

Trap Shoot...from Page 1A

Friday to lend his support for the venture.

"The big misunderstanding with the youth homes is, a lot of people hear the Sheriffs' Youth Homes and they think it's a home for kids that have been in trouble," said Sheriff Craig. "And basically, what we provide is a home for kids that really have nowhere else to go."

"It can be private placement, it can be placement by your local sheriff from somebody that just needs somewhere to go. The courts do some placement in the youth homes, sort of like, instead of foster care they can send them to the youth homes."

Some children may stay only a few months, while others spend much or most of their childhoods in the youth homes.

"What is unique about the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes, what I appreciate about

it is that we actually make a lifetime commitment to that child," said Sheriff Craig. "They go to public schools, they attend afterschool activities, sports and things like that."

"When they get out of school, we've got tutors there on campus that work with the kids to make sure that they're getting their work done, that they're getting the attention that they need. As they grow up in the youth homes, once they're 16, a lot of times we'll put them on the insurance and help provide them day cars."

It is this daily devotion to the children that makes the Sheriffs' Youth Homes, which is overseen by the Georgia Sheriffs' Association, such a worthy source of donations.

"We try to provide the same type of environment for the kids that we provide for our kids, and try to keep that as normal as possible," said Sheriff Craig, adding that the



Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton, center, with the Union County 4-H Shotgun Team.

relationships continue even after children graduate from high school. "We'll send them to college, so we continue providing for those kids."

Friday's trap shoot consisted of five-person teams, with each person attempting to shoot 50 clay pigeons. Of the 10 teams that competed, Chatuge No. 1 won first place,

followed by two Union County 4-H teams that came in second and third.

Best individual score went to 16-year-old Union County High School junior Blane Brown of the second place 4-H team, who shot a perfect 50. Brown also won highest junior score honors.

More money was raised

with a raffle, featuring a Remington Model 770 and over 60 prizes donated by area businesses, including tools from Hiawassee Hardware and Home Depot, basketball season passes from Young Harris College, T-shirts to be designed by Threadz Ink Printing, a scholarship to William Holland Lapidary School, and

much more.

Food was cooked and provided in part by Noble and Ruby Rhinesmith of the gun club, as well as Brent Boutwell and his company, Correctional Resources.

Many of the Towns County Citizen Law Enforcement Academy donated their time to run the raffle and get people where they needed to be.

Prizes were awarded at the end of the shoot, and retired Gordon County Sheriff Sid Roberts received special recognition from Sheriff Clinton and Sheriff Craig for his 15 years of service as the development officer with the Sheriffs' Youth Homes.

Residents who would like to continue to support the youth homes can donate privately, and Sheriff Craig's fundraiser is the annual JeepFest in Jasper, which takes place this year Sept. 4-6. For more information, visit www.sheriffsjeepfest.com.

Fest...from Page 1A

agritourism."

Only in its second year, the festival finds itself perfectly poised to ride – and to craft – the momentum of growing wine enthusiasm in North Georgia, with hopes that next year and the years to come net even larger crowds.

"We want to make wines that specifically speak to the flavors and cultures and tastes and smells and everything else from this area," said Green. "I think that's what sets us apart from other parts of the state, wineries in other parts of the country and the world."

The Upper Hiwassee Highlands area, which includes Towns, Union and Fannin counties, was just in the last year designated as an American Viticultural Area, for the first time putting Georgia on the American map of grape-growing destinations for the production of wine.

And many Georgia wineries Friday and Saturday offered unique varieties from which to choose, such as Warm Springs Winery out of Atlanta,

which brought its jalapeno-infused muscadine wine, Hotlanta.

Mercier Orchard, known since 1943 for its remarkable variety of apples, sampled its hard ciders, which are made from the orchard's own crop and bottled on site in Blue Ridge.

Everett and Natalie Thompson of Cumming heard about the festival several weeks back after visiting the area and picking up a flyer for the event.

"We've enjoyed the wine tasting and the bands so far, and it's been good," said Everett Thompson.

Carol Moore Demme, an artist out of Blairsville, enjoyed visiting with patrons and participating in the weekend festival.

Demme paints pet portraits for people all over the country and makes her own frames, and draws much inspiration from local wildlife. She also crafts Lawn Jockeys and ships them nationwide, and colorfully repurposes furniture with her own artistic flare.

Dennis Barber, the chef/owner of Copper Door restaurant in Historic Hayesville,

prepared crawfish tortellini – spicy crawfish tails, cream sauce, parmesan cheese and cheese-filled tortellini – and people loved it.

"We know they're trying to grow this event and they'd like to see it take off, and I'd like to see it take off myself – we're here to support as much as anything," said Barber of the festival. "I'm from New Orleans, so if you've ever been to the Jazz Fest in New Orleans, it's craziness for two weeks, and thousands and thousands of people. But, it started out small, just like this."

Overall, the festival was a hit with patrons, who were able to sit in shade, enveloped by an artistic atmosphere, and sip on their favorite selections of wine while listening to the smooth, comforting sounds of professional jazz.

Fairgrounds Manager Hilda Thomason would like to thank the sponsors of the festival: United Community Bank, Towns County Tourism Association, Lake Chatuge Lodge, Park Sterling Bank, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Atlanta Magazine and Faron King with Coldwell Banker.

County...from Page 1A

online, from home or work, any local law created by Towns County ordinaries, or later on when the office was separated and became Towns County commissioner," said Commissioner Kendall. "This code should be available at both the county's website, www.townscountyga.com, and the

Municipal Code Corporation's website, www.municode.com, within 60 to 90 days."

The code will be periodically updated online as new ordinances and resolutions are passed into law in Towns County.

A hard copy of the ordinances is available for viewing

in the commissioner's office.

"Up until we adopted this, if someone wanted an ordinance that was adopted, or to see if one was adopted, the only option they had was to go through the minutes or ask us to research it for them," said Commissioner Kendall.

Hiawassee...from Page 1A

well as a First Reading of the Budget 2015-2016 Appropriations Ordinance.

The city's fiscal year runs July 1 of one year through June 30 of the next year, with each year reflecting a budget that is calculated three times: the initial budget, the adjusted midyear budget and the end of year budget.

"We're real big into watching it as we go," said Stancil. "We had done the mid-year adjustment when we had numbers for half the year. Now, this is numbers that, by the time we adopt it, will be for the full year, so we'll have actual numbers. The reason we track it is, if we're overspending, we

want to know about it before it's overspent.

"That's kind of a precursor, but by doing that, when we do that we're also preparing for next year, because basically, our next year budget will be our end of year budget that will be adjusted for inflation, be adjusted for, if we know that there's known upcoming expenses that need to be put in, then we'll do that."

Performing the midyear budget adjustment in particular helps the city to check its pace, to see if it is on schedule with the way the budget set out at the beginning of the fiscal year. The end of year budget allows the city to anticipate the next

year's budget.

And according to the end of year budget, "it looks like we're going to have a surplus in each department, which is positive," according to Stancil.

Residents seeking more information and public comment on the amended 2014-2015 end of year budget and proposed 2015-2016 proposed budget can attend a public hearing on Wednesday, June 24, at 2 p.m. at Hiawassee City Hall.

Copies of the budgets can be obtained at city hall, and city council will be presented with the budgets to pass at the next regular meeting, on Tuesday, July 7.



Pat...from Page 1A

Nina Grant, 82, of Hiawassee, has frequented the senior center for many years, and she will certainly remember Nicholson and her contributions to the county.

"Anybody that's been around for that many years, certainly you're going to miss them," said Grant. "It'll be hard to replace her."

The senior center offers the county's seniors a chance to take part in physical activity, with treadmills and various programs geared toward physical health, and acts as a social outlet for those who wish to become more involved in retirement.

"We do transportation for them, we do home-delivered meals, we take them for doctor appointments," said Nicholson of the services offered by the senior center. "They confide in

us sometimes when they don't their own family, because their family doesn't live here. It's a big thing – I wish I'd have kept count of the people that I've served over 30 years' time."

Nicholson started as director when she was 39 years old, and has seen the center grow from serving 10 home delivery meals to more than 1,000 a month.

"I've had more than one generation," said Nicholson. "I've been here 30 years – I saw their parents, and now I'm seeing some of them. It's been very enjoyable doing the job that I've done for 30 years, but it's also been a lot of heart-break, because we've lost a lot over 30 years. I've touched people, all over the county, for 30 years."

The senior center is operated by the Legacy Link Area Agency on Aging out of

Gainesville, which is designated by the Georgia Department of Human Resources to advocate for seniors, conduct planning, and administer programs.

Friday, June 12, was Nicholson's last day, and Legacy Link decided to close the senior center this week as it attempts to find her replacement. The center is expected to reopen the week of Monday, June 22.

"We certainly wish you the best in your retirement, and in your pleasure of enjoying your family," said Legacy Link Community Programs Director Lamar Gailey at the reception. "I can't think of anything better than enjoying grandchildren, and you're going to have that opportunity. We do appreciate what you have done over the time that you have given us, and the leadership that you have provided here in Towns County."

Young Harris...from Page 1A

Department of Agriculture has given notice to the City to proceed with the Sewer Improvement Project. Thus, the City has adopted a resolution authorizing the issuance and sale of a not-to-exceed \$4,771,000 promissory note as an interim receipt in connection with the City of Young Harris Water and Sewerage Revenue bond.

Finally, the Administrative Committee has made recommendations that will adjust fees related to the water and

sewer systems.

Recommendations include that the water and sewer rates be raised by three percent per year until the water and sewer systems are supporting themselves, that water and connection fees be increased to be comparable with surrounding areas, and that the water and sewer re-connection fees be raised.

These recommendations have not been voted on or resolved. A water and sewer

committee meeting was set for June 23 at 7 p.m.

On a brighter note, the playground in Mayor's Park may soon be getting a facelift. Some concerned children have contacted the City Council to repair the swings and pressure wash the equipment. Mayor Andrea Gibby said that as soon as construction on Main Street was complete, the equipment will be pressure washed, and in the meantime, the swings will be repaired.

BOE...from Page 1A

Connection Mentor Coordinator, who ran the after school program, will be moving to a new position.

"Jenny just got hired as our chorus and drama teacher, and so therefore that position was opened up. She's hiring someone to run the middle school and high school site and someone to run the elementary site," said Berrong.

The Elementary School Site Coordinator will be Cynthia Wood.

"Cynthia Wood has been working in the Family Connection office for many years now and we will be approving her as the site 21st Century Elementary School Site Coordinator since Jenny Stowers is leaving," said Berrong.

The Site Coordinator for the High School and Middle School will be Debby Horvath. "Debby has been working in the after school program for several years as well and with Jenny taking the drama and chorus position, she has recommended that Debby Horvath be hired full time in the after school

program," said Berrong.

As far as the school system itself, there are still several vacant positions in the high school, including two teaching positions and one position for football defensive coordinator.

"We do have some very good applicants," said Berrong. "We are still looking for a defensive coordinator football coach. We are getting to the point where if we have one, we have one, and if we don't, we don't. So we will probably be trying to hire somebody by the end of the week. I just can't see us waiting any longer."

There have been several applications for an economics teacher, but none of the applicants are suitable to fill the role of defensive coordinator as well as teacher. Similarly, applicants for defensive coordinator who have contacted Athletic Director Jim Melton do not have the credentials to teach economics.

"So we're running into some issues there. I don't know exactly how we're going to solve the football coaching issue, but right now I'm just

trying to figure out how to put a teacher in the classroom," said Berrong.

"As far as science goes, we haven't had very many applicants for the science position, so right now I don't even know who we possibly may hire at this point," he added.

To fight the high turnover rate of faculty in the last three years, the Board is attempting to hire only people who they are confident will stay on as long-term faculty.

"I think a lot of people come here and realize it's not really the place they thought it would be for them," said Berrong. "The grandeur of living in the mountains, I think, kind of runs out quickly, and they realize they would rather be somewhere closer to a mall or something like that."

"Hopefully some of the hires we're getting this year, I feel very comfortable and confident that I think they're actually going to stay with us," he went on. "We're not going to see the turnover that we've for the past three years in the high school."

Music On the Square continues in Hiawassee

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

This summer, the On The Map Committee of Hiawassee has produced a concert on the square every week, beginning on May 23. This week, on Saturday, June 13, the Bauman Family Band performed.

"We've been playing for about ten years since the kids were little," said husband and father of the band Jeff Bauman. "We do a little bit of everything. Most of the kids play a band instrument like trumpet, French horn, flute. They all play guitar. I'll occasionally play the drums as well."

Right now, the Bauman family does not play or write original songs. They play covers of old folk or rock songs.

"We're covering a wide variety of things from traditional stuff all the way to Bruce Springsteen and things like that. Just sort of whatever we like, we tend to cover," said Bauman. "Bruce Springsteen for this band is sort of what we model ourselves after, with a lot of background vocals. We're sort of vocal-oriented. We're normally a two or three part harmony with everything we do."

Unlike some that come to perform on the square, the Bauman family is 100 percent local. They come from Blairsville. Jeff Bauman teaches music at Young Harris College, where his oldest daughter is an art major.

"We play around here a lot. Next week we're playing at the historical courthouse in Blairsville. We do that just about every summer, too. We do a lot of summer outdoor festivals and stuff like that. Just community



stuff," said Bauman.

The Bauman family has a unique ritual to for rehearsal. Since everyone is busy throughout the day, the family wakes up early to get a family practice in before they go to work or school.

"That's when we practice, at like 7 in the morning, and then head out," said Bauman. "Because that's the only time we could get everybody together. It's always somebody had soccer practice or something in the evening."

"It was mostly a way for the family to get together and do stuff," he added. "It gets so busy we hardly ever see everybody at the same time otherwise. And so one of the things we do that's relatively unique, during the school year, we practice before school."

The band has practiced together almost every day this summer in preparation for their shows, but for Jeff, the hard work is easier to bear for the love of music.

"I really like doing these community-oriented things. This is just a cool thing. Folks

come out and it's nice. I guess that's it, music bringing people together," he said.

As scheduled, the Baumans took the stage at 6:30 p.m. and played until 8 p.m. During halftime, a young performer, Christy Bremner, treated the crowd to a vocal performance.

The On the Map Committee, OTM, has been hosting the concert on the square for 15 years.

"They had a group of people about 15 years ago that started doing this show. It was basically for local talent and stuff and it has expanded to the point the point now where we get some name-brand people coming in here every once in a while," said OTM member Tim Massey.

"Everyone involved in the production is a musician," he added. "We all have our favorites, but at the same time we go through as a group and decide who we would like to have and if we can get them. Everybody so far that we've had has been a unanimous decision."