

Towns County Herald

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Foster Park hosts Iwo Jima Vets

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Five area Iwo Jima Veterans held a program commemorating the 71st anniversary of the beginning of the Battle of Iwo Jima on Friday, Feb. 19.

The event was held at the recently installed Iwo Jima Memorial Statue, located out front of the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park.

Todd Kimsey and C.E. "Bud" Johnson, both of Hiawassee, Phil Gamache of Blairsville, Mack Drake and Joseph B. Tedder of Gastonia, NC, hosted the event, which featured a program by U.S. Marine Corps League Unicoi Detachment #783 in honor of the Iwo Jima Veterans.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall



L-R: Iwo Jima veterans U.S. Marine Phil Gamache, Marine Mack Drake, CPO Bud Johnson, FCO 3/C Todd Kimsey and Marine Joseph Tedder

and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris were both in attendance for the event, and both spoke to those gathered.

Those in attendance went to a luncheon afterward at Daniel's Steakhouse in Hiawassee, hosted by the Marine Corps League. Iwo Jima was the largest

Marine Amphibious battle of all time, according to program literature, as well as the costliest – more than 5,900 Marines died, along with 20,000 Japanese

Rep. Doug Collins demands answers from Windstream

Towns County Herald
News Special

The following is a letter sent by Congressman Doug Collins to telecommunication provider Windstream on Thursday, Feb. 11, regarding their unsatisfactory and substandard service to their customers in the Ninth District of Georgia. Congressman Collins is requesting information from the company, which received government money from the Phase II Connect America Fund, as well as preferred tax status from the IRS, on why their service continues to underperform in Northeast Georgia, despite the federal



Rep. Doug Collins

government's involvement. The full text of the letter, originally published on Rep. Collins website, is below:

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State to Vietnam Vets: 'welcome home'

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Nearly 200 Vietnam Veterans of Union and Towns counties were honored by the Georgia Department of Veterans Service in a special ceremony on Wednesday, Feb. 17, at the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center.

In the ceremony titled "Georgia Salutes Union & Towns County Vietnam Veterans," veterans were awarded the state's Vietnam War Certificate of Honor, along with the Defense Department Commemoration Vietnam War

Lapel Pin, all in recognition of their service during the war.

The certificate is a special presentation made by the state in conjunction with efforts in recent years by the U.S. Department of Defense to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War.

Representing the state were GDVS Commissioner Mike Roby, Assistant Commissioner Dan Holtz, Assistant Commissioner George Canavaggio, Chairman Phil Youngblood of the State Veterans Service Board, and GDVS Projects Manager Brian

Zeringue, who also acted as emcee for the evening.

Vietnam Pat Phillips of Blairsville, who also sits on the State Veterans Service Board, received special thanks throughout the evening for his role in organizing the event.

Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley read a proclamation on behalf of the City of Blairsville, which was approved in the February meeting of the Blairsville City Council – Councilman Tony Dyer was present as a representative of the city as well as a Vietnam Veteran.

Both Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall attended the event, and Bill Kokaly came from the office of Congressman Doug Collins.

Arts Center Manager Regina Hawks helped to conduct the ceremony, and as veterans came onstage to receive their certificates and pins, they were greeted by a row of local dignitaries who were all too happy to welcome them home.

Vietnam Veterans honored that evening were:

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Stephen Smith, Center, accepts his Vietnam War Certificate of Honor. Pictured with Smith are GDVS Commissioner Roby, Chairman Phil Youngblood of the Veterans Service Board

Towns places two wrestlers at state

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Gwinnett – Towns County High School sent three wrestlers to the 2016 GHSA Traditional State Wrestling Tournament over Valentine's Day weekend, where two medaled – Daulton Rogers securing Third Place at 170 pounds and Thomas Mitchell netting Fifth Place at 126 pounds.

Also at state was Blaine Rogers, who didn't place "but wrestled two outstanding matches and gained some experience that will prove

invaluable in the future," said Wrestling Head Coach Jeff Stowers.

Daulton Rogers and Mitchell are seniors who, along with Keanu Ngyuen, Dylan Roberts and newcomer Jacob Farmer, will be hard to replace on next year's team.

"We're going to miss Thomas and Dylan, Keanu and Daulton, the leadership that they bring, and the work ethic they bring," said Coach Stowers. "It's going to require that some kids step up and score some points next year.

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Brandon Rowland, Thomas Mitchell, Jeff Stowers, Daulton Rogers and Blaine Rogers at the Class A state tournament.

TCMS Robotics Wins First Place

Towns County Herald
News Special

The Towns County Middle School Robotics team, Praetoria Nave, participated in both the First Lego League (FLL) Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center Qualifier and the Super Regional at Athens Academy resulting in advancement to the University of Georgia FLL State Championship. This state tournament, held on February 6, 2016, is the highest level of FLL competition here in Georgia. The team had to

compete in four categories which are Robot Design, Project, Robot Performance, and Core Values. These representatives are judged by FLL representatives and scored based on a rubric. The team scored well in all four categories at the first qualifier and the Super Regional receiving the 2nd Place Champion's Award at both events out of thirty registered teams in each.

The theme for this year's competition is FLL Trash Trek which focuses on

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New Wastewater Technology in Place

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Thursday, Feb. 18, operator training was held at the City of Hiawassee's sewer treatment plant. The operators were briefed on the new ultraviolet water filtration system, which is an upgrade from the previous one.

The operator training and new system is part of the city's overall efforts to keep its negative impact on Lake Chatuge as low as possible. Excess runoff, sediment, pathogens, and unwanted nutrients all contribute to lower lake water quality. The sewer treatment plant seeks to drastically lower the amount of excess nutrients and pathogens

in the water. The new ultraviolet filtration system, which took about a year and a half for the city to acquire, is better than the other one in almost every way. It is more effective at reducing pathogens. It is also equipped to handle almost double the water discharge.

"It's sized to handle 500,000 gallons a day. Right now we're getting around 250,000," said City Engineer Don Baker.

"If we ever went from a 300,000-gallon permit to a 500,000-gallon discharge permit, this one will more than handle that flow, so we're building for the future. We'll have to at some point in time, because we're basically



Don Baker - City Engineer

handling all the sewer, not just for the city but also for the county," said City Manager Rick Stancil.

The new model has eight bulbs, as opposed to the old

model's 16 bulbs. It is also self-cleaning, meaning that there is less opportunity for someone to break a bulb while trying to clean it.

"They quit making

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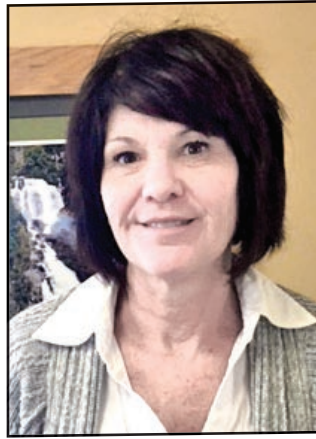
Chamber to upgrade Ambassadors' Program

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors Program is relatively young, but already making strides in advancing the interests of local business.

Last year, for example, the Ambassadors hosted the Business Showcase for local businesses to come and network with consumers and with one another.

Towns County Chamber of Commerce President Candace Lee said that this year, the Ambassadors are going to make great strides for



Candace Lee the Chamber. "The Ambassadors See Chamber, Page 11

Commissioner Approves Bell Mountain Park project

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

At the Towns County Commission meeting on Thursday, Feb. 18 the County re-adopted several plans and policies aimed at maintaining the quality of its popular transit service.

"They will take anyone to the grocery store or the doctor's office. One of the big uses is to go to dialysis treatments in Union County or most anything you want to do if you don't have a vehicle or if you do have a

vehicle and want to use this as transportation," said Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall.

First on the agenda was to adopt the Transit Title IV plan detailing descriptions of services the transit provides as well as non-discriminatory service policies, all of which are public record.

The County also passed the Vehicle Preventative Maintenance Policy and Procedures, which is a set of rules making it even safer for anyone in Towns County to use the transit system.



Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall

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Hiawassee City Business Group to meet March 8

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

In the last several years, the city of Hiawassee has renewed its interest in revitalizing its downtown area and its businesses.

Multiple groups have been formed, notably the Hiawassee Ambassadors, and the Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors, to help keep the area aesthetically and economically healthy. The most recent addition to these

programs is Hiawassee City Council member Liz Ordiales's City Business Group.

In the spirit of exclusivity, Ordiales has spent the last month tracking down businesses in

the city that don't have a business license, in part to ensure that they aren't left out of the

group. "There were 91 businesses that don't have a license that I spotted. Now I know that there are some

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Liz Ordiales

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SPORTS
BASEBALL
Wednesday, February 24
Lumpkin County
5:30 PM