

# Towns County Herald

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## Veterans to be honored in annual Veterans Day Service on Nov. 11

News Special  
Towns County Herald

There will be a Veterans Day Service on Monday, Nov. 11, at Towns County Veterans Park in front of Towns County High School starting at 11 a.m.

The Towns County High School Band will be in attendance and will play "The Star-Spangled Banner" and various patriotic hymns along with Taps.

Serving as the keynote speaker this year will be past-National Commander of the American Legion Dale Barnett.

Barnett is a highly decorated military officer who graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point. He served in combat in the Gulf War and

was awarded the Bronze Star and Combat Infantry Badge. He retired after 22 years as a Lieutenant Colonel.

There will be six veterans' names added to the Memorial Wall of Honor this year: Frontz Goring, Robert Marshall, Joyce Giller, Robert Nicholson, George Shook and Stanley Warth.

Thanks goes to the following organizations for their support: VFW Post 7807 and Auxiliary, American Legion Post 23 and Auxiliary, Sons of the American Legion, the Marine Corps League and Towns County.

In the event of rain, the service will be held at the Towns County Recreation Center. For more information call VFW Post 7807 at 706-896-8387.



Dale Barnett

All veterans are encouraged to attend and be recognized.

## Chief Copeland talks Fire Department history, safety with residents

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Mountain Movers and Shakers welcomed Towns County Fire Chief, Coroner and longtime public servant Harold Copeland to talk about his job leading the Fire Department on Friday, Nov. 1.

Affectionately known as "Big H" around the county, Copeland started with Towns County Fire Rescue some 36 years ago as a volunteer, working his way up the leadership ladder to lieutenant, then captain, then part-time and later full-time assistant chief.

And since Feb. 1, 2015, Copeland has served as the county's first ever full-time fire chief leading the volunteer Fire Department.

In 2016, Copeland won election to the seat of county coroner, making him a county official to boot.

Originally from Hall County, Copeland got his start as a firefighter after moving to Towns in 1983. He worked out of the Young Harris Fire



Fire Chief Harold Copeland

Station, which served the whole county at the time and with great results, Copeland said.

Former sole commissioner Truman Barrett and the Young Harris firefighters added four more stations to the county starting in 1984, and Barrett named David Sellers the first Towns County fire chief, who in turn asked Copeland to be the first assistant fire chief.

The county has since added a sixth station, is looking at the possibility of adding another, and is nearing completion on a brand-new Young Harris station.

"Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw is doing a wonderful job at moving this project forward," Copeland said. "We're finishing up the new  
See Copeland, Page 6A

## Students wish Smokey Bear 'Happy Birthday' at elementary school



Former Mark Wiles and Smokey Bear spoke with students of Towns County Elementary last month during Smokey's birthday celebration. Photo by Chad Stack

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Georgia Forestry Commission and students from Towns County Elementary helped Smokey Bear celebrate his 75th birthday last month.

Throughout the day on Monday, Oct. 14, students made their way to the library

to hear from Mark Wiles, Michael Wood and Keith Moss of Georgia Forestry, with class after class of children gathering around to learn the 75-year-old story of Smokey Bear.

After each class heard the historic tale, the kids got to asking about Smokey himself - was he going to be there to celebrate his birthday with

them? Wiles said that he was not sure, as Smokey was busy educating students all over about the importance of fire safety, but that if the students could yell his name loud enough, maybe he'd hear them and come in for his party.

Sure enough, Smokey  
See Smokey, Page 6A

## Halloween at the Courthouse offers kids a screaming good time

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Halloween at the Courthouse was a smashing success on Friday, Nov. 1, despite having to be rescheduled from Halloween night due to bad weather.

Hundreds of families and costumed children made their way around the Towns County Courthouse to trick or treat with local businesses and groups handing out free candy.

2019 marks the second year in a row that the event has been held at the courthouse, with last year serving as the first time the annual Halloween event moved from the Hiwassee Town Square.

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Local businesses and other groups handed out candy to hundreds of kids at the ever-popular Halloween at the Courthouse event on Nov. 1. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

## Fishing tournament nets strong support for local veterans

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Lake Chatuge Chamber of Commerce hosted the "Reelin' It In for Vets" Fishing Tournament on Saturday, Nov. 2.

Tournament proceeds came from area businesses and registration fees, with a portion going toward the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7807 in Hiwassee, which sponsored a pre-fish feast on Friday, Nov. 1.

With so many local residents being veterans, Chamber President Candace Lee said she wanted to do something to involve the community and the veterans.

"It's important for the veterans of Towns County to know that we are grateful for  
See Fishing, Page 6A



Steve Abercrombie and Robert Rogers of Blairsville finished in First Place at the veterans fishing tournament with a 15.70-pound haul on Saturday. Photo by Chad Stack

## Bradshaw, Paris join other Georgia sole commissioners for DC trip



All eight Georgia sole commissioners in one place at the White House in Washington, D.C.

By Mark Smith  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Lamar Paris of Union County and Cliff Bradshaw of Towns County are two of eight sole commissioners in the whole state, and they joined the other six for a trip to the District of Columbia in October.

The purpose of the trip was so the commissioners could attend the Alabama, Florida, Georgia State Leadership Day event on Thursday, Oct. 17, at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Organized by the National Association of Counties, NACo is the "only national organization that represents county governments in the United States," according to naco.org.

"It was an amazing event," Paris said. "For the first time in my 19 years as commissioner, all eight of us Georgia sole commissioners were able to be at the same place at the same time."

The sole commissioners

were joined by several other Northwest Georgia and Metro Georgia commissioners, Paris said.

"Many of those commissioners have been in office a lot longer than I have," Bradshaw said. "So, I basically just listened, and I learned a lot from these folks. It was very educational."

Bradshaw said he also learned a lot about President Donald Trump's agenda by listening to the speakers at the Leadership Day event, observing that there is a push "to return a lot of the powers back to the states."

"They talked about 'The Wall,' of course," Bradshaw said, adding that its purpose is more to stop the flow of drugs into the U.S. than to check illegal immigration. "The biggest thing is the drug problem."

Of all the speakers to address the commissioners at the Leadership Day event, Paris said he thought Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue,

formerly the governor of Georgia, was the most informative and best prepared.

"Immediately following the scheduled events, we had a reception at the White House with all the commissioners," Paris said, going on to describe a dinner at the hotel that same evening where all the Georgia sole commissioners gathered to discuss and compare their counties.

Paris said it's always good to have contacts in Washington, D.C. to help with county projects like the Union County Gun Range, and it's always good to talk about common issues with other counties to learn new strategies.

Some ideas discussed were a Transportation-SPLOST that two Georgia counties have already approved to help with county road maintenance, which in turn could lead to a reduction in property taxes.

Jail costs, court costs and ways to reduce them also  
See DC Trip, Page 6A

## TCSO arrests homeowners association treasurer on theft charge

News Special  
Towns County Herald

On Wednesday, Oct. 23, a report was made to the Towns County Sheriff's Office in reference to a theft of funds from the Bald Mountain Park Homeowners Association checking account.

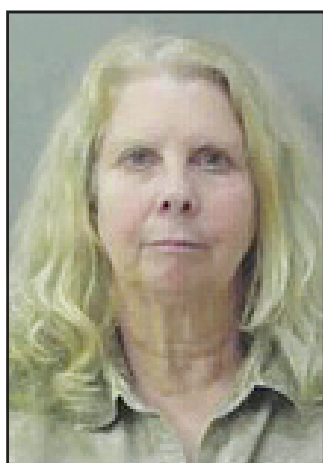
The information relayed to deputies indicated that over \$9,000 was suspected to have been stolen over a 10-month period between December 2018 and September 2019.

Upon further investigation into the reported incident, deputies gathered checking account records and

conducted several interviews. At the completion of the initial investigation, Pamela Dawn Smith, 65, of Hiwassee, who was identified as the treasurer for the Bald Mountain Park Homeowners Association, was arrested and charged with one count of theft by taking.

The investigation is active and ongoing at this time, and the case will be forwarded to the Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

All suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Pamela Dawn Smith

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**FOOTBALL**  
Nov 8 vs. Athens  
7:30 PM

**Smoke Alarm Installation**  
Date Nov. 12

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**Veterans Day Luncheon**

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**Energy Assistance Funds Available**

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