

Towns County Herald

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TCMS shines with stellar Milestones test results

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Middle School came out on top for another year running with its 2022-23 End of Grade Georgia Milestones Test results.

Milestones results were released recently, and among the 14-county Pioneer RESA, the Middle School placed amid the Top Three in 15 of 16 testing categories. Of those placements, TCMS came in First Place in 13 categories, Second Place in one category, and Third Place in another.

The Middle School is also celebrating having earned Top 15-placements in 12 of 16 testing categories – for the entire state.

“This is not a new thing to TCMS,” Middle School Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs said. “In 2021, TCMS had 12 of 16 First Place finishes. In

2022, we had 13 of 16 Top Three places. And now in 2023, 15 of 16 Top Three places.”

There are eight Milestones tests in the Middle School each year, including English/Language Arts for sixth-eighth graders; Math for sixth-eighth graders; eighth-grade Physical Science; and eighth-grade Georgia History.

Each of the eight tests produces two categories of results, one looking at the percentage of students who pass the test, and the other demonstrating the percentage of students who scored proficient on the test, hence the 16 categories.

And middle school is where students receive more testing than at any other stage in their primary academic careers, according to Hobbs, with Towns County kids testing in the company of stiff competi-

See Test Results, Page 3A



The highly successful faculty and staff of Towns County Middle set a school record in Milestones testing performance for 2022-23.

Bradshaw honors Youngblood, Shook of Towns County Elections Board



Commissioner Bradshaw was pleased to honor late Board of Elections Members Barbara Shook and Loretta Youngblood in his September county meeting, pictured here with friends and loved ones of the women.

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw unveiled memorials for the late Board of Election members Loretta Youngblood and Barbara Shook in his Sept. 19 regular meeting at the Temporary Courthouse Offices.

In addition to her involvement on the Elections Board, Youngblood was an English teacher at Towns

County Schools, where she taught multiple generations of children before retiring. She died in March.

Shook also worked at Towns County Schools, serving as an instructional aide for 29 years. She retired in 2016 and passed away in 2017.

Friends and family of Youngblood and Shook approached the front of the meeting room that Tuesday to stand with Bradshaw and accept recognition for their loved ones’

years of service with the Elections Board and other county matters.

“When I think of both those names, I appreciate what they did on the Election Board,” said Bradshaw, pausing to hold back tears. “But I think more of them as friends because I’ve known them forever.”

Commemorative photos of Youngblood and Shook now hang in the Board of Elections Office to honor their memory and the many contributions the

pair made over the years.

In other business, Rachel Mathis and Cindy Levi of Avita Community Partners presented a slideshow about their organization. Avita specializes in helping residents recovering from addiction and mental health crises.

Levi walked the audience through the kind of people Avita assists and the patients the Gainesville Specialty Center sees. Avita offers programs

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Young Harris addresses resident’s traffic concerns



In the most recent Young Harris City Council meeting, Rosemary Royston of the Main Street Program spoke on the importance of “relationship building” in promoting the city.

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Sept. 12, the Young Harris City Council and Mayor Andrea Gibby discussed a full slate of business, including the installation of yield/stop signs on Brasstown Shadow Road and Mineral Springs Road, Timberline booster pump project updates, sewer line rehabilitation, and more.

Resident Robert Evans approached council members in the regular meeting with his concerns about unsafe traffic conditions where he lives on Mineral Springs Road.

“In the last year or so ... there’s more traffic,” Evans said, showing pictures of the road to give the council an idea of what he was dealing with, including shots from Mineral

See City of Young Harris, Page 3A

Game Warden Turner gives DNR law enforcement talk

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Mountain Movers and Shakers welcomed Georgia Department of Natural Resources Game Warden First Class Jeffery Turner for a talk on Sept. 15.

Turner, who grew up just outside of Helen, has been with DNR for 10 years. After working in Floyd County and around Lake Lanier, he was all too happy to return “to God’s country” – the North Georgia Mountains.

In his talk, he reported statistics and provided some basic information, relating, for example, that the DNR has five divisions: Coastal Resources; Environmental Protection; Law Enforcement; Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites; and Wildlife Resources.

See Game Warden Turner, Page 7A



Georgia Game Warden First Class Jeffery Turner spoke about Department of Natural Resources law enforcement in a recent civic meeting.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

Hiawassee Police announce Adventure Bags partnership

News Special
Towns County Herald

Earlier this month, the Hiawassee Police Department announced its partnership with Adventure Bags, Inc., using the tagline, “Creating security & comfort throughout Hiawassee, one bag at a time!”

A nonprofit venture, Adventure Bags provides backpacks filled with overnight essentials and comfort items to children who are in crisis. These bags are donated at no charge to agencies that serve children across the state.

Adventure Bags, Inc. backpacks not only comfort a child who is in a situation that is beyond their control but also represent a tool for the agencies, foster homes, shelters, and first responders who serve children and/or families, acting as a relationship builder and as-

See Adventure Bags, Page 6A



Hiawassee Police Chief Jeremy Parker received multiple “Adventure Bags” from the nonprofit of the same name inside City Hall recently.

Photo/Submitted

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FOOTBALL
9/29 7:30 PM

@ Greene Co.

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Test Results...from Page 1A

tion here in the North Georgia Mountains.

“As far as the whole state goes, Pioneer RESA ... (excels) compared to other districts, so it’s not like we are competing against districts that don’t perform well,” Hobbs said, adding that some of their scores surpassed those of other counties by anywhere between 7 and 20 percentage points.

Milestones testing is administered to all students in Georgia beginning in Grade 3. Students in Grade 8 experience especially rigorous testing, and for those in advanced placement classes, that includes high school-level tests.

“Some of our students test for six days solid,” Hobbs said, describing the process as “brutal.” And while she does not necessarily agree with the extreme, state-required standardized testing, she is no less impressed – and exceedingly proud – of her students.

That pride extends to her TCMS teachers, and for good reason. Because of the school’s small size, most of the teachers are running “solo,” meaning that they are the only ones teaching any given subject per grade level. As Hobbs puts it, the “spotlight” immediately lands on them when test scores come back at the end of each year.

“Every teacher who gave a tested subject placed first in our RESA, which is unheard of,” Hobbs said, offering a special shout-out to Gina Chambers, who has placed first in English 11 times since 2015.

Moving forward, it will be hard to improve after earning Top Three in 15 of 16 categories, but there’s no reason why TCMS students and teachers can’t achieve top honors in all 16 categories. After all, they must be doing something right to consistently come out on top.

“I think I have the right staff, the right group of teachers, and we have exceptional students,” said Hobbs, who is in her 33rd year in education, having served locally as TCES Assistant Principal for one year, TCHS Principal for four years, and being in her fifth year as TCMS Principal.

Added Hobbs, “We have the best students, parents and dedicated teachers in the state right here in Towns County. We thank them for helping TCMS to excel.”

Indeed, Towns County Middle has truly embodied the school motto of “One Family, One Tribe.”

Pioneer RESA rankings for 2022-23 Milestones testing were as follows:

Gina Chambers and Rachael Queen, 6th Grade ELA: 1st in % Passing; 1st in % Proficient; 3rd in the State.

Kerry Rogers and Rachael Queen, 6th Grade Math: 1st in % Passing; 1st in % Proficient; Tied First Place in the State.

Kerri Abernathy and Rachael Queen, 7th Grade ELA: 1st in % Passing; 2nd in % Proficient.

Jonny Eyrich and Rachael Queen, 7th Grade Math: 1st in % Passing; 12th in the State.

Lesia Johnson and Lauren Rogers, 8th Grade ELA: 1st in % Passing; 1st in % Proficient; 4th Place in the State.

Averi Rountree and Lauren Rogers, 8th Grade Math: 1st in % Passing; 1st in % Proficient; 6th Place in the State.

Heather Nichols, 8th Grade Physical Science: 1st in % Passing; 1st in % Proficient; 8th Place in the State.

Chris Vardo, 8th Grade Georgia History: 1st in % Passing; 3rd in % Proficient; 12th in the State.

Go Indians!

1953 Class of Towns County High School 70th Reunion



(L-R) front: Bettye Kimsey Parker, Joyce Kelley Baker, ALice Hicks Cunningham, Buford Burch; back: Mike Hedden, Bill Justice, Noel Barnard, Norma Jean Rogers Tucker, Ruby Wheeler Abernathy

The 1953 class of Towns County High School met at Daniels Steakhouse on September 16, 2023, which marked our 70th anniversary. 52 members graduated in 1953 with 20 members still living. 9 members were present with 6 guests. A good time was had by all.

City of Young Harris...from Page 1A

Springs Road. He attributes the spike in activity to more people moving into the area.

It doesn’t help, Evans said, that the view coming out of the driveway can be obscured by woods and inclines, and he realizes that it’s just as difficult for drivers to see him exiting.

In fact, Evans said there have been three instances between himself and his wife where, if they hadn’t slammed on the brakes, they may have suffered collisions.

Ultimately, the mayor and council agreed with the idea, and City Attorney Marvin Harkins confirmed that the city could go through with a plan to put a yield sign on Brasstown Shadow Road and a stop sign on Mineral Springs.

The council ratified an invoice for \$5,332.18 to repair the fluid pump in the Sewer Plant; the fix occurred prior to expenditure approval because the repair work was an emer-

gency. “And because it was an emergency ... I told them to go ahead and fix it because we don’t want a sewer problem in the creek,” Gibby said.

The council accepted a resolution regarding the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds, which Gibby relayed needed to be obligated before 2024 and spent before 2026. The \$620,278 in federal ARPA funds will go toward “infrastructure improvements.”

Councilman Steve Clark offered an update on the Timberline booster pump project, which is ready to be bid for construction.

“The goal is to put this out to bid over the next 10 days, have the month of October to have it bid, (and) have the bids in here the Friday before our November meeting,” Clark said of the long-running project.

Next, the council accepted bids for two different sewer

lines slated for rehabilitation, and work for manhole projects is expected to be bid “the Friday before the November meeting,” confirmed Clark.

Main Street Program Director Rosemary Royston will be gathering feedback from community members to further develop Downtown Young Harris. It’s worth noting that every third Tuesday, Royston holds Main Street meetings at City Hall at 6:30 p.m.

Seeking ideas, Royston has traveled to neighboring cities to learn how they built up their own community programs. Hayesville, Blairsville and Hiawassee have been “super inspirational,” and she has met with chamber representatives like Towns County’s very own Julie Payne.

“Really, these first seven months have been relationship building,” Royston said of the program, suggesting that one of the best things to do

for building business is to act as “cheerleaders” for the city, showing other folks why they should visit Young Harris.

The Young Harris City Council meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. inside City Hall located at 50 Irene Berry Drive, barring delays or rescheduling for holidays. These meetings are open to the public, and the community is encouraged to attend.

Food Pantry Food Distribution

The Food Pantry hours are Monday – Thursday 9 AM– 12 PM with the exception of distribution day. The Distribution is every other Wednesday 11 AM – 2 PM.

Any questions or concerns, please contact Richard Thomas at towns.pantry@ndocsbg.org or (706) 896-4783.



VFW Fish Fry

Join us for the last two VFW Fish Fry of the season! Friday, October 13, 4:30-7 PM. and Friday, October 27, 4:30-7 PM.

VFW Post 7807 Hiawassee, GA. \$12 includes: fish, coleslaw, hush puppies, beans, fries and drink. No tip and not tax. We hope to see you there.

VFW Bingo

The VFW Post 7807 in Hiawassee has Bingo every Sunday afternoon at 2:30 PM. Doors open at 1:30 PM.

We are located on Highway 288, Sunnyside Road, Hiawassee, Ga. Food and drinks will be available. Come join us and have fun! Starting January 16. For more info call 706 896-8387.

County Meeting...from Page 1A

and services for adults with developmental and behavioral disorders, including counseling, occupational and housing support, crisis support and more.

For folks struggling with affording mental health medications, getting help from Avita could benefit them greatly if they don't have insurance or their plan won't cover the cost. The standard charge for every prescription through the Gainesville-based pharmacy is \$4.50.

Avita's Gainesville Specialty Center opened its doors in 2021 and features around-the-clock surveillance for patients who pose a threat to themselves and others.

Not only that, but mothers struggling with addiction can come to the center to detox over the span of six months to a year – and bring their babies with them. Patients can arrive as walk-ins or be referred there from the Emergency Room.

Following complaints regarding the parrot's-feather weed overwhelming Lake Chatuge, Bradshaw has been speaking with officials from the Tennessee Valley Authority.

In the next couple of weeks, TVA will be sending airboats out to survey the environment. The subsequent environmental review will run into next year, but that means a plan can be formulated.

Lakegoers should take caution not to drive boats through parrot's feather, as boat motors, in addition to becoming clogged, can chop up the weeds and cause them to spread even



TCSO Chief Deputy Gene Moss offered a Sheriff's Office update in the Sept. 19 commission meeting.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

farther, as little pieces set adrift can take root elsewhere.

"They don't know right now whether it'll be treated with chemicals (or) carp – fish that eat weeds; they mentioned a lot of different things," Bradshaw said. "I feel like it will be addressed, but (working with) any government entity, it takes a little time."

On that note, Bradshaw wanted to inform the public that the U.S. Department of Agriculture will be dropping oral rabies vaccinations, otherwise known as ORV baits, from airplanes again soon.

Last year, concerned residents called in about the plane sightings. This year, the baits will be dropped starting Oct. 3 and the subsequent week.

Towns County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Gene Moss spoke briefly about the new "state-of-the-art" cameras that will be equipped on jailers and installed in police cars to update safety.

"We think that it will help us with some behavioral problems because (inmates) know they're going to be recorded," Moss said. "And I think it's a safety thing for them as well."

Adventure Bags...from Page 1A

sisting them as they navigate through the first 24 to 48 hours of displacement.

Through the organization's "Help Us Help Heroes Program," the nonprofit has been able to provide over 800 Adventure Bags to first responders across the state, enabling them to offer security and comfort to the children in their community during crisis situations.

"With these bags, it is our desire that no child be without something that they can call their own and feel a sense of security and comfort during traumatic situations," said Adventure Bags Executive Director Misty Manus.

Information about this

organization and these bags can be found at www.adventurebags.org, or people can follow the nonprofit on Facebook at Adventure Bags.

Adventure Bags, Inc was

founded in October of 2011 and has since served over 45,000 children while partnering with more than 400 agencies in all 159 counties in the state of Georgia.

The Georgia Mountain Writers Club September Meeting



(L-R) front: Brenda Kay Ledford, Franklin Boulineau, Mary Cone; middle: Pat Miner, Nancy Smith, Idell Shook, Connie Rosenberry; back: Alan Cone, Jim Miner, Jackie Volk, James F. Davis, Jean Nethery, David White

The Georgia Mountain Writers Club met on September 6, to share memories, and enjoy the fictional creations of its members. Suggested topics were the intriguing "Missing Without a Trace," "Family Secrets," and "The Power of Positive Thinking."

Fred Teagle started us off with a humorous and observant look at mountain life from the perspective of a former "flatlander" in "Life in 3 Dimension." After 300 years of his family being coastal people, Fred moved to the mountains and found neighbors houses weren't just to the left and right of you, but above and below you. Fred has also decided "driving these hills with their narrow winding roads and no shoulders should be considered an athletic event." However the myriad of colors and vistas make it all worth it.

Jim Miner shared a winter memory in "The Mailbox vs. the Snowplow." After a mailbox was destroyed by a plow, the neighbors constructed one of steel and concrete that sent the snowplow spinning on the icy road. The plow gave the mailbox wide berth from then on.

Pat Miner reminisced about "The Chickens in My Life" and how her relationship to the egg bearers and the feisty rooster changed from when she was a child to the present.

Rick Sapp has been absent for a few months, and he shared the results of his work; a client asked him to write her story. He passed a couple of copies of the finished project around.

Nancy Smith wrote the humorous account of the years she spent dating, (or capturing), her husband. It started with a dance class. It must have been successful. Today there is a dance floor in their house.

Dave White regaled us

with more tales of his high-functioning autistic son in "Senior Year." Jordan started his senior year in high school by cleverly figuring out how to print an essay without any paper.

Jean Nethery shared a segment of the book she is working on for her family. This was the continuing saga of buying and renovating an 1823 house while raising four children and teaching 4-H classes.

Idell Shook read "Sisters," an account of her four sisters meeting for a day at the beach. The vastness of the ocean at first made her feel insignificant until she recognized God's hand at work, and that even she had a place in it.

Connie Rosenberry used the prompt, "Missing Without a Trace," in "The Mystery of the Disappearing Ring." After class one day, she can't find her boyfriend's class ring which has been sized to fit her hand using yards of yarn wrapped around the band. Although she searches everywhere, it is never found. 10 months later it mysteriously reappears in a purse she had carried that day and emptied several times in an effort to find it.

Using the prompt "Family Secrets," Brenda Kay Ledford read her story about her granny. She hid it well and didn't think anyone knew she dipped Dental's Scotch snuff, but the family was wise to her ways.

In Alan Cone's "Family Matters," a psychiatrist takes extreme measures to care for his mentally unhinged son. But who is the crazy one?

James F. Davis combined two prompts in his story about a family member. After his great-great-grandfather lost his beloved wife, he took to drink. His married housekeeper moved in and straightened him out in more ways than one, producing two chil-

dren. The lady and the children disappeared without a trace when the heir to the estate took over.

Jackie Volk presented a different approach to "The Power of Positive Thinking," in "Weirdly Positive." When a young woman's job hunt through networking is unsuccessful, she decides to use her positive thinking skills to start a new business as a wedding planner. It does not go well until she reads a Dr. Seuss quote about the weirdness of love. Accepting the weirdness of her clients leads to a successful business and happy life.

Franklin Boulineau recalled that as a boy he reacted with anger at himself in unfavorable incidents. As he taught himself to accept situations, "it could have been worse," and later "find the positive," his self-image and happiness were greatly improved.

Mary Cone's "What a Day," is a look into a young mother's life. Jill is suffering through a horrible day. When her husband brings home roses to cheer her, he unwittingly sets into motion a chain reaction of events that unleash ear-splitting chaos on the household. In the end, rather than cry, they collapse in laughter.

Our next meeting will be held at the North Georgia Technical College on October 4 at 10:00 AM. Suggested writing prompts are: "If I'd only known then what I know now," "Gallows Humor" for those of you with a dark side, or "From the Garbage Collector's Perspective." As you can see from the stories just recounted, writers are welcome to share whatever they are working on. All readings should be held to 5 minutes or less, so all have time to read. Please bring a brief (2-3 sentences) summary of your story. All inquiries may be directed to connie.rosenberry3@gmail.com. NT(Sep27,Z14)CA

Ladies Night Out: Dinner and Annual Quarter Auction!

You and your friends are invited Thursday, October 19, 2023

from 6-8 p.m. to the Banquet Room of the Union County Community Center overlooking the beautiful mountains and Butternut Creek Golf Course.

The evening begins with a scrumptious dinner of goat cheese and spinach stuffed chicken breast, fresh tomato basil sauce, wild rice, steamed broccoli, your choice of apple pie or chocolate mousse, tea/coffee/water.

Then the Quarter Auction fun begins! At press time some of the items up for auction include gifts or gift certificates generously donated by area businesses and individuals: Beautiful Things, Beauty Barn Blue Ridge, Cabin Coffee, Crooked Creek Farms/Foxfire Blends Bath & Body, Eller's Tires Hiawassee, Habitat ReStore, Humane Society Mountain Shelter Thrift Store, The Josephine Boutique, Kelli's Creations, Marina Station Hiawassee, Pampered Chef/Director Emily Biagianti, Paris Nails, Relax Nail Salon & Spa, S & S Smoothies & Supplements, Cyndi Tomlinson/Chocolate Lover's Basket, Fae Herd/ hand sewn quilted Christmas table runner, Haircut by Maxine, Jocelyn Bowers/ Czech crystal handmade bracelet, Resin craft/ Nancy Ellingsworth. More to come!

Quarter Auctions are a blast so be sure to bring lots of quarters. At check-in, each guest will receive a numbered paddle and list of auction items. Items will be displayed so you can plan your bidding strategy in advance. Each item will be presented, described, and the required number of quarters needed to bid (1 to a maximum of 8). If you are bidding on an item, place the required number of quarters in the bin provided at each table and raise your numbered paddle. Keep your PADDLE UP until the winning paddle number is drawn. If the person with the winning number did not bid on the item, then another number is drawn until there is a winner. As with last year's Ladies Night Out Quarter Auction, there is much fun and excitement to be enjoyed so invite a friend, she'll be glad you did!

Did you grow up with that Cinderella story? Sit back and hear Linda Cloer's inspir-



Linda Cloer

ing version, "Found Life's Answers After The Glass Slipper Shattered." Linda's focus is to challenge women of all ages to become everything they can be. Traveling by land, air and sea, Linda is a speaker for women's groups around the world. Linda, among other endeavors, is a former runway

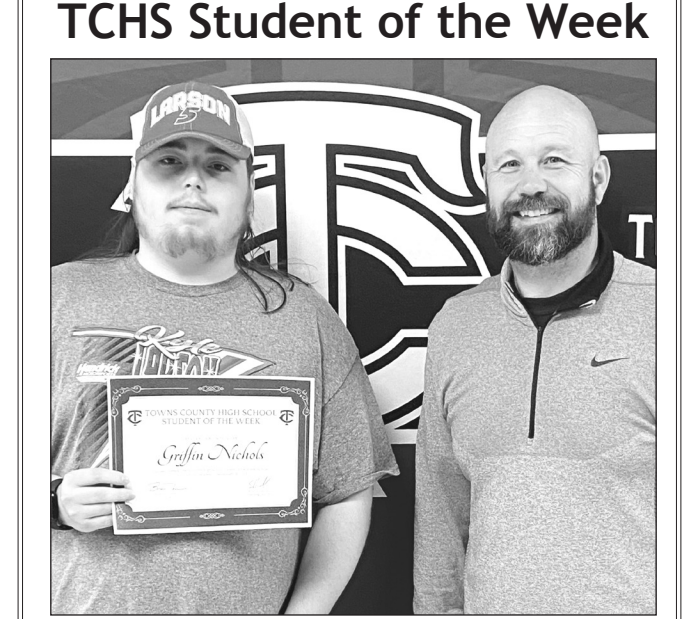
model, a wife, mother, and a VERY proud grandmother.

Please plan to share this special evening with us! The cost is \$25 with pre-paid reservations required by Tuesday, October 10. Mail your check made payable to TCWC, to Judy Teague, 3245 Mulky Gap Road, Blairsville, 30512. If you are paying for other guests, please include their names. To reserve your place contact: Jocelyn at jowabow@aol.com, or phone Jane at 706-838-5599 or text Jane at 706-633-7868.

For more than 35 years, the Tri-County Women's Connection in Blairsville has planned and hosted a variety of events meeting women where they are, as they are. Auction proceeds will benefit TCWC locally and Stonecroft a 501(c)(3) for women for 85 years.

We look forward to connecting with you! NT(Sep27,Z12)CA

TCHS Student of the Week



Griffin Nichols and Brian Hunnicutt

The TCHS Student of the Week is junior Griffin Nichols. Social studies teacher and basketball coach Brian Hunnicutt states: "Griffin shows excellence in U.S. History through his excellent test scores and contributions to class discussions. Griffin is very respectful to staff and peers in the classroom. He has been exemplary in his time in U.S. History.

Griffin's favorite subject in school is history as it comes naturally to him as his family also enjoys learning and discussing history. Griffin is not sure of his plans after graduation, but whatever life takes him, he will surely be successful. Out of all the TRIBE components, he believes that he embodies respect the most with his relationships with peers and teachers. One of his proudest accomplishments was receiving this award.

38th Annual National Mounted Police Colloquium



County Mounties

Lawrence Beal of Hayesville, NC, Director of the County Mounties, a 501(C)3 non-profit mounted search and rescue group, participated along with 11 members from Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama at the 38th Annual National Mounted Police Colloquium September 11-15.

The Lexington, KY Colloquium consists of two days of training in equitation, obstacles, crowd control, jumping team work and other horsemanship skills.

There were close to 150 riders from all over the US and Canada. Approximately 40 riders and trainers from seven

sectors of the US Border Patrol participated.

Lawrence Beal won first place in gaited equitation, third place in individual obstacles and second place in combined equitation and obstacles. Ashley Manning of the E. Tennessee Unit won seventh place in uniform class. NT(Sep27,Z4)CA

Game Warden Turner ...from Page 1A

Georgia DNR Headquarters is in Social Circle, and there are six different regional offices. Towns and Union counties are part of Region 2, with the local area being managed out of Gainesville.

Turner said that while many people realize game wardens deal with law enforcement, not many know the fine details. Fishing, boating and environmental laws are the most commonly cited, but it's not unheard of for some game wardens to encounter criminal and traffic cases.

"Our main primary goal is the wildlife, fishing, boating and environmental side of it," Turner said. "The mission of our division is to conserve our natural resources and to protect the people we serve."

According to 2021 statistics, the catches of 1.28 million anglers were checked, 707,000 hunters were docu-

mented in Georgia, and 333 boats were registered.

"That's a lot of people for an agency that only has ... 180 officers on the ground that work outfield every day," Turner said, explaining that the statement becomes even more impressive considering the exact numbers of those statistics "grow every year by a lot."

The 37 million acres patrolled by Georgia's game wardens include 63 state parks and historic sites, 132 wildlife management areas and 11 public fishing locations. Furthermore, it's up to these wardens to manage 16,000 miles of river waterways and 100 linear miles of coastline.

Part of that duty includes investigating water-based accidents. Boating collisions are to wardens what car wrecks are to state troopers. Recovering drowning victims also falls to game wardens, and special side-scan sonar and explorato-

ry, deep-diving cameras help them find closure for families.

Seven K-9 units operate statewide for the entire DNR and have helped solve everything from murders to poaching with specialized training meant to identify "unnatural scents," or anything that stands out from an area.

It was no exaggeration that Turner referred to his department as "wearing many hats" for the good of Georgia's wild spaces and the creatures and people who enjoy them.

As soon as he allowed for questions, several hands came up, and many attendees were keen to thank him for the incredible job he and his co-workers do.

The Movers and Shakers meet every Friday at 8 a.m. at the Sundance Grill in Hiawassee, almost always featuring a guest speaker from the area. The public is invited and encouraged to attend.

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