Holmes...from Page 1A

administrator position for over 30 years, and when he retired from the hospital, he continued to serve his community by working at the Towns County Courthouse in a variety of positions for 28 years.

He retired last year from his duties with the county, and received honors in front of his family and friends in the February 2017 county meeting of Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw.

"Mr. Holmes, you don't know how much you have meant to this county," said Bradshaw at the time. "You have no idea the affect you've had on so many people in this county – it's amazing.'

advocates for seven children

standards of dedication to

make the child welfare system

responsive to the needs of

the children for whom you

advocate," said Georgia CASA

Executive Director Duaine

Hathaway, addressing Curley.

"In doing so, you inspire others

to follow your lead and put the

volunteers in Georgia, the

advocacy you provide is

considered to be of the highest

CASA Volunteer Supervisor

for Towns and Union counties,

and he nominated Curley for

Enotah CASA Volunteer

Diana Smith back in 2017,

and Smith went on to become

the 2017 recipient of both the

"Out of all the CASA

Gary Greene is the Enotah

Greene also nominated

child's future first.

the 2018 award.

quality.'

"You displayed high

concurrently.

Heritage...from Page 1A

Added the commissioner: "I just want you to know we love you and we thank you for everything you have done for Towns County." Holmes chose to wear

a multitude of hats in his community, including but not limited to the following: He was the longest

serving deacon of Friendship Baptist Church; Friendship Community Club President; member of the Georgia Hospital Association, the Georgia Health Care Association, and the Towns County Board of

Furthermore, Holmes held the state record for longest serving board of health member, with over 50 years of

Georgia Volunteer of the Year

Award and the National CASA

Association G.F. Bettineski

He was a member of the Towns County Lions Club for 61 years, where he served as president, secretary and director. Holmes received numerous Lion Awards, including the Melvin Jones Fellow Award, presented for Humanitarian Service from Lions International.

Steve Holmes is the grandfather of Julie Payne, Sharla Manglass, Blake Wilson, Jessica Wheatley, Leigh Blalock, Erica VanWagoner, Kaitlin Merwin, David Payne and Andrew Kessler.

He is the greatgrandfather of Bradley Rogers, Hudson and Ellie Blalock, Nora Manglass, Avery VanWagoner and Mary Payne.

Curley will travel in March to National CASA's annual conference, where she will stand with other CASAs from around the country in receiving recognition for her state-level award.

attending the Georgia CASA Conference in August to be officially honored for her accomplishment in front of her fellow Georgia CASA volunteers.

CASA Volunteer of the Year qualifies her for national recognition, and that award will be decided and announced at a later date.

never go away, Enotah CASA is always looking for new volunteers and accepting donations to continue its nonprofit work in these North

For more information, visit the website at

duties of a CASA."

Child Advocate of the Year Considering that there are much larger CASA districts in Georgia, some with hundreds more volunteers, the fact that two Enotah CASA volunteers received back to back Georgia Volunteer of the Year awards

"All of us at Enotah CASA have known for years that Pam is the ideal CASA volunteer, and we are thrilled she is being recognized by Georgia CASA as the Karen N. Sibley CASA Volunteer of the Year," said Enotah CASA Executive Director Linda D'Angelo. "She exemplifies compassion, tenacity, trust, team building and consistently

goes beyond the expected

speaks volumes to the level

of care being delivered by the

Enotah CASA.

She will also be

Her selection as Georgia

Because the need will Georgia communities.

EnotahCASA.org.

Hiawassee...from Page 1A

"I think we're going to do great things. The possibilities are endless.

Noblet is also new to the council, and though she swore in early during a November 2017 council work session, she signed an updated oath - one prepared for the evening by the city attorney – in the January meeting Hiawassee voters elected

Noblet to fill the remaining two years of the term started by former councilwoman Ordiales, who resigned from her council seat in August 2017 to run for mayor.

Patsy Owens was due to swear in as a member of the council during the Jan. 2 meeting, though she was unable to attend and will be sworn in presumably at an upcoming meeting.

As soon as Owens takes office, the council will consist once more of five voting members.

In April 2017, thenmayor pro tem Ordiales relinquished her council duties to run the city following the early retirement of former mayor Barbara Mathis, bringing the council total to four regular voting members.

When Ordiales resigned in August, Berrong briefly held the mayor pro tem position before Mitchell took his place, dropping the number of regular voting councilmembers to three for several months.

That number went back up to four in November, after Noblet was sworn in, and soon, Hiawassee will have a

Jay Chastain Jr. and Rayette Ross were the two departing members of the council, as their terms expired at the end of 2017.

After Ordiales and Barrett were sworn in, the new mayor filled everyone in on what she had been up to since

being elected in November. "We renewed the health benefits for the employees as they were last year," said Ordiales. "We were able to get them for 50 percent cheaper. So, that saves us a little bit of money – \$50 per month, per employee."

The mayor also said that a representative from the Department of Community Affairs had paid her a visit to alert her that the city had been operating under an out-of-date Hotel-Motel Tax agreement.

"It seems that in 2008, there were 24 different

Hiawassee City Councilwoman Amy Barrett taking her oath of office on Jan. 2. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

authorization paragraphs that were changed, and we never changed them," said Ordiales. 'So, he is going to come back. We have to do a new ordinance. but I'm waiting to get what the new ordinance looks like to make sure we have the right

"The biggest and very good news for us is that we can keep 60 percent of the revenue from motel-hotel taxes, and do whatever we want to with it. That's nice, because that's got DDA written all over it, Downtown Development Authority."

Under the current arrangement, the Towns County Chamber of Commerce receives all but \$5,000 of the city's Hotel-Motel Tax revenues, and the city. Based on DCA guidance, the upcoming new ordinance will set that ratio at 60/40 in favor of the

Ordiales also explained a recent loan payoff that will save the city thousands of dollars in interest payments over the next seven years, stemming from a meeting she had in December with the city

"As you know, we've had all those many open accounts in Park Sterling and in United Community Bank," said Ordiales. "So, I went in there with them, and I had the opportunity to say, what is this? Why do we have 37 open accounts? And they showed me why we had 37 open accounts.

"We have five pretty big loans. One of them was taken out in 1984. There were five accounts associated with that 1984 bond. So, I jumped right into that one, because it was 8.375 percent interest."

Continued Ordiales: "I started consolidating all the dollars that we had in five of those accounts that were tied to that, and we had more than enough money to pay that off. Originally, the loan was for \$274,000. And we've been paying on it for 33 years, and we owe \$139,000.

At that point in the meeting, many of the people in attendance groaned or uttered statements of disbelief – "Oh my God," "Wow," "No way,"

"Yes," said Ordiales. "I got the information from USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture). The only record that they had computerized was since 1993. From 1993 to current, we've paid \$602,253, of which \$135,000 was toward

"So, I hurried up and went over to the bank, consolidated all those CDs with Cenlya, and we had over \$150,000, so we paid that loan off. The reason we had to do it now is, the next payment was due Jan. 1.

"If we didn't do it prior to that, we would have to have paid another \$25,803 toward nothing, toward all that interest payment. We paid that off, sent them a check. That's one gone, and five accounts that we were able to consolidate.

Mayor Ordiales said that she plans to continue chipping away at the city's outstanding debts, and will focus next on another old bond with an interest rate of 5 percent.

"I promise you guys we're going to do great things in the city," said Ordiales, wrapping up the meeting. "We're going to get a hold of all these weird financial things we've got going on.

"I'll explain everything to you so you know what's going on. Some of it, like this (1984 bond), made absolutely no sense that we paid that much interest on such an old Continued Ordiales:

"So, we're going to make good things happen. I promise you, you'll know everything. I promise – transparency at its finest.'

As for new business in the Jan. 2 council meeting, the council added Ordiales to all the city's bank accounts, now down to 20 from 37, and also approved a beer and wine license for Fred's Super

Homecoming...from Page 1A

all will make an appearance during the halftime of the Boys Basketball Homecoming Game on Friday, Jan. 12.

One of the seniors will be crowned 2018 Basketball Homecoming Queen that evening, and the stands are expected to be filled with multiple generations of Towns County students, all cheering on the basketball players and the Homecoming Court. "We're one of the

unique school systems that has Basketball and Football Homecoming, so we try to not do them exactly the same," said TCHS Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs. "Football Homecoming is just for seniors.

"For Basketball Homecoming, we include the underclassmen. So, the freshmen vote for their person, and the person with the most votes is on Homecoming Court. And then the same with sophomores (et cetera)." Continued Dr. Hobbs:

"So, we have a freshman, a sophomore and a junior representative. For seniors, they choose five from their class, so we have a total of eight girls." Basketball Homecoming

is an exciting time of year for

students – winter break is over, and the beginning of spring semester marks the halfway point in the school year. It's the perfect time for a schoolwide celebration. 'The underclassmen

really enjoy being a part of it, and they get excited every year when we vote on Homecoming,



Emma Kate Ledford was crowned 2017 Basketball Homecoming Queen on Jan. 20, 2017. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

because they're included in this," said Dr. Hobbs. "They all just really love it and look forward to it, and it gives the underclassmen an opportunity to participate."

On Friday, Jan. 12, the high school will hold a pep rally in the afternoon to get students pumped up ahead of the big evening.

"We're pieing a teacher in the face, we're doing a couple of cheers, the cheerleaders are performing and doing a dance," said Dr. Hobbs. "And then, we're playing a fun, peprally type basketball game.

"All the winter sports athletes, the wrestlers and the basketball players, they're going to all be recognized, as well as the girls on Homecoming."

Homecoming is a timehonored tradition where those who came before return to cheer on those who will be following in their footsteps.

And as Dr. Hobbs said, not many schools have a Basketball Homecoming, so Towns County High is definitely unique in that regard. "This community,

basketball has a special place in their heart, I think," said Dr. Hobbs. "We had Basketball Homecoming for a long time before football was ever even a sport here. "I feel like the community

would like to keep it going, and I think it's a great thing for the community. Basketball has won a lot of championships. we've got a lot of titles in the past, and it just seems to be a special sport for this community."

Boys and Girls Homecoming Games will be played against Hebron Christian at home in the Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium at the schools on Jan. 12. JV games start at 4 p.m. and Varsity games start at 7 p.m.

Young Harris...from Page 1A

Miller occupied Post 3 and served in that capacity on the Young Harris City Council for six and a half years. When he resigned, Miller still had a remaining two years on his

Since Miller's resignation, the council has been set with a difficult decision regarding the vacant seat, especially since the city just had an election only weeks prior to Miller's departure.

Young Harris City Attorney Marvin Harkins has been diligently advising the council on which steps would be most practical for the council to pursue, one of which being a special election for the seat.

Other options included waiting until the city's updated charter goes into effect in the spring, though that would leave a vacant seat for longer than much of the council felt comfortable with.

While the cost of a special election is no small amount for the city – an estimated \$10,000 - it seemed to the council to be the only solution to filling yet another vacant seat. Miller is the third councilmember to resign in the last six months.

"Obviously, we're a councilmember down," said Harkins. "In discussions that we've had in the past about the charter, the way the current charter is set up, if there are six months remaining on a councilmember's term, then the council can then appoint someone to take that seat. However, in the revised charter, it states that if there is 24 months left on the term. then the council has the option to appoint someone. But,



Young Harris City Councilman Donald Keys sitting next to Deputy City Clerk Nicolette Wade. Photo/Lily Avery

not in place yet.

"So, the scenarios are basically that you call the special election for March and if enough people qualify, then you have an election. But if one person qualifies, then you call the election off and that person basically gets the council seat.

"If nobody qualifies, then there will not be an election. And in that scenario, until the charter is enacted and upon adoption, in April, May, or June, you'll be in the position where you can appoint someone to the position.'

As of right now, the council has decided to hold a special election for Post 3 on March 20. However. if there are no qualifying participants for the election, the council will then have the option of appointing a new councilmember to Post 3, according to the city's

Qualifying fee for the March 2018 special election will be \$72 for the council seat.

obviously, that new charter is Dates for qualifying for the election will be posted closer to time for the election.

> Also during the meeting, Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby, Councilman Lynne Nation and Councilman Donald Keys were sworn into office by City Clerk Shirley Jarrard

Mayor pro tem and other committee appointments also were made during last week's meeting, and Matt Miller was once again voted to serve as mayor pro tem.

The following council members have taken on the following committee assignments in 2018: Dr. John Kelley, Jared Champion and Lynne Nation on Water/ Sewer Committee; all council members on the Administrative Committee; Jared Champion, Donald Keys and Matt Miller on Street/Tree Committee; Lynn Nations as the Planning Committee Representative; Jared Champion as Library Board Representative and City Clerk Shirley Jarrard will continue in her position as

Burglaries...from Page 1A

by receiving stolen property and one count attempted burglary, per a TCSO new release.

Ashley Lauren Patterson, 22, of Blairsville, was also arrested as a result of the ongoing investigation, and she has been charged with one count of making false statements to an officer, per the release.

Zachary and Ashley Patterson are husband and wife, according to the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

Prior to the Patterson arrests, on Nov. 21, 2017, Towns County made two other arrests related to reported burglaries and thefts in the Woodlake Circle area of Young Harris, as well as the Bugscuffle Road area of Hiawassee, per the TCSO news release.

The two burglary suspects arrested then were Jonathon Caleb Hart, 24, and Kristy Megaha, 37, both of Young Harris, per the release. Hart was arrested and

charged with one count of burglary in the first degree, one count of burglary in the second degree and one count theft by receiving stolen property, per the release.

Megaha was arrested and charged with one count of

burglary, per the release. "The residential burglary reported on Bugscuffle Road on Nov. 21 around noon was solved very quickly due to the quick response of (Towns County) Sheriff's Office investigators,' read the release. "Most of the stolen property in that burglary was recovered by that afternoon by investigators.

'The first suspect, Caleb Hart, was also located the same day and arrested. As the investigation continued in the days that followed, the trio of Caleb Hart, Kristy Megaha and Zack Patterson were linked to additional burglaries and

"The victim of one of the burglaries was a relative to one of the suspects. Ashley Patterson, the wife of Zack Patterson, upon being questioned about the burglaries and thefts, was arrested for making false statements to investigators as to information that she provided to them."

The investigation remains active and ongoing, and additional charges are likely, according to the sheriff's

"The quick response and diligent police work of our detectives put an end to this group's crime spree," said Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton. "I am very pleased with the job our deputies are doing to protect the property of our citizens."

In an unrelated incident

on Dec. 30, 2017, deputies with the Towns County Sheriff's Office arrested Jeffery Dale Plott, 46, of Young Harris, per a TCSO news release.

Superintendent of Elections.

He was charged with one count of violating the Georgia Controlled Substances Act for possession of methamphetamine, per the

Plott's arrest was made on Byers Creek Road in Young Harris following a traffic stop involving a black Toyota Tacoma pickup, per the release.

The Georgia State Patrol assisted Towns County deputies with the traffic stop, per the release.

SMART Recovery program SMART Recovery (Self-

Management And Recovery Training) helps individuals gain independence from addiction (substances or activities). by providing an educational and supporting environment based on SMART Recovery 4 Point Program. We teach self-empower-

ment for recovery from addiction, drug abuse, alcoholism and alcohol abuse, by teaching how to change self-defeating thinking, emotions, and actions; and to work towards long-term satisfactions and quality of life. For more information

call 706-994-3692; 76 Hunt Martin Street, Blairsville, GA.