

TCSO continues drug arrests, nabs 16 suspects in recent weeks

News Special
Towns County Herald

The Towns County Sheriff's Office continues to make good on its promise to pursue the arrests of suspects on drug-related charges in the community, with more traffic stops and searches producing drug arrests in recent weeks.

On Friday, Nov. 15, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on a Pontiac Grand Prix on US 76 in Young Harris.

The driver, identified as Rene Chavira Jr., 26, of Murphy, North Carolina, was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana, driving on a suspended license and speeding.

On Saturday, Nov. 16, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on a Chevrolet

pickup truck on US 76 in Young Harris.

Upon further investigation, the passenger, identified as Travis Mathew Reece, 30, of Young Harris, was arrested on the following charges: possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug-related objects, and giving a false name to a law enforcement officer.

Reece was also arrested on three active warrants out of Towns County for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug-related objects, and possession of dangerous drugs.

The active warrants were the result of a search warrant previously conducted at a residence located off Ford Road in Young Harris.

On Sunday, Nov. 17,

Towns County Deputies responded to a traffic accident reported on SR 75 South in Hiawassee.

The driver of one of the vehicles involved, Kimberly Tracy Holcombe, 42, of Dahlonega, was arrested and charged with possession of methamphetamine, driving under the influence, and possession of drug-related objects.

On Friday, Nov. 22, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on a Jeep Wrangler on US 76 in Young Harris.

The driver, identified as Sarah Victoria Williams, 19, of Social Circle, was arrested and charged with possession of marijuana, driving under the influence, and unlawful use of emergency lights.

The following passengers

in the vehicle were arrested on the following charges:

Kristen Nicole Grant, 19, of Buford, possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol.

Baylee Nicole Hendrick, 20, of Shelby, North Carolina, possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol.

William Andrew Grohovac, 19, of Cumming, possession of marijuana.

Ivie Ellis Gatlin, 19, of Suwanee, possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol.

Madison Joy Dupriest, 18, of Hayesville, North Carolina, possession of marijuana and underage possession of alcohol.

On Friday, Nov. 22, Towns County Deputies responded to

a domestic incident in the parking lot of a business off SR 288 in Hiawassee.

Upon further investigation of the incident, the following subjects were arrested:

Tammy Bokstrom Lawler, 47, of Murphy, North Carolina, on charges of possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, and possession of drug-related objects.

Jason Joseph Williams, 40, of Murphy, North Carolina, on a charge of possession of methamphetamine.

On Monday, Nov. 25, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on US 76 in Young Harris on a Ford pickup. Upon further investigation, the following subjects were arrested:

Brandon Tracy Davenport, 31, of Blue Ridge, for possession of marijuana, possession of drug-related objects, driving on a suspended license, and violation of the Telephone Hands Free Law.

Taylor Ray Parrott, 28, of Warne, North Carolina, for trafficking methamphetamine, possession of marijuana with intent to distribute, possession of methamphetamine, and possession of marijuana.

On Friday, Dec. 6, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on a Cadillac

passenger car on Mill Creek Road in Hiawassee.

Upon further investigation, the driver, identified as Nicole Hope Weaver, 19, of Blairsville, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence (drugs) and failure to maintain lane.

A passenger in the vehicle, David Allen Elliott, 29, of Morganton, was also arrested and charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of marijuana.

On Friday, Dec. 13, a Towns County Deputy made a traffic stop on a Jeep Cherokee on US 76 in Hiawassee.

Upon further investigation, the driver, identified as Jason Eugene Cunningham, 38, of Blairsville, was arrested on the following charges: possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, possession of drug-related objects, and violation of headlight requirements.

All the cases are still active and ongoing. They 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.



Baylee Hendrick



William Grohovac



David Elliott



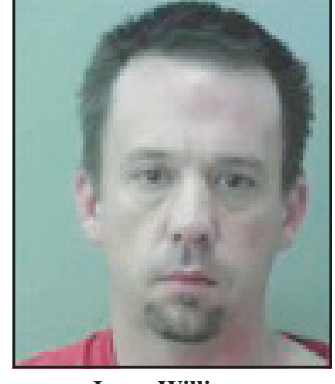
Brandon Davenport



Ivie Gatlin



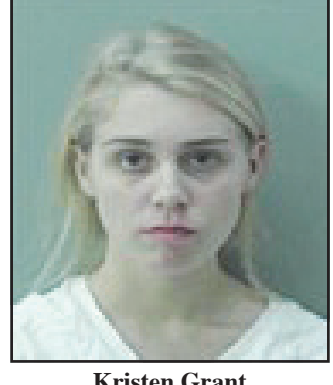
Jason Cunningham



Jason Williams



Kimberly Holcombe



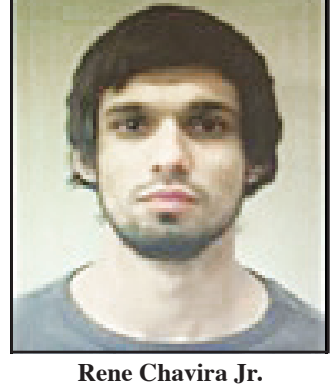
Kristen Grant



Madison Dupriest



Nicole Weaver



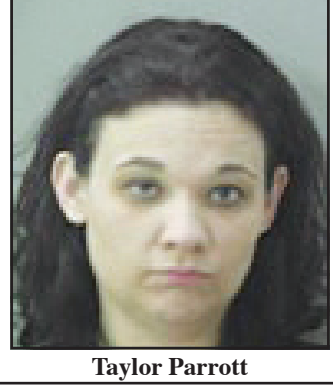
Rene Chavira Jr.



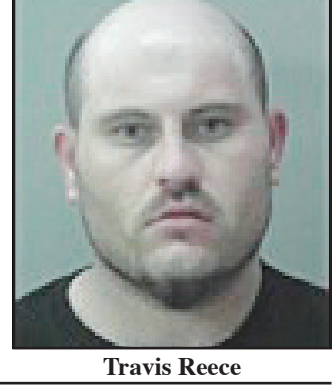
Sarah Williams



Tammy Lawler



Taylor Parrott



Travis Reece

Native blueberries: one of the most popular garden fruits

By Carol Chandler
Preservation
Committee GMREC

Native blueberries are one of the most popular fruits that gardeners seek to plant in their gardens. However, it seems that precious little research is done prior to the excited purchase and the actual bringing home of a small group of blueberry plants. The most popular type seems to be the Rabbit eye variety. Its history began on the edges of Georgia forests where moist, acidic soil, and adequate sunshine provided just the right environment for its growth, pollination and ripening of their luscious berries.

The Rabbit eye Blueberries are further divided according to whether their bloom period is early, mid or late season. Their blooms must be cross pollinated during this bloom cycle. Blueberry pollen, according to North Carolina State University is too heavy to be carried by the wind. Further, the positioning of the blueberry flowers would prevent wind born pollination. Thus the need for pollination by Bumble bees, Honey Bees, Solitary Bees or other insects. (https://Entomology.ces.ncsu.edu/small-fruit-insect-biology-management/blueberry-pollinators/)



Rabbit Eye Blueberries

Another popular variety of Blueberry is the Northern High Bush. It requires more hours of cold weather before it breaks dormancy and blooms. Western North Carolina and other higher elevations of Georgia do provide adequate cold hours for this variety. I chose its mid blooming variety of Blue Ray and Blue Crop which break dormancy and bloom at just the right time. These particular varieties begin with their first fruit in early June. Next the three types of Rabbit eyes begin producing its fruit till late summer.

Soil samples are necessary due to required acidity of 4.5 to 5.0. County Cooperative Extension Services can provide further handouts to complete such information as spacing of plants. These handouts are available when obtaining soil sample kits.

For more information about the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center: www.gmrec.uga.edu. There will be upcoming educational events in the future that you are sure to enjoy.

Call Clare Johnston at GMREC for questions or to be placed on our notification list, 706-745-2655. NT(Dec18Z17)CA

Historical Society...from Page 1A

"The open house at the Old Rock Jail was a big hit with the kids and Santa Claus," Green said.

Also during the meeting, Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales reported on the city's most recent purchase of the derelict buildings on Main Street between Anderson's and Victoria's Attic.

"We've been looking at those for a couple of years now, and finally, we were able to meet with (property owner) Dan Paris," Ordiales said. "And he gave us a great price on the buildings - \$99,000 is what the city paid for it."

"They were appraised at 135,000, so he donated the difference of \$36,000. As far as what we're going to do with them right now, the only thing I can tell you is that we're not going to tear them down. We're going to restore them as much as we can."

When Ordiales finished the building update, the result of the 2020 election of officers was revealed.

Historical Society members cast their ballots at the beginning of the meeting, and since the only members to be nominated in the November meeting to serve as 2020 officers were the 2019 officers, all current officers were re-elected with a mandate to carry on their good work.

Green will continue as president, Jerry Taylor as vice president, Frances Shook as treasurer, Mary Ann Miller as membership secretary and



Historical Society President Sandra Green got in the holiday spirit with some festive headwear in the annual Christmas meeting last week.

Osborn as secretary.

Taylor spoke in the meeting about some recent historical items that were donated from the Ruby Roberts Estate. Roberts, who was Marvel and Dean Garrett's daughter, passed away a year ago, and her family has donated her library of local and family history.

He displayed two of the books, "The King's Mountain and its heroes" and "In Search of the Strode Orphans."

Taylor also talked about an old ledger from Mrs. Mary Mauldin, daughter of Joseph Mauldin, who was among the first group of people to establish the Towns County Board of Education.

"The record of this event

is very beautifully written in this fragile old ledger and incorporates events from May 9, 1860, to Jan. 4, 1864," Taylor said.

Following Taylor's update of new items donated to the Historical Society, local historian Jason Edwards returned for a visit from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, where he is working toward earning his doctorate.

Edwards divided members in attendance into teams to compete in Towns County and Christmas trivia.

The Historical Society will meet next on Monday, Jan. 13, at 6 p.m. at the Old Rec Gym for their first meeting of 2020.

Chamber...from Page 1A



The "Denim & Pearls" annual meeting was well attended on Dec. 5 and featured impressive statistics highlighting the importance of tourism to the area.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

as much as I can."

2020 chamber board members are Katie Stancil, Wayne Phillips, Kimberly Miller, Bill Pierson, Mike Dvorak, Tim Barrett, Charles Burton, Brandon Grimsley, Pat McCallen, Nathan Noblet, Janet Allen, Brandy Parton, Mark Dotson, Michelle Barnard and Sue Deering.

These board members were inducted by Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw.

"I want to take just a minute before we do this, and I want to thank all of you who support the chamber and all of you who serve the board," Bradshaw said. "We appreciate all of your time and your effort. It is a very vital part of our community, and I think y'all do a great job. We are very thankful to have you."

Special awards were given to members of the

Chamber of Commerce who have made a difference and helped with the growth of the community.

The President's Award went to Michelle Barnard of Brother's at Willow Ranch, which catered the event. Manny Carrion of Carrion Tree Service received the Make A Difference Award. And Laura Kate Gleaton of Ice Cream Island received the Next Generation Award.

The chamber also recognized members that have been with them for 30 years, including Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, the city of Hiawassee, Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, Hiawassee Animal Hospital, Hiawassee Hardware, Mountain Realty, RE/MAX Hiawassee Realty, South State Bank, United Community Bank, Young Harris College and Always Christmas.

To conclude the meeting,

Lee talked about the monetary contributions of the tourism industry to Towns County over the last couple of years.

"In 2017, Towns County's direct tourist spending was \$51.71 million, making Towns County eighth highest in the North Georgia Region out of 17 counties," Lee said. "The newest figures from 2018 have Towns County's direct tourist spending at \$53.48 million, which is almost \$2 million more than in 2017."

"We remain the eighth highest in the region, but from 2015 to 2018, we are showing the second highest increase, second only to Dawson County."

The Chamber of Commerce hopes this increase continues and that 2020 is a good year for local businesses and the community.