

# Towns County Herald

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## Tate City recognized as a Firewise USA Community

By Todd Forrest  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Last week, Tate City became the 22nd Firewise Community here in Towns County and the 94th in the State of Georgia.

The Firewise recognition was held on Wednesday, Aug. 29, at the Tate City Community Center, and it featured dignitaries from both Towns and Rabun counties, as well as Atlanta and Washington, D.C.

Since surviving a near-miss in 2016, when wildfires swept through northeast Georgia and southwest North Carolina, Tate City residents have doubled down on community responsibility to protect their people, property and natural resources from the risk of wildfires.

"Tate City is known for being a very independent,

very isolated community, and quite frankly, we like it that way," said Judy Potter, Tate City Firewise Coordinator. "But everything in our world changed on Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2016."

That day, a number of Tate City residents went out in search of emergency services, "and whoever reached a phone first was to call and report that someone had set four fires," said Potter.

About two weeks later, after the flames jumped the final water source providing a buffer for her home, the wildfire came dangerously close to Potter's house on the southern end of Tate City.

"I left Atlanta to get five items out of my house, but I was otherwise prepared to say goodbye to my home," said Potter. "When I arrived, the firefighters were like ants

around this community, and everyone that I met told me, 'We will look after your house and keep you safe.'

"Because of that, I felt better, and even sent out an email to the community that said, 'We're going to make it through this.' Tate City made it through the fire without losing a single structure, not even a shed. And that was because we had some amazing people come in and protect us."

Following Potter's remarks that Wednesday, Frank Riley, who is the executive director of the Chastatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council and serves as the Georgia Firewise Liaison, addressed the standing-room only crowd, beginning with the recognition of local county officials:

Mark Wiles, Michael Courcy and Jim Roberts of

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L-R: Frank Riley, Tony Harkins, Harold Copeland, Smokey Bear and Judy Potter during the Firewise USA presentation at the Tate City Community Center on Aug. 29.

Photo by Todd Forrest

## TCHS Principal: 'Come support our kids for Homecoming'



The 2018 Towns County High School Girls and Boys Football Homecoming Courts.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

Homecoming is always a special time of year, when alumni return to their alma mater to watch the big game and witness the proverbial passing of the torch, or in this case, the tiara.

This year, Towns County High School will be celebrating Homecoming on Friday, Sept. 7, and the Indians football team will face Andrews, North Carolina, starting at 7:30 p.m. in Frank McClure Memorial

Stadium.

The halftime will feature the time-honored Homecoming tradition, in which the girls are escorted onto the field and one of them is crowned Homecoming Queen.

2017 Homecoming Queen Hannah Whitehead will be returning this year all the way from Georgia Southern University to crown her 2018 counterpart.

The 2018 Girls Homecoming Court includes Taylor Cornett, Emily Williams, Kristen Byers, Kaitlyn Crowder, Kenzlee Denton, Ella Bury,

Jenna Coker, Tori Van Tassel, Carly Woodard and Erika Spano.

"Something I thought that was interesting, when we voted this year, every single girl was voted for by someone," said TCHS Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs. "So, every girl in the high school was nominated, and we choose whoever had the most votes in the Top 10. But every single girl got a vote."

On the boys side are Andrew Griffin, Lane Denton, Jacob Parker, Blaine Rogers, Walker Winn, Will Travis, Tyler

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## Ordiales appointed to UGA/GMA Training Board

By Mark Smith  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales has been appointed to a four-year term on the Municipal Training Board of the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute.

Conducted jointly by the University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the Georgia Municipal Association, the Training Institute is a series of voluntary training programs for mayors, council members and managers.

Laura J. Meadows, director of the Carl Vinson Institute, informed Ordiales of her appointment in a letter dated Aug. 1, 2018.

"The Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute was created through an Act of the Georgia General Assembly," explained Meadows. "This state law requires the Carl Vinson Institute of Government to establish, in consultation with the Georgia Municipal Association, a committee of



Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales

municipal officers to design, implement and administer the course of training and education required by this Act.

"This committee is now known as the Municipal Training Board. I am delighted to announce your appointment to the Municipal Training Board as the District 2 representative."

Ordiales was excited for

the news, of course, as she feels her appointment will give a greater voice to small cities like Hiawassee, with its population of 907 people.

"These folks are responsible for the future of training for all of our municipalities for the whole state," said Ordiales. "And they work closely with GMA. So, to

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## Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Joy Parks takes the bench

By Mark Smith  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Standing across from Gov. Nathan Deal at the Georgia State Capitol with her husband and daughter at her side, Joy Parks swore in as the new Superior Court Judge of the Enotah Judicial Circuit on Tuesday, Aug. 14.

Formerly the chief judge on the White County Magistrate Court, Parks is now serving alongside Chief Judge N. Stanley Gunter and Judge Raymond George on the Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court.

Parks heard her first case as a Superior Court judge on Sept. 4, and she is looking forward to a long career serving the residents of Union, Towns, White and Lumpkin counties.

Initially, Parks caught the law bug as a high school student working part-time for a law office in Helen.

She continued working for that law office while attending



Judge Joy Parks swearing in as a Superior Court judge of the Enotah Judicial Circuit. Pictured here with daughter Annabelle, husband Robert Head and Gov. Nathan Deal at the Georgia State Capitol on Aug. 14.

the University of Georgia, then moved on to work for another law firm as she earned her Juris Doctor from the Mercer University School of Law.

And it was during her time with this second law office that she came to understand her calling.

"After working with that lawyer, just seeing the way he

could help people with the law, that's what piqued my interest in it. From there, that's what I chose to pursue," said Parks.

She graduated from Mercer in 1993, then practiced law for a couple of years before heading back to school, this time to the University of Nottingham

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## Sheriff's Office makes several arrests in recent weeks



Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton, center, with Investigators Jay McCarter and Langdon Beard. Pictured here: thousands of dollars in recovered stolen property.

News Special  
Towns County Herald

Town County Sheriff's Investigators have recovered over \$20,000 worth of stolen property identified to have come from a reported burglary in the Fodder Creek Road area.

The burglary was reported to the Sheriff's Office on Aug. 15, and investigators recovered most of the stolen firearms on Friday, Aug. 24, in a wooded area within the Swallow Creek Wildlife Management Area of Towns County.

A U.S. Forrest Ranger

assisted investigators with the recovery of one of the stolen firearms, along with other miscellaneous items.

The stolen property recovered included over \$10,000 worth of silver.

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Lake Levels

Blue Ridge	1,681.54
Chatuge	1,922.92
Nottely	1,771.02

**FOOTBALL**

Fri. Sept 7 vs. Andrews, NC 7 PM

**SOFTBALL**

Sept. 5 vs. Prince Ave. 4:45 PM

*High Heels & HARDHATS*

CASINO NIGHT GALA

North Georgia Technical College Conference Center 6:30pm

September 8th

**Jerry Taylors speaking to Towns County Historical Society**

Sept. 10th

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**BRMEMC Annual Meeting**

September 8th