

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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50 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 87 Number 47

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

Board of elections investigating Hiawassee voter rolls

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Board of Elections and Registration spent half of last week and the beginning of this one looking into Hiawassee voter rolls.

Specifically, Board Chair Janet Oliva and office staff looked to see if all of the 612 registered Hiawassee voters (as of Aug. 24) had clear residency status based on Georgia election code requirements for residency, one such requirement being a residence within the city.

Apparently and for some years now, there have been people registering to vote based on their business properties being located within Hiawassee City Limits, all the while their actual residences were located outside of city limits.

"Residency is defined in the law as intent for it to become your permanent domicile, at least for the time being," said Board Co-Chair Mark Dehler. "It's measured by several factors. The most common that we all think about is, where do you sleep at night? And for most everybody, that's their home,

not their business."

The board decided to undertake this task after the matter came to their attention recently via John Holmes, a candidate for Hiawassee City Council's Special Municipal Election to be held Nov. 8.

Oliva said that Rayette Ross – her sister and Holmes' opponent in the upcoming Hiawassee Special Municipal Election – is in agreement with Holmes, that the board of elections should be fair and consistent in determining voter residency qualifications.

According to advice from Chris Harvey, elections division director out of the Secretary of

State's office, the board is compelled to address the issue now that it has become aware an issue exists.

"As long as it's not done within so many days of an election, if we have an issue, we have a right and a duty to examine the qualifications of certain voters if there's a question," said Oliva.

Board members met in a special called meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 20, to discuss how to proceed, and it was decided that the investigation should be conducted without delay.

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Towns County Board of Elections and Registration Chair Janet Oliva explains to the rest of the board why they need to go through the voter rolls.

Towns County High School celebrates Homecoming over two days



The 2016-2017 TCHS Homecoming Court

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County High School students will be voting this week on their next Homecoming Queen and King

from a pool of very talented seniors.

The 2016 Football Homecoming Court consists of 10 girls and 10 boys:

Mekenna Cook, Madison Stroud, Amaria Barrett, Kirsten

Ledford, Amanda Donnelly, Alexis Pettengill, Sierra Oakes, Kristen Henson, Madison Landress, Summer Nations, Adam Barrett, Will De Vries, Major Moss, Joshua Goeltz, Nick Shook, Walker Ross,

Kobe Denton, Luke Ledford, Colten Shook and Andrew Rogers.

Homecoming King will be crowned at the Pep Rally that kicks off the Homecoming

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Deputy Henderson in serious condition

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Union County Sheriff's Office has been missing one of its own since Monday, Sept. 19, as Deputy Mitchell Henderson fights to mend in Northeast Georgia Medical Center.

As of press time, Deputy Henderson's condition was considered serious but stable, according to UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn.

Deputy Henderson sustained several injuries during his single-car accident the morning of Sept. 19, including a brain injury, though his condition "improved tremendously over the weekend," and Lt. Osborn said he was expected to move forward this week with important medical procedures.

The 25-year-old deputy is a native of Young Harris,



Deputy Mitchell Henderson

where he currently resides.

Henderson had just started his shift and was on his way to a wreck in Union County that Monday morning, between 5 a.m. and 6 a.m., when another deputy radioed

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Millage rate, ethics discussed

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The City of Young Harris is setting its 2016 millage rate the same as last year, at 2.965, which will result in fewer tax dollars collected than in 2015.

For this year's tax bills, the city is aiming to collect \$32,775 in city property taxes, which is a net loss of \$866 in property taxes over 2015.

As discussed in the September meeting of Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby and city council, the council is expected to set the city's millage rate in the Oct. 4 regular monthly meeting, which begins at 7 p.m. inside Young Harris City Hall.

Immediately preceding the Oct. 4 regular meeting will be a public meeting on the city's Comprehensive Plan, to begin at 6 p.m.

Another topic in the meeting was the ongoing discussion over the current ethics ordinance and its



Young Harris City Council will set the yearly millage rate at the Oct. 4 regular council meeting.

proposed replacement.

And the tone of the discussion has apparently changed, as a few days after the regular meeting, the Young Harris Ethics Committee reversed course on its previous treatment of an ethics complaint filed in January.

As background, an

ethics complaint was lodged at the beginning of the year, concerning a potential conflict of interest for four members of the city council: Angi Smith, Jared Champion, Stuart Miller and Samuel Leslie.

The above-listed

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Houser honored as System Teacher of the Year

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Behind every good book of literature is an English teacher who took the time to encourage a student, and Towns County High School's Christa Houser is one such educator.

At this month's Towns County Board of Education meeting, Houser was voted as not only TCHS Teacher of the Year, but also the System TOTY.

When presented with the extraordinary award, Houser was speechless, saying she could not believe that, out of all the wonderful teachers in Towns County, she was chosen to receive such an honor.

"There are incredible teachers here," said Houser. "Humbling is all I can say. I'm just so humbled and honored."

Houser, a 1993 Towns County High School graduate, received her postsecondary



Christa Houser, an English teacher at Towns County High School, goes over an assignment with Corrina Luckenbach, who is a freshman honor student.

education at Mercer University, where she majored in English before continuing at Wesleyan College to pursue education.

Before college, Houser said she had never thought of teaching as a career path,

and thought her talents only extended into the realm of reading and writing. However, one college English professor made her consider otherwise.

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Gas supplies expected to return to normal this week

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Gov. Nathan Deal expressed his optimism that gas supplies will return to normal this week, after yet another weekend of shortages at stations around the area.

For the past couple of weeks, motorists in several southeastern states have gotten used to seeing bagged pump handles or signs reading "Regular Unleaded Only."

Locally, deliveries have been regular for most stations, though not all have had gas at the same time, compounding the problem by increasing demand at individual stations until a station runs out, at which point another station will have received a shipment.

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People were still having to line up to get gas this weekend, as area shortages kept pumps dry all over town. Supply is supposed to return to normal this week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Charlie Daniels keeps the legend alive at fairgrounds

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

It is always a good show when the Charlie Daniels Band comes to Town, and this year was no exception when the Country Music star played at the Anderson Music Hall on Saturday, Sept. 24.

The high-intensity concert featured Charlie Daniels hits both new and old, from "The South Is Gonna Do it Again" to "The Legend of Wooley Swamp," and even a few tracks from his new album, "Nighthawk."

Daniels wowed the crowd with blazing fiddle solos and slamming guitar progressions, showing everyone in the near-capacity music hall just how excited he was to be back in good ol' Georgia.

"It's great to be down here in Dixie," said Daniels after his starting set. "There's nothing like it."



Here, Charlie Daniels performs "The Legend of Wooley Swamp," a song featuring his famous fiddle.

And just when Daniels fans thought they knew what the Country Music legend was all about, Daniels included a surprise rendition of Bob Dylan's

"Tangled Up in Blue."

The cover left no questions as to why the newly inducted Country Music Hall of Famer

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