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Veterans Day Service honors military women

By Shelly Knight
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Local patriots gathered at Towns County Veterans Park on Monday, Nov. 11, to honor all veterans while giving female veterans distinctive recognition.

In a poignant and powerful ceremony that was well attended by the public, local Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion commanders thanked their fellow veterans for their service and sacrifice.

American Legion Post 23 Cmdr. Mel Halfon opened the ceremony by noting how veterans "put their lives on the line every day for our freedom."

"We want to honor you here today," Halfon said. "I'm excited about today. It gives us

a chance to get our veterans together and thank them, and if it wasn't for our veterans, we wouldn't have the freedom that we enjoy."

Towns County High School Band Director Tim Skinner led the band in all five of the service ballad hymns as veterans of each branch stood when they heard their song playing. The students performed beautifully for the crowd, even though school was not in session for the holiday.

Halfon then turned to the dedication of the new Female Veterans Monument in the park, a gorgeous three-sided sculpture made of black marble that weighs approximately 8,000 pounds.

"Many of you know Luin Mitchell, who lived



Female veterans took the spotlight at this year's Veterans Day Service with the dedication of a new local monument in their honor. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Fighter pilot veteran enthralled meeting guests

By Shelly Knight
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Mountain Movers & Shakers welcomed back former Fighter Pilot Johnny Morris on Friday, Nov. 15. Hollywood has nothing on Morris; no fictional movie or cinematography can communicate the instantaneous decision-making, the resilience and the bravery of such heroes.

A Vietnam Veteran, Morris spoke with the Movers & Shakers in August about his time as an F-4 Phantom fighter pilot aboard the USS America aircraft carrier. And he returned last week, by popular demand, to provide more of this tale.

As he shared his experiences, Morris put the audience in the cockpit of his fighter jet. One felt the gravitational force

as the jet climbed into the atmosphere at 600 miles per hour. He compared it to sitting on a rocket, as the F4 climbs at a rate of 41,000 feet per minute from ground level.

"The majority of the missions that we were required to fly from U.S. carriers in Vietnam were flown in the northern sector," Morris said. "There were no friendlies from the Chinese border to the DMZ about 200 miles south of China. Zero people down there liked us."

"They were all Chinese, Russian or North Vietnamese, and if you went down on the ground there, they didn't treat you very nicely. You would end up shot or killed, especially if you couldn't walk."

"Many of my friends lived in what we affectionately called the 'Hanoi Hilton,'

which was the largest prison in North Vietnam. Many, many Navy and Air Force pilots ended up there because they ended up losing their airplane due to fighter aircraft or ground fire shooting them down.

"We were flying missions in Vietnam knowing full well that we were fighting the Russians. The Vietnamese didn't have any airplanes. They had very few pilots. They didn't have any airports until the Russians came in and built them one. They flew MIGs. They were Russian built, very good fighter aircraft, and that is all we ever saw there."

"Many times, we would be called by our air wing commander to go south of the DMZ to support the U.S. Army or the U.S. Marine Corps because they were bogged down and under siege by ground forces.

They would call our ships, and we would send F-4s and A-6s to help them.

"I remember Khe Sanh. It was an encampment of our military, and the Chinese and Russians had surrounded that mountain and were pounding them away. They couldn't get off of the mountain, and they couldn't defend themselves."

"We got called in, and two of us had what is referred to as CBU bombs. They were 30-foot long canisters filled with bomblets that were like hand grenades. When we dropped those things, it would cover like 20 miles, and it looked like little donuts exploding. It really shut down a ground emplacement if they were shooting at you."

"When we first entered combat, we lost eight pilots



At the Movers & Shakers meeting Friday, guest speaker Johnny Morris showed off his Quilt of Valor, which he received as thanks for his meritorious service in combat as a fighter pilot. Photo by Shelly Knight

Council approves contracts, hears public comments



Hiawassee City Councilwomen Nancy Noblet, Amy Barrett and Patsy Owens in their Nov. 12 regular meeting. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Hiawassee City Council held three meetings earlier this month: a Nov. 7, called meeting to approve \$8,662.44 in repairs to a Kubota trackhoe; a Nov. 7 work session to discuss business expected in the next regular meeting; and a Nov. 12 regular meeting to approve business items.

In the work session, the council discussed purchasing an aerator for the Wastewater Treatment Plant and ratifying a contract with the company 120Water for a line investigation - specifically for lead. Both items were approved Nov. 12.

As explained by City Clerk Bonnie Kendrick, a fed-

eral mandate has required that all connections to the city's waterline be documented, leading to questions about water quality of some customers.

"None of our system has lead, as nearly as we can tell," Kendrick said. "We know there's no lead in the system, but we have 452 customers who we did not know what was on their side of the meter."

"Every one of those customers has to get a letter stating that we don't know what's in the ground servicing your home."

Also Nov. 12, the council renewed the city's AirMed-Care contract for \$5,390 - the same price as last year - to cover medical helicopter expenses for city residents via Life Force choppers. This is distinct from Towns Coun-

ty Government's contract that covers similar services through Air Methods.

In other business, medical insurance for city employees was renewed with AETNA because "the increase is not ... statistically significant." For clarification, \$1,368.26 covers one employee per month, for an increase of about \$110.

Meanwhile, the Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia Interlocal Risk Management Agency has introduced a new program for first responders to help treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

"This is a program that's basically state-mandated," explained Acting Mayor Jay "Junior" Chastain.

Essentially, the protocol comes from House Bill 441. See City Council Meeting, Page 7

US Marine Corps celebrates 249th Birthday with patriots

News Special

BLAIRSVILLE - On Nov. 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress passed a resolution stating that "two Battalions of Marines be raised" for service as landing forces with the U.S. Fleet.

This resolution established the Continental Marines and marked the birth date of the United States Marine Corps.

On Friday, Nov. 8, members of the Marine Corps League's Unicoi Detachment 783 hosted the Marine Corps Ball where members gathered to celebrate the Corps' 249th Birthday. Also on hand were dignitaries, family members and friends.

The event was held in The View at Butternut Creek, in its main ballroom, and featured a delicious buffet complete with a prime rib carving station.

The evening's program included the Pledge of Allegiance, the Marine's Hymn, the Missing Man Table, Gen. LeJeune's Birthday Message, ceremonial cutting of the cake and a birthday message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Eric M. Smith.

Detachment 783's Commandant, Alton "Doc" Coleman, served as the evening's master of ceremonies.

After dinner, Coleman addressed the history of the Marine Corps and how it has

proven to be a formidable force since its inception 249 years ago, noting numerous battles in which the Corps had distinguished itself.

This was followed by an award ceremony. Recipients included Calvin "Gunny" Triplett, Distinguished Service Medal; Claudia Entwisle, Detachment Associate Member of the Year; and Ashford Todd, Detachment Marine of the Year.

A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to retired U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. David Haag for his volunteerism and leadership.

The evening culminated with continued camaraderie and dancing.



MCL 783 Commandant Alton "Doc" Coleman presented retired Lt. Col. David Haag with a Certificate of Appreciation at the Marine Corps Ball this month. Photo/Submitted

14 Pages

Vol. 94 No. 04

Lake Levels

Sheriff Henderson to Speak 11/22 See Page 2

See Page 2

Arrests - 2 Opinions - 4
Chamber - 3 Legals - 13
Church - 8 Obits - 9
Classifieds - 13 Sports - 10

Blue Ridge 1,670.05
Chatuge 1,918.96
Nottely 1,763.93

Towns Co. Digests/Millage Rates See Pages 5 & 11

Home Heating Help Information See Page 14



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United
Community

Movers & Shakers...from Page 1

and four airplanes in the first two weeks. That is when we figured out that we were really fighting the Russians. We were attempting to fight the way we had been trained to fight.

"The Phantom was designed to fire missiles straight ahead or with sidewinders, which were heat-seeking and designed to go up the tailpipe of the plane. That's all we had. We didn't have any guns.

"But the Russians with their fancy guns would get us engaged in what we called a tail chase, and the next thing you know, they are right up behind us shooting down a plane. The Phantom was fast, but it wouldn't turn.

"It was so big and bulky and had such power that if you tried to turn it, it would just start shuddering. When you got up to about 6 Gs, it just wouldn't turn. The Russian MIGs could pull 7 or 8 Gs, and they would do a barrel roll, come right up behind us and shoot the airplane down.

"Our commanding officer of the airwing called us in and said we had to develop a different strategy. Those of us who were flying missions were asked for input. We designed different tactics based on what we thought we could do with the Phantom.

"It would climb like a rocket, and you could come down just as fast. What we decided to do was test fighting with one of our airplanes acting as the enemy and fight vertically rather than horizontally as we'd been trained to do.

"We found that we could go up and down and the enemy could not chase us. They didn't have the power to chase us. So, any time we picked up another aircraft we had to decide within seconds what to do.

"You were doing 600 miles per hour, and he was probably doing the same thing. What's your closure rate? He's coming at you about 20 miles per minute. You've got to either outrun him or outshoot him, cause he's going to shoot at you, I guarantee it.

"We would roll over full power and start straight down 600 miles per hour. We would

get down to the bottom of the arc, pull the airplane around and start back up the hill, and he's still coming down at us.

"The radar man would lock on him, and we would fire the missile straight up at him and knock him out of the air. That was our new tactic, and I was a part of that. In a few weeks, our kill rate went up and the number of losses went down, all because we had to design new tactics in the heat of the battle.

"Our air wing commander wrote that up as a maneuver and called it Top Gun. It led to the creation of the Top Gun School, and I was a part of that."

Referencing a carrier tragedy that resulted in the deaths of more than a hundred sailors and aviators, Morris next relayed "the real story of the USS Forrestal because it's important for us to understand she played a big part in naval aviation."

"She was built and designed to be the first jet aircraft carrier," Morris continued. "It was the longest and heaviest ship in the U.S. Navy at the time. She weighed 70,000 tons, and that was before you put the airplanes on her.

"She carried a million gallons of black oil to run her. She had three 250,000-horsepower engines. She was 80 feet off of the water. She had angled decks and was the first carrier that could fire off four airplanes at one time.

"She had a lot of history behind her, and that history was tested on July 29, 1967. We lost a lot of brave people and a lot of airplanes that day. And it was not due to enemy fire or to Lt. Cmdr. John McCain. I can tell you the real story.

"Basically, we were getting ready to fly another alpha strike and had 24 armed planes lined up on the fan tail of the carrier getting refueled and ready to go. Our guns and weapons were pointed inside at each other. Each plane was loaded with 3,000 gallons of jet fuel, each one had hundreds of bombs. They were hot and ready to go.

"A pilot flipped a gen-

erator switch on so that everything would activate inside the aircraft. An errant circuit went down into the wing and found a rocket that did not have a safety pin in it. It fired that rocket, and it was pointed directly at an A-4 that was sitting beside John McCain's A-4.

"Lt. Cmdr. White's plane blew up, and that killed him; McCain's plane got hit, and it blew him overboard. Bombs started going off all over the ship. Within four minutes, 126 sailors and pilots were dead, and 27 airplanes were destroyed.

"Millions and millions of dollars' worth of airplanes were destroyed that day. The only reason that ship didn't go down was due to the brave pilots and crewmen who saved it and fought the fire.

"After the Forrestal, I was ordered to the USS America, and that's the ship I flew over 100 missions from. The last mission I flew from, it was Aug. 31, 1968."

In that last mission, Morris' aircraft was tagged by a Russian surface to air missile, or SAM.

"A SAM was about 60 feet long with a gigantic rocket motor on one end and a warhead on the other," Morris said. "They were radar controlled. Our aircraft could detect when they'd launch one, and we'd get warning signals.

"In the daytime, you could actually see it coming, a big telephone pole with the tail end on fire and a big bomb on the front of it. And it's got your name written on it. Our job, to save ourselves and our plane, was to wait for that thing to come at us as close as we could stand it and turn right into it.

"It had proximity fusing, and our job was to be within 75 to 100 feet of it and make that bomb go off. You've got to roll upside down and pull just as hard as you can. But it goes off as you go by, and many aircraft, eventually including mine, got hit in the belly.

"My Radar Officer and I were both injured. I spent over six months in the hospital. Many people ask me, 'Would you do it again?' And I say

absolutely. And every veteran I've ever spoken to answers that question the same way."

Morris then recognized his wife Brenda of 58 years for being his guiding light. Brenda Morris is a published author of the book entitled "All I Ever Wanted," which is the story of their lives together and contains many more of Johnny's stories.

When asked if he ever has nightmares about his terrifying experiences, Morris responded, "I break out in sweats at night sometimes."

"You never get over it," Morris said. "You just don't talk about it. I've shared things with you here today and the last time that I haven't talked about for years.

"And the reason is because you deserve to know you've got some very brave people that are volunteers that are doing this every day and night. I deeply respect that, and I deeply respect them. I know the odds."

There are about 7,000 naval aviators currently serving, and the Towns County Herald thanks them – and all members of the military, past and present – for their service.

Rotary Club of Lake Chatuge welcomed YHC Astronomy Instructor Lauren E. Albin



The Rotary Club of Lake Chatuge recently welcomed Lauren E. Albin, Director of the O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium and Instructor of Astronomy at Young Harris College. Since arriving at Young Harris College, Lauren has hosted numerous shows in the O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium and opened the college's observatory for YHC students, local school groups and members of the surrounding community.

Lauren teaches astronomy courses like "Introduction to the Solar System" and "Beyond the Solar System" for both YHC and Young Harris Early College students. Lauren Albin joined the YHC family in 2022. She specializes in telescopes, star lore, and poetry. She came to YHC from Fernbank Science Center in Atlanta, GA where she worked in the planetarium and observatory. She holds several graduate level degrees and is more enthusiastic about all things not found on our earth. She is also a published poet and translator of Korean poetry. Lauren spoke about some upcoming events sponsored by



Lauren E. Albin

the planetarium and provided the link for more information and tickets: www.yhc.edu/community/planetarium/.

Friday, November 22 at 7 PM: Did an Asteroid Really Kill the Dinosaurs? This show is a part of their kids & family series and explores fun questions such as did a space rock six miles wide slam into the Earth millions of years ago and wipe out a majority of all living things at that time, including the dinosaurs? And it explores this impact and other cosmic collisions that formed numerous craters on worlds like the Moon, Mars, and even

distant Pluto.

Friday, December 6 at 7 PM: Let it Snow! This family-friendly show with exciting visuals features a variety of holiday classics and includes a stunning multimedia finale by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. The merry soundtrack is visually enhanced with artistic animation and full-dome holiday scenery, making it a fun and entertaining experience for audiences of all ages.

Friday, Decemeber 6 at 8 PM: Season of Light! This perennial holiday favorite is a show about the coldest and darkest of seasons—a time which holds some of the warmest and brightest celebrations of the year. Narrated by NPR's Noah Adams, the show explores the traditions surrounding the world's most endearing holiday customs, all of which involve lighting up the winter season—from the burning Yule log to the lighting of luminarias, to sparkling Christmas tree lights and candles in windows. The program also explores possible astronomical explanations for the star that led the Wise Men to Bethlehem.

Come and celebrate the season through the wonder of the planetarium's star-filled sky.

City Council Meeting...from Page 1

which calls for the coverage of PTSD treatment for first responders. It includes a lump sum payment upon diagnosis and a monthly disability payout. In Hiawassee's case, that means a \$1,204 total yearly, billed in two installments.

Water Treatment Superintendent Andrew Sims gave

a work session update on the plant, revealing that the third filter was online and everything was running smoothly at 21 hours daily.

Hiawassee Police Chief Jeremy Parker shared in the work session that, following the "transitioning" of Cloud-Cop into JusticeONE, impor-

tant police records are on the line.

"We've made the decision to not transition into JusticeONE software," said Parker, noting that the customer service leaves much to be desired. Instead, a company called i3 Verticals comes highly recommended via the neighboring Blairsville Police Department.

"I got a good report with the chief over there. They went to JusticeONE, and now they are an i3 Verticals customer," Parker said before an i3 Verticals representative spoke with the council and answered questions over the phone during the work session.

During the subsequent regular meeting, the council agreed to a contract with i3 Verticals software, but a decision is pending when it comes to new hardware such as in-vehicle laptops and GPS monitors.

Economic Development Director Denise McKay offered an update, saying that the Paris Business Center has a new opening date projected around March 2025.

McKay also advised that anyone wanting to support Asheville neighbors impacted by Hurricane Helene in North Carolina could purchase a live tree and speak to Tyler Osborn to facilitate the delivery.

Public comment opened up toward the end of the work session and saw two residents sign up.

Regarding public comments by Acting Mayor Chastain at the Mountain Movers & Shakers meeting on Oct. 11, former Mayor Liz Ordiales said there was not a "critical misunderstanding" about the installation of the third filter at the Water Treatment Plant.

"When I first got involved in the Water Treatment Plant, I found it absurd to spend \$3 million to have a third filter that would just give maintenance to the other two filters, so we re-applied to the EPD, and they granted us permission to use all three filters at one time," said Ordiales without comment from the city.

Resident Noel Turner expressed displeasure with the city for deciding to remove stop signs at Harbor Road that were installed under the previous administration.

"It's insulting that none



Former mayor Ordiales gave comments in the Nov. 7 work session. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks. Turner, though Chastain and eral residents of Harbor Road were consulted prior to the Councilwoman Amy Barrett had asked the city to remove removal of the signs," said said after the meeting that sev- the stop signs.



Happy 90th Birthday Nana



Jo Kimsey "Nana"

We are blessed to celebrate the 90th birthday of Nova Jo Kimsey. Born November 19, 1934, she has lived her whole life here in Hiawassee. For 39 years, she ran Jo's Beauty Shop on the square, making countless friends and memories along the way.

Jo's family is her greatest joy; her daughter and son-in-law, Sovilla and Joey Hyatt, two granddaughters and their spouses, Jordan Hyatt and Kayla Clonts, and her great-grandchildren, Cleo Hyatt, Holden and Harbour Clonts. Jo also has a neighbor, Jamie Tallant who she considers family. Jamie and her family are wonderful to Jo and we are all thankful for them!

Jo's home has been a gathering place for countless family dinners, holiday celebrations and heartfelt conversations.

Her birthday party was attended by her family, and she is so grateful for each and every one of them.

We have been blessed to have her here with us for 90 years. Earth has been a better place because of her presence.

We asked her if there was any advice she'd like to give and it was, "work your fingers to the bone and behave yourself when you get home." And if you know Jo, you know what she means!

Citizens for a Better America Thursday, November 21st meeting

We have an information packed meeting and guest speakers in store for you at the Citizens for a Better America monthly meeting. We are joined together to make our voices heard, to actively defend our liberties and uphold our rights according to our Constitution. We will keep

politicians accountable, and encourage like-minded citizens, peacefully and patriotically!

Thursday, November 21st at Legends Steakhouse in the private meeting room, 42 Tennessee Street, downtown Murphy, NC. Food ordering starts at 5 PM, meeting starts

promptly at 6:00-7:30 PM. This meeting is free & open to the public.

For more information: Website: <http://www.CitizensForABetterAmerica.com>

Email: Contact@CitizensForABetterAmerica.com Call: (828) 494-7403

Women Vets Honored...from Page 1

in Hiawassee 38 years and dedicated much of his life to maintaining our park for us," Halfon said. "He trimmed the

trees and cut the grass and planted the flowers. He was always involved in veterans' affairs.

Union County Farmers Market Historic Walking Trail

Chestatee Chattoohochee RC&D Council is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that lives on grants that it writes and administers for the citizens in the 12 counties of northeast Georgia. A grant application is developed from a need in our area from organizations that we partner with to help make our citizens lives better, more comfortable, more profitable, and provide learning opportunities so that our history will not be lost for future generations to enjoy. Chest Chat has been successful with applying for grants in the past 12+ years that I have been the Executive Director. Our grants and contracts are the only funding mechanism that we have to pay our bills and payroll. (which is the most important thing!) There are only 2 of us!

This year we applied for 9 grants and were awarded 8 of them which will keep us busy for at least 3 more years. Each grant has specific deliverables that I build into the deliverable part of the application and in order to be reimbursed for the events, projects, and field days that we put on; we must achieve the goals that we put in the grant when we said we would do it. Grantors for our grants and contracts are USDA NRCS, USDA Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, NACD and others.

A grant that the USDA NRCS awarded us is for the Union Farmers Market Historic Farm Stead and is described below. Union County requested funds to construct a walking trail on the Farmer's market's campus. The trail will pass through the historic farm stead on the property and wind through pumpkin fields, pollinator gardens, across and along the creek, and up to an old homestead where settlers made their home. There will be kiosks along the way explaining points of interest for visitors to read and learn about the history of the historic property.

The main objectives of the project are: Make visitors aware of every day farm life in the 1800's Make visitors more

aware of the Native Americans that called Northeast Georgia home before 1832 Make visitors more aware of who, what, and where our first settlers were and why they came to present day Union County Demonstrate how these plants can be grown in Union County Identify and exhibit native plants growing along the banks of Butternut Creek Demonstrate how these plants can be incorporated into the home landscape Use the Farmers Market Campus to show local students how people lived everyday lives during the 1800's.

Plans for the project are: Use the Farmers Market Campus as a living classroom to educate local students about the mountain environment and stream ecology. The trail will be approximately 2,500 feet long starting at a bridge to be constructed near the dog park and ending at the historic farm stead.

The trail construction started in September and will be completed by May 2025 depending on availability of construction crews. There will be a Bridge constructed near the dog park across Butternut Creek and 3 culverts across the small streams in the field. This bridge will not be for vehicles but for walking only. There will be 3 informational Kiosks along the trail explaining that part of the historic farm and demonstrating how the settlers worked, played, and lived. There will be other informational exhibits along the trail. There will be heritage and pollinator Gardens installed in the spring in the fields that the trail meanders through. These crops will be changed like the settlers did by the current growing seasons. For more information on this exciting project stop by the Farmers Market. NT(Nov20,29)CA



Frank Riley
Executive Director of RC&D

"Last year Luin saw a veterans' monument that inspired him, and he bought this for us. He had it shipped here, and he put it up here. He would have been here today, but unfortunately, he passed away about six months ago.

"We're really grateful to Luin and what he's done for our park. At this time, we're going to ask Beverley Schoeffler to dedicate this female memorial."

Schoeffler, who serves as adjutant for local VFW Post 7807, thanked everyone for coming and "joining us for this dedication to all the women veterans in the military, whether retired or not, those who serve."

"We are here because of all the women who came before us, as we would not have been able to be a part of this if they hadn't paved the way for us," Schoeffler said. "This is for them and for us. As of 2022, women made up 17.3% of the active-duty soldiers, and 21.4% of the reserves.

"Veterans Day is a chance to say thank you to all of those who put their lives on the line and sacrifice daily.

Whether they serve in times of war or in times of peace, every veteran has played a part in protecting what we value most.

"Honoring them on this day reminds us to never take their sacrifices for granted and to keep their dedication close to our hearts.

"Thanks to Luin, we have this beautiful Female Monument today. I hope you each take a moment see it before you leave."

American Legion Post 23 Chaplain Scott Drummond announced the new engravings on the Veterans Memorial Wall, which is Towns County's way of honoring its residents who served:

Timothy J. Bresnahan, III, U.S. Air Force; George L. Dyer "Bud" Jr., U.S. Navy; Richard W. Everhart, USAF; William T. Persick, U.S. Coast Guard; Harold E. Smith, U.S. Army; and Benjamin W. Sutton, U.S. Navy.

Then the memorial wreaths were laid as per tradition.

A particularly heart-rending moment in the ceremony came when veteran Sal Anicito played the acoustic guitar and performed "American Soldier" by Toby Keith: "I



VFW Post 7807 Adjutant Beverley Schoeffler led the dedication of the Female Veterans Monument on Nov. 11.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

don't want to die for you, but if dying's asked of me, I'll bear that cross with honor 'cause freedom don't come free."

And it was clear in the ceremony that every man and woman who has ever served embodies those words.

There are over 100,000 World War II veterans estimated to still be living today, and their average age is 98. Americans who have ever voted, expressed an opinion in public, or owned property should thank a Vet.

Home Heating Help for the Elderly and Medically Homebound apply beginning December 2nd

Brenda Dalin, Program Director, Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. announces Home Heating Help for the Elderly and Medically Homebound for Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Dawson, Elbert, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Jackson, Lumpkin, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White counties.

Households in which every member is age 65 and older -OR- is medically homebound due to health reasons may apply for assistance with their heating bills beginning on December 2, 2024. One-time payments will be made by check issued to the home energy suppliers. Eligibility for the program is based on the income of all household members.

When applying for assistance, persons will present verification of age for everyone in the home, verification of all household income received within the past 30 days (check stubs, public assistance checks, unemployment checks, etc.); verification of Social Security numbers for everyone in the home, verification of citizenship (driver's license, state ID, etc.), and the most recent heating bill AND electric bill. PLEASE BRING ALL DOCUMENTATION AS

WE CAN NO LONGER OBTAIN THE INFORMATION FOR YOU.

All eligible applicants are asked to contact Ninth District Opportunity, Inc.'s scheduling system December 2, 2024 beginning at 8:30 AM by telephone at 855-636-3108 or go online to <https://ndo.appointment.works/ea>. Phone lines and website for scheduling will not be active until the opening date of the program and no appointments will be made by telephone or online until this time. No walk-ins, please. Appointments will be scheduled until all funds are exhausted. Additional information will be made available online at www.ndo.org.

Only households 65 years of age and older or medically homebound may apply beginning December 2, 2024. Applicants that do not meet the required criteria will be denied.

The general public may apply on January 2, 2025 beginning at 8:30 AM.

Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. is an equal opportunity agency while providing services without regard to age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, or any other classification or category.

VFW Post 7394 and American Red Cross Blood Drive

VFW Post 7394 and the American Red Cross are hosting an upcoming blood drive on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 9 AM - 1:30 PM at the Major Leon Davenport Building located at 78 Blue Ridge Hwy, Blairsville, GA 30512. Please join our lifesaving mission and schedule an appointment today! Go to www.redcross.org to make an appointment.