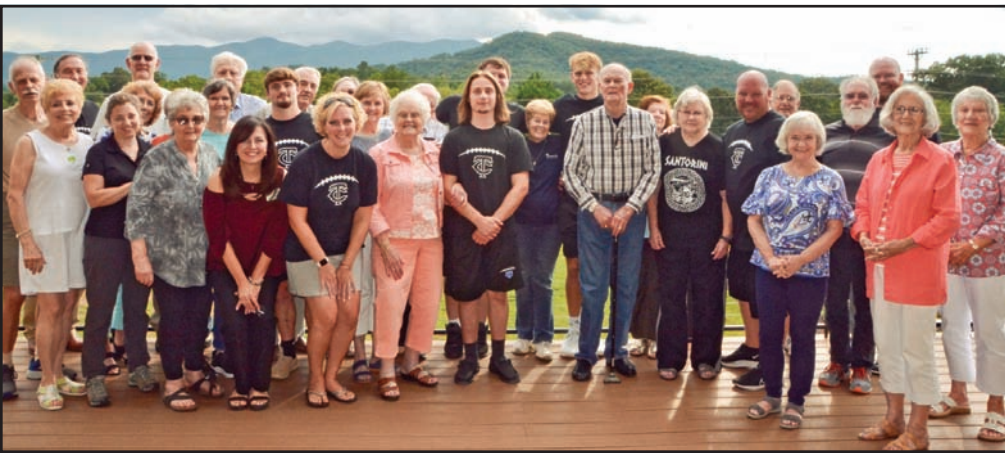
A vast array of musical talent will be available each of the nine days of the Fair, with performances by acts like Lorie Morgan, Wyatt Espalin and the Riverstones, The Inspirations, The Primitives, Neal McCoy, Country River Band and many, many more.

Attendance for the Fair is \$12 per person each day, with \$12 per person entering free. See GA Mtn. Fair, Page 6A



Country Music Star Mark Chesnutt will be performing at the Georgia Mountain Fair on Saturday, Aug. 20, as will fellow music icon Tracy Byrd. Both men have performed for decades and enjoyed numerous Billboard hits. Photo/Facebook

TCHS Football youths, local senior citizens break bread



TCHS Indians football players visited with residents of the Hiawassee Park Senior Living Community last week. Photo by Jeremy Foster

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

A joyous gathering took place on Monday, Aug. 8, as the Towns County High School Football Team Leadership Council joined with residents at the Hiawassee Park Senior Living Community for food

and fellowship. The event brought student-athletes together with community-minded seniors in a bridging of the generational divide and a showing of respect demonstrated by an invitation to attend the first Indians home game of the season on Friday, Aug. 26.

Members of the Football Leadership Council handed out special "Blackout"-themed Indians T-shirts to residents of the senior living community so they may support the players in style as they take on Lake Oconee Academy at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 26.

The T-shirts are available See Football Dinner, Page 6A

Union Co. Schools worker arrested in shooting incident

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Blairsville – Terror struck at the heart of Union County Schools the day before classes were set to begin last week when a disgruntled school employee shot up a maintenance vehicle parked at the Primary School on Thursday, Aug. 11.

The suspect quickly left school grounds and, following an extensive law enforcement search of the area, was apprehended less than an hour later.

School officials requested the Georgia Bureau of Investigation to handle the case, and a GBI representative stressed Thursday evening that there was no longer a threat to the public following the "targeted" incident.

Not much has been disclosed as the GBI has been investigating, but what information has been released should be reassuring to school staff,

parents, students and the community at large, as the incident was not the typical example of a tragic school shooting people dread seeing in the news.

What started as a potential active shooter threat ultimately ended in no one being physically injured, and the GBI has clarified that the "isolated shooting" was the result of a "specific unoccupied vehicle" – and not people – being targeted by gunfire in the school parking lot.

Dwight Anthony "Tony" Brown, 64, of Blairsville, was arrested Thursday afternoon and charged with three counts of aggravated assault in connection with the shooting at the Primary School, the GBI said.

Brown was a maintenance employee at the schools who had been working on campus that day prior to the shooting, and while an exact motive remains unclear at present, the GBI did say it was accurate to describe Brown as a "disgrun-



Dwight "Tony" Brown

bled employee."

Regarding his employment of 16 years at the schools, Brown's position was officially terminated in a called School Board meeting on Sunday, Aug. 14, and he is no longer allowed on school grounds. Further, he was denied bond last week and remained behind

See Shooting Incident, Page 6A

Historical Society learns local 'History in the Woods'

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Historical Society convened its regular monthly meeting at the Civic Center on Monday, Aug. 8, welcoming guest speakers Bruce Roberts and Sheldon Henderson for a slideshow presentation titled "History in the Woods."

Henderson, who worked 38 years in the U.S. Forest Service and has written a few local history books, and Roberts, who retired from aviation after 34 years, shared their passion for roaming the woods in search of historical evidence of man's mark on the land.

Together, they showcased many of their explorations using images of local sites such as Native American



Local outdoor enthusiasts and history buffs Bruce Roberts and Sheldon Henderson joined the Historical Society for their August meeting. Photo by Jeremy Foster

lithic workshops, early settler homesteads, Civilian Conservation Corps camps, and various found objects.

"My interest in finding historical items and landmarks of nature has been for well over

See Historical Society, Page 6A

City Council enacts new Home Rule, buys squad car



Hiawassee City Councilwomen Nancy Noblet, Amy Barrett, Patsy Owens and Anne Mitchell in their regular monthly meeting Aug. 2. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Hiawassee City Council officially enacted the new Home Rule Ordinance and approved the purchase of a new vehicle for the Hiawassee Po-

lice Department in the Aug. 2 regular city meeting.

Thanks to the new Home Rule, the council has the option of passing ordinances in one meeting rather than over two, which will come in handy for local initiatives that have broad

council and community support.

In short, as Mayor Liz Ordiales put it in the July 25 work session, the Home Rule Ordinance will "get things moving a little quicker." See Hiawassee Council, Page 6A

Young Harris talks sewer rehabilitation, economic development

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

In their Aug. 2 regular meeting, Young Harris City Council and Mayor Andrea Gibby discussed updates on the Timberline booster pump, sewer line rehabilitation and more, with an exciting economic development reveal toward the latter half of the meeting.

Leading things off, City Finance Officer Ana Hess offered a progress report on her project of updating and completing the city's most recent monetary records, which has been made challenging in recent years given Young Har-

ris' issues retaining long-term financial workers.

"Our system is a little cumbersome – we have to actually key in several things and click a bunch of accounts to get everything updated – so, 2022 is all updated in the system," Hess said, noting that this will streamline the 2023 budgeting process.

Councilman Steve Clark brought blueprints to talk about another problem needing to be addressed in the city's pursuit to repair and replace sewer lines, highlighting a faulty manhole on Maple Street near Young Harris College that has experienced backups nearly tri-

monthly. "If you ask me to prioritize its need of being fixed, it's probably the highest priority we have," stated Clark, elaborating that the line also needed to be rerouted due to its close proximity to a tree planted on college grounds.

The roots of this tree, which is too large to move, have grown into the manhole, resulting in stop-ups that must be pumped regularly.

"If you ask me what the priority is (regarding) flow rate and what it serves, it's probably at the bottom of our list; it doesn't serve very much," Clark said, explaining another side of the issue.

See Young Harris Council, Page 6A



Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby, City Attorney Marvin Harkins, and Financial Officer Ana Hess in their Aug. 2 regular city meeting. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

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FOOTBALL
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Grand Jury Indictments

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