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in office. For the next eight years, he was a sole practitioner in private practice in Union County before being elected District Attorney of the Enotah Judicial Circuit. He served in that capacity for three terms beginning in 1999. After that, he was the Executive Director of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia until his appointment to the bench in June of 2012. Judge Gunter is admitted to all courts in Georgia, including the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Judge Gunter served as a

past president of the District Attorneys Association of Georgia and served as a council member of the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia for six years. He is a member of Leadership Georgia, Class of 2003. Judge Gunter is past president of the Blairsville Rotary Club and the Blairsville/Union County Chamber of Commerce. He is an active member of First Baptist Church of Blairsville and serves as a deacon in the church. Judge Gunter and his wife, Rita, have been married for 31 years. They have two grown sons and a granddaughter.

Wilson ...continued from Page 1A

man Gordy Wright. Lt. Wilson was traveling east when he lost control of the vehicle, Wright said. The vehicle then traveled onto the north shoulder, went off an embankment, struck the ground with the front of the vehicle and then traveled into Lake Chatuge, Wright said. Lt. Wilson was trapped inside the submerged vehicle and extricated by rescue divers for Towns County Fire & Rescue, Wright said. "It is possible Wilson suffered a medical condition at the time of the crash," Wright said. Lt. Wilson was taken to Northeast Georgia Medical Center after his rescue by Towns County Fire & Rescue, Wright said. His passenger, a female relative who is a budding sophomore basketball and soccer star for the Towns County Lady Indians, tried to save Wilson before she had to swim to safety for her own well being. She was treated at Chatuge Regional Hospital in Hiwassee and later released. Lt. Wilson began his

career in law enforcement in 2005, when he began working at the Towns County Detention Center. Lt. Wilson was soon promoted to a sergeant's position where he had the responsibility of supervising detention personnel and overseeing day-to-day operations of the detention center. Lt. Wilson also was assigned to supervising the Inmate Work Detail Program. In late 2005, Lt. Wilson began work as a deputy sheriff, shortly after receiving a Police K-9 named Rocky. Lt. Wilson and Rocky became certified to detect narcotics as a team in March 2006 and earned a tracking certification in April 2008. In June 2008, Lt. Wilson and Rocky were assigned to the department's Criminal Investigation Division. Lt. Wilson and Rocky became an investigate team, investigating drug cases and domestic violence crimes. *The Towns County Herald will keep its readers posted on how to help the family of Lt. Brian Wilson.*

Lawsuit...continued from Page 1A

and on or around Feb. 16, 2012 she was accepted as a pledge by Gamma Psi sorority. Gamma Psi is unique to YHC, and has no national affiliations with any other Greek organization, according to the lawsuit. After acceptance as a pledge into Gamma Psi, "the sorority began subjecting Burch to what it called an education period." During this "education period," Burch allegedly was subjected to severe and pervasive harassment and abuse by senior members and alumni of the sorority, according to the suit. Burch alleges that she heard many senior sorority members refer to this "education period" as "hazing," according to the suit. The suit alleges that on Feb. 24th, 2012, Burch and other pledges were forced into vehicles of sorority members and driven to a nearby wooded location. During the trip, the lawsuit alleges that sorority members "blared loud, heavy metal music, and forced the pledges to scream their names, in response to profanity-laced questions." Afterward, they allegedly were taken into the woods and blindfolded, and required to continue screaming the names of sorority members, the lawsuit alleges. "Eventually, the blindfolds were removed, and various sorority members began to scream and spit in the faces of the pledges. They further smeared mud in the pledges' faces, and required them to crawl through the mud into a cold creek." Throughout this abuse, sorority members continuously shouted at the pledges, calling them sex-specific insults, according to the lawsuit. According to the law-

suit, one of the hazers shouting at the pledges was a Gamma Psi alumnus, who was a YHC staffer at the time she allegedly took part in the hazing rituals. According to the lawsuit, she still works at YHC. According to the suit, the YHC staffer continually screamed profanity at the pledges, and instructed Burch and other pledges on how to properly do exercises such as crawling through the mud. The hazing ritual, according to the lawsuit, lasted six nights, into the wee hours of the morning. Burch grew tired of the initiation and after nearly a week of hazing, she decided she would de-pledge from the sorority, according to the lawsuit. Burch then met with her advisor on the student newspaper, Crapanzano. Burch shared her experiences and the extreme nature of abuses she suffered at the hands of members of Gamma Psi, according to the lawsuit. Burch then alleges she met in a "confidential meeting" with Susan Rogers, the college's vice president of student affairs. Afterward, Burch alleges that she received a text message from a member of Gamma Psi informing her that someone had disclosed her complaints of hazing to members of the sorority. "On information and belief, YHC staff member Susan Rogers disclosed the complaints to Gamma Psi, despite Burch's request for confidentiality," the lawsuit alleges. Burch scheduled another meeting with Rogers on Monday, April 2, 2012. Terry and Joy Goldsmith attended this meeting and Rogers informed Burch that Gamma Psi would be suspended for one year, but that no individual involved in the hazing would be punished, the lawsuit alleges.

According to the lawsuit, Rogers discouraged Burch from filing a police report. Threatening that, if she did, the sorority members involved would sue her. The lawsuit alleges that Crapanzano researched the hazing for an article in the school newspaper, and that she found that extreme forms of hazing were widespread at YHC, and frequently involved sexually abusive conduct. She alleges the hazing rituals included such tortures as forcing female pledges to take part in a "panty run," in which they are required to run across campus in their underwear as other students, including male students, looked on, forcing "sweethearts" (female members of male fraternities) to stand naked and be judged by the fraternity members; forcing "sweethearts" to hump the ground and moan as if having sex, as the fraternity members looked on and forcing both female and male pledges to stand in a pool of water in which the older pledges have urinated or defecated in, according to the lawsuit. Crapanzano and Terry alleged they held faculty meetings to discuss the school's lack of a discipline policy on hazing, but when specifically questioned about potential disciplinary action against the member of YHC staff who was involved in hazing Burch, allegedly YHC President Cathy Cox responded that the investigation had been 'unable to substantiate' the allegation. Cox, according to the suit, went on to explain that, despite the existence of eyewitness testimony, eyewitness testimony was "inherently unreliable." It was at this meeting, according to the lawsuit that Crapanzano directly challenged Cox's comments re-

garding the evidence of a YHC staff member's involvement. In response, Cox allegedly threatened Crapanzano, suggesting that she and Crapanzano should "step outside and fight," the lawsuit alleges. Crapanzano claims she completed her article on hazing at YHC the next week, but Dr. Jennifer Hallett, the chair of the Communication Studies Department, informed Crapanzano, Terry and the Communication Studies faculty via e-mail that the article would have to be sent to YHC's attorney to be "screened" before publication. "On information and belief, the intention behind this request was to censor the article and hide the details regarding the widespread and deeply institutional nature of hazing practices among YHC student organizations," the lawsuit alleges. President Cox eventually refused to allow the article to be published, and a week later, Crapanzano was fired, and "barred from attending graduation activities, denied access to her school e-mail, and escorted to her office to retrieve her personal belongings by campus police nearly three months before the natural end of her one-year contract with no explanation," the lawsuit alleges. It wasn't long after that the Terry said he was fired in a letter "warning him that he had no contractual rights as a non-tenured employee." All three plaintiffs seek special damages for economic injuries as a consequence of YHC's violation of their rights in an amount to be determined by a jury. They seek compensatory and punitive damages, including interest, for violations of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Chase...continued from Page 1A

Carlin-Chis crashing her 2001 white Ford Expedition into the patrol car of Deputy Combs from Union County, Sheriff Mason said. "Sam's okay and we're proud of that," Sheriff Mason said. Following the chase that ended in Union County, Carlin-Chis was taken to Union General Hospital for medical treatment. Afterward, she was taken to Peachford Hospital in Atlanta, authorities said. Her condition was unavailable at press time. Carlin-Chis faces 16 charges in Towns County, including felony aggravated assault, fleeing/attempting to elude a police officer, multiple counts of

failure to maintain lane, reckless driving, too fast for conditions and failure to obey traffic devices or police, Towns County arrest warrants show. In Union County, Carlin-Chis is charged with felony aggravated assault for attempt to strike Deputy Combs with her Ford Expedition, and misdemeanor obstruction and fleeing/attempt to elude Union County sheriff's Sgt. Josh Berry, Union County arrest warrants show. Rabun County charges were unavailable at press time. "We're just glad to have her off the roads," Sheriff Mason said. Carlin-Chis remained in the Atlanta hospital at press time.

Barge ...continued from Page 1A

Marsha Elliot described as she introduced him to the members and guests in attendance. "I've known John Barge since he was in middle school. I had him in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade as a gifted student at Griffin Middle School. He was the ultimate in a student. He wanted to learn. He craved knowledge. I am honored and thrilled to introduce to you my former student, Dr. John Barge," said Elliott. Barge was excited to be able to talk and brag about Georgia's public school system even though he was there, by his own admission, to celebrate Georgia's retired educators. But there is no true way to celebrate educators without talking about and acknowledging their contributions to education. "Education Weekly, using 129 indicators, ranks states based on those indicators. For two consecutive years, Georgia has ranked seventh in the nation," said Barge. Barge described a recent visit to Boston, Mass. in which "state chiefs" from China were visiting. "They are just now getting around to educating all their children. They did not previously educate their poor. I was told by one of the state chiefs that it is more difficult to be a teacher in the United States, because we take children from all backgrounds and educate them together. They don't do it that way in their country," Barge said. "If I had



Dr. John Barge with Roy Perren, STAR Student Jennifer Chinnici, STAR Student Dillon Diehl, and his STAR Teacher, Alecia Frizzell. Photo/Libby Shook

been a child in China, I would not have received the education that I did because I was poor. Had it not been for somebody like Marsha Elliott, we could have continued the same cycle of poverty, alcoholism, and addiction. "It didn't matter if I was poor or on food stamps. My teachers didn't care," Barge said. "They taught me that I could learn; that I could achieve; that I was smart." Barge told the crowd that they have reached and changed the lives of their students. "You have the incredible opportunity to impact lives forever," he said. "You don't just change lives. You change generations." Barge spoke proudly in regards to Georgia's achievement during the 2012 school

year. He reported that Georgia ranked 12th in the nation in advanced placement exams (SAT, ACT). He also told the group that Georgia is the only state in the nation where increases in every single subject area were noted in state-mandated testing. "For our folks to have students achieving at the rate they are in these economic times is astounding. Thank you for all you do," Barge said. He challenged the students present as he said, "My folks never paid a dime for any of my education. I got scholarships, work programs, and four-college degrees. I don't owe a penny." The following were the recognized during the Retired Educators Association Awards Program: Towns County STAR

student Dillon Diehl and his STAR teacher Alecia Frizzell, Towns County STAR student Jennifer Chinnici and her STAR teacher Shannon Floyd, and the Retired Educators Association scholarship recipient, Young Harris College sophomore Kerri Abernathy who is majoring in middle grade education and wants to teach in the Towns County School System. State School Superintendent Barge and former Georgia Gov. and U.S. Sen. Zell Miller, who was unable to attend the evening's event, were honored and recognized as Outstanding Georgia Educators. Local awards also included: Community Service, Jayne Brechbill; Volunteer Service, Rachel Windsor; and Emeritus members, Susie Miles and Nan-nie Rose Taylor.

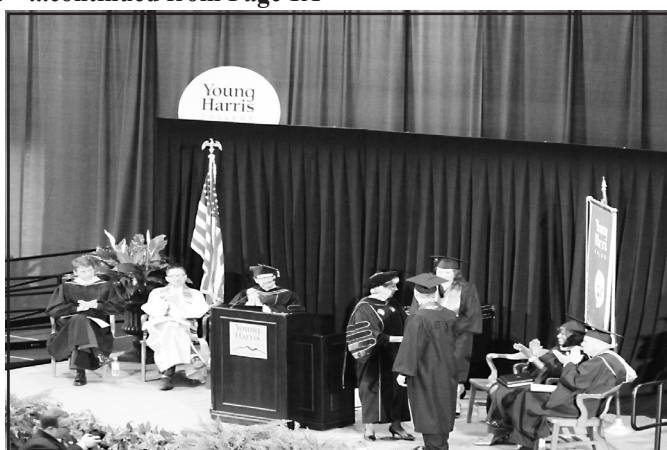
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penalties/fines to be imposed for offenses prohibited by O.C.G.A., Sections 16-13-30, 16-13-30.1, and 16-13-31, namely offenses involving the illegal use, manufacturing, and/or distribution of marijuana, controlled substances, and non-controlled substances. These additional penalties/fines are specifically earmarked for "drug abuse treatment and education" according to HB 1176. Judge Miller told the *Towns County Herald* that a 50 percent surcharge will be assessed over and above the imposed fine. "The law says that the money assessed must be used for Drug/Alcohol Treatment and Education," Judge Miller said. "This comes about as part of a criminal justice reform act that the State Legislature passed in 2012. "The money goes into a special dedicated account," Judge Miller said. "It's a way for offenders to essentially contribute to their own treatment and it can also be used for education in the schools. Fifty percent is a pretty considerable surcharge. If a fine is set at \$2,000, the offender will pay the court a total of \$3,000," Judge Miller said. "That 50 percent surcharge will go toward drug/alcohol treatment and education. "If someone is passing through Towns County and violates the Controlled Substance Act, their money will go towards treatment and education in the Towns County area instead of the taxpayers picking up the tab," said Miller. Section One of the signed Resolution states that "penalties for offenses prohibited by O.C.G.A., Sections 16-13-30, 16-

13-30.1, and 16-13-31, which relate to certain activities regarding marijuana, controlled substances, and non-controlled substances, shall be imposed and collected by the Clerk of Court. These funds shall be paid over to the Commissioner of Towns County and shall be deposited into a special account known as the Towns County Drug Abuse Treatment and Education Fund. Section Two of the Resolution deals with the formation of the Advisory Committee to oversee the funds and specifies that it "shall consist" of the following: Commissioner Kendall, Superior Court Chief Judge Murphy Miller, District Attorney Jeff Langley, Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton, and Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye. It also states that "the above members will elect a chairperson who will preside over all meetings of the Committee." Kendall said, "Judge Miller has appointed this group to serve on the Advisory Committee." Section Three of the Resolution declares that all funds in the Towns County Drug Abuse and Treatment Fund will be used "exclusively and solely" for substance abuse treatment (drug and alcohol) and educational programs. It also specifies that "expenditures from this fund must be authorized and approved by the Towns County Drug Abuse and Education Advisory Committee in accordance with rules and procedures adopted by the Committee." Offenders beware. It's gotten real and Towns and surrounding counties are taking substance abuse very seriously, as is Chief Superior Court Judge Miller.

Graduates ...continued from Page 1A

thank your parents and grandparents or whoever it was that helped get you to where you are right now. It's all about attitude and gratitude." Pearson delivered the commencement address at Saturday's graduation ceremonies on the YHC campus at the Recreation and Fitness Center. Pearson charged the graduates with a famous John D. Rockefeller quote, "The secret of success is to do the common things uncommonly well." She told the graduates that regardless of how they chose to define the word success, it was the result of a four letter word - work. "We are here to celebrate you and your graduation," she said. "While you may see this ceremony as an end, it is only the beginning. "Hopefully, what you studied during your four years here will help you find your calling or passion," Pearson said. "Don't allow things to hold you back. Strive to be the best you can be. Autograph your



Young Harris College graduates accept their diplomas. Photo/Libby Shook

work with excellence. Display a positive attitude. Learn how to take constructive criticism. Be punctual. Don't fear making a mistake. No one is perfect. When you make a mistake, admit it, and move on." Pearson added that, "The quality of you and your work will determine your success. "Just because you have graduated doesn't mean you shouldn't continue to grow and achieve," she said. "The best decision I made after I left WSB-TV was to enroll in graduate

school at the age of 65. "Next year, I'll be sitting where you are now," she said. "I plan to write and travel. Education is your key to success. I was the second person in my family to graduate from high school and the first to graduate from college." Pearson is currently enrolled at the University of Georgia's Grady School of Journalism working on her Master's Degree in Media Studies and Communications. Pearson encouraged the

graduates to give back to their communities through selflessness and volunteerism. "You really are your brothers and sisters keepers. Give hope to the hopeless," she said. "What you possess at the time of your death will belong to someone else. What you do for others during your lifetime will live on. Be a giver, not a taker." Two local students tied for the coveted Charles R. Clegg Outstanding Scholar Award, both having a perfect 4.0 GPA. Connie Wallace of Hiwassee was the first recipient of this prestigious award. Wallace, a History major, also received a full scholarship to Clemson University's Graduate Program. Ian Calhoun of Young Harris was the second recipient of the Clegg Award. Calhoun received a degree in Business and Public Policy. The Clegg Award is presented to the graduating senior or in this case, seniors, with the highest overall grade point average in all courses completed at YHC.

Historical Society goes waaaay back!

Like many of our programs, this coming Monday, May 13 we will go back in time in Hiwassee to learn what our grandmother's lives were like. Dorothy Handy of Young Harris will bring many of the articles grandma used, and tell about them in her own special style. Don't miss "Grandma's Apron,"

you'll love every minute. The program begins at 5:30 p.m. at the new Senior Center, but we encourage you to come early to the TC Historical Society's business meeting at 5 p.m. We have light refreshments you can enjoy before the program. See you there. TMAY8/HD/SH