

Elections...from Page 1A

This is because the deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 8 election is Oct. 11, a mere two weeks from now.

Should a Hiwassee voter's residency be challenged by the board and determined as not meeting the requirements, that voter will need to have time to re-register wherever they do have residency.

In order to challenge a voter's residency, the board must hold hearings, in which the person whose residency is being challenged will receive the opportunity to argue their case for residency in front of the board.

The first step past the Sept. 20 initial meeting was a called meeting for Tuesday, Sept. 27, starting at 4 p.m., during which the elections board reported on those businesses found to be in potential conflict with the residency requirements established by state law.

Results from that meeting were not available at press time Monday, though the board was expected to have determined a time for the hearings and a list of those whose Hiwassee residency status was called into question.

In going through the rolls, Oliva and office staff examined tax records to check for listed residences, or, for example, if a voter registered in Hiwassee had claimed a homestead exemption elsewhere in the county.

Should the board determine in an upcoming hearing that a Hiwassee



Township Finance Director Andrea Anderson went through an itemized list of the Board of Election's budget in the called meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 20.

voter doesn't actually meet the residency requirements to be registered to vote within Hiwassee City Limits, that voter will be kicked from the voter registration, and will simply need to re-register based on their actual residence, wherever that may be.

Elections Division Director Harvey offered further guidance to the board, that there may be precedent to allow a business owner to register their place of business as their residence if the business has had appropriate living space added to it, such as a suite.

Also in the meeting, the board heard from Township Finance Director Andrea Anderson, who reported to the board that they had already gone over budget for the year by about \$4,000 up to that point in September,

and must therefore submit a revised budget for the rest of the year.

The board's budget is based on the calendar year, and the current budget was decided in 2015 to last through Dec. 31, 2016.

As for why the board is over budget, it has been busier than usual this election cycle. The board had to hold a runoff in the summer, and has hired new staff this year due to the retirement of longtime registrar Irma Nichols, among other unbudgeted items.

The board agreed in the Sept. 20 called meeting that Board Chair Oliva and office staff will work on the proposed budget revision, and the board will get a chance to vote on the revised budget in its next regular meeting on Oct. 12.

Hebron Christian Academy will kick off at 7:30 p.m. Friday night.

Homecoming Queen will be crowned during halftime of Friday night's game in Frank McClure Memorial Stadium.

Homecoming...from Page 1A

Carnival that will be held around the high school track on Thursday, Sept. 29, at 6:30 p.m.

The Homecoming Parade will be held at the schools at 2 p.m. this Friday, and the big Homecoming Game against

Henderson...from Page 1A

to Henderson that he would handle the accident instead, according to Lt. Osborn.

"And Henderson didn't answer - then they dispatched a wreck in Towns County," said Lt. Osborn.

The accident is still under investigation, but for some reason Henderson's vehicle left the road a little ways past Gibby's Furniture on GA 515 headed toward Union County, according to Lt. Osborn.

His patrol car spun after leaving the road and ended up hitting a tree on the driver's side. Towns County Fire & Rescue responded to the scene

to extricate Henderson by cutting off the top of his vehicle.

Henderson was then transported by Towns County EMS to Union General Hospital. Due to foggy conditions that morning, he couldn't be airlifted, so he was taken from there by Union General EMS to Northeast Georgia Medical Center, according to Lt. Osborn.

UCSO escorted the ambulance to Gainesville, and received assistance from law enforcement agencies in White and Hall counties to help clear the route.

Since he arrived in Gainesville, Henderson has been surrounded by family and friends. He has family staying in a hotel nearby, and the Union County Sheriff's Office has had a deputy at the hospital around the clock.

Lt. Osborn says that prayers for Henderson and his family are more than welcome during this difficult time. For major updates to Henderson's condition, stay tuned to the "Union County - Georgia Sheriff's Office" Facebook page.

There has already been a successful GoFundMe account set up to give the community a way to show their support, which can also be found on the UCSO Facebook page.

Millage...from Page 1A



Councilman John Kelley and Councilwoman Angi Smith listen as Mayor Andrea Gibby talks about the need to hold a public meeting on the Comprehensive Plan. The council agreed to hold that meeting at 6 p.m. on Oct. 4, before the start of the regular meeting.

members are all employees of Young Harris College, and the complaint asked for clarification of potential areas of conflict, namely whether a vote on any matter concerning the college - their employer - would be in violation of the city's ethics ordinance.

In response to the complaint, the Young Harris Ethics Committee said the following, which the council heard in February: "No city official, prior to discussion or vote on an issue, should fail to disclose substantial personal or financial interest in the issue, or fail to recuse himself from discussion or vote on the issue."

This seemed to suggest that, yes, the four members would be in violation of the city's ethics ordinance if they voted on matters concerning the college.

The council entertained discussions back in March and more recently about reworking the city's ethics ordinance to be less restrictive, and they reached out to attorney David Syfan, who specializes in matters of municipal law.

Initially, the council approached Syfan to ask for a redraft to mirror the state's ethics ordinance standards. Syfan supplied two letters of opinion in August, which were turned over to the Ethics Committee.

Syfan's opinions concluded that there wasn't a significant conflict of interest for several reasons, including that the four councilmembers who are employed by the college do not serve as "administrative management

executives" for Young Harris College, and therefore do not "make core management decisions" concerning college business.

Further, Syfan suggested that the Ethics Committee may have overstepped its bounds by not following "the due process procedure of the Ethics Ordinance" in issuing a "public reprimand as to one or more City Councilmembers" following the councilmembers' decision to vote on recent issue concerning the college.

Responding to Syfan's letters just a few days after the September council meeting, the Ethics Committee said the following:

"We the members of the Ethics Committee, have used the Code of Ethics (passed June 7, 2011) as our basis to determine whether ethics complaints are valid or not. We assumed that the Code of Ethics conformed with the laws of the state of Georgia as stated on page one of the Ethics Ordinance.

"However, upon reviewing two letters from Attorney R. David Syfan, we find that state case law authority defends 'conflict of interest' differently than the Young Harris City Code of Ethics, thus requiring the City Code to be rewritten in this area.

"Therefore, the Ethics Committee withdraws the 'Ethics Reprimand' (1-15-16) against certain City Council members and will reconsider the complaint after the Code re-write."

Now, it seems the

Ethics Committee is in favor of an ethics code rewrite, which Syfan emailed to the council and mayor on Sept. 13.

According to Syfan, the proposed revised ethics ordinance "is now consistent with general state law as provided by statutes and case law."

The current ordinance, which stands to soon be replaced, practically mirrors the example provided by the Georgia Municipal Association. Adopting that ordinance helped Young Harris to become a "GMA City of Ethics."

In Syfan's Sept. 13 email, he stated: "I attempted to retain as much of the old ordinance as I could, but revised the ordinance to bring it into compliance with state law."

For now, it is uncertain whether these revisions will have an impact on the city's designation as a "GMA City of Ethics."

As far as Syfan's status as acting city attorney concerning the handling of the ethics ordinance business, there was some concern over his cost to the city up to that point (Sept. 6) - nearly \$4,000 - for having provided two letters of opinion without an ordinance redraft, which was provided a week after the meeting.

Councilmembers also reviewed a second, similar ethics complaint that was lodged just prior to the regular meeting.

The proposed revised ordinance will be on the agenda at the Oct. 4 regular council meeting.

Houser...from Page 1A



TCHS Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs and Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong present Houser with System TOTY at the September monthly BOE meeting.

"I had an English professor, Mary Wilder, at Mercer," said Houser. "We all called her Bloody Mary because you'd get your papers back and they'd be bleeding there would be so much red ink."

"But she told me one day that if I didn't teach, I would miss something in my life. It was one of those conversations that the whole world kind of shifts for a minute. So, I took one education class and hated it, but I took another one."

"Then I sat in on this high school class, and they were reading something that I loved, so I got up and started talking to the students. The teacher I was observing thought I was insane because I was just supposed to be sitting there, doing nothing. I knew in that moment."

Houser officially began her career as an educator in 1998 and has not looked back since. Her first year was spent teaching English at Westside High School in Macon. According to Houser, it was an urban school so large that police officers would ride their bicycles down the middle of the hall.

Coming from a small town background, Houser found it difficult to relate to the students, and soon thereafter transferred to Perry High School, where she spent a large portion of her time as an educator - eight years to be exact.

"My mentor, Sharon Lee, taught at that school and she recruited me," said Houser. "She

was my department head and she really was my inspiration. It was at Perry High School that things happened. That was my place."

After Houser and her husband had their second child, the two found themselves wanting to move back to their roots. Houser quickly found a job at Rabun County High School, where she taught for two years before taking eight years off to homeschool her children.

"I left the paycheck but I didn't stop teaching," said Houser. "I homeschooled my kids, and we were part of a group so I taught there."

"It's funny because I always teased my students that I would teach for free if my husband would let me. Then I finally did it. That was a cool experience because I learned that it's not only what I do, but it's who I am."

Now, years later and with many wonderful experiences under her belt, Houser has made her way back to Towns County High School, teaching in the same classroom in which she took ninth grade literature.

When asked why she feels literature and learning are so important, Houser responded:

"You're only going to live one life if you don't read. It opens up the world and lets students experience life through another lens, and that's so, so important."

Gas...from Page 1A

All the trouble started when a massive fuel leak in Colonial Pipeline's Line 1 was discovered in Alabama on Friday, Sept. 9, prompting a 12-day shutdown of the line.

The pipeline in question carries gas from Gulf Coast refineries in Texas all the way to North Carolina, where it continues up the East Coast to New Jersey.

Bad weather and fumes delayed the repair process, and after more than a week without a fix, the Atlanta-based company began work on a bypass segment

that would allow the line to be restarted.

That work came to a head on Wednesday, Sept. 21, when Colonial Pipeline finally restarted the line.

Throughout this ordeal, Gov. Deal has issued several executive orders aimed at keeping Georgians supplied with gas. One such order, extended several times by the governor, allowed fuel truck drivers to operate under extended delivery hours.

"We've extended the executive order for another three days to ensure that the supply of gasoline is as abundant as possible," said Deal in a

statement on Sept. 22. "The new executive order expires at midnight Sept. 26, by which point normal supplies should have been restored."

The governor issued another executive order last week that reiterated state law prohibiting price gouging. Prices have indeed increased at the pump, but for the most part they have hovered between \$2.09 and \$2.50 around the region.

AAA representatives have said that, while gas price averages rose some \$0.28 in Georgia during the 12-day line shutdown, prices have begun to fall since the line was restarted, a trend that The Auto Club

Group anticipates will continue this year.

"The reduction in pump prices are a good sign that supplies are reaching the areas most affected by the outage," said Mark Jenkins with AAA. "It could take a couple of weeks, but prices should eventually return to levels seen before the leak, then fall in-line with other states as they follow a downward trend through the rest of the year."

As for the leak, the next step is to clean up the 336,000 gallons of lost fuel in Shelby County, Alabama, and for investigators to figure out what caused the leak in the first place.

Daniels...from Page 1A

will forever be a Country Music icon, as he took the Classic Rock hit and added a twist that only Daniels could pull off - fiddling.

"It's hard to really explain him, he's just great," said Charles Paris, a longtime Daniels fan from Gainesville. "I still remember the first time I ever saw him in 1972 with Lynyrd Skynyrd."

"But this is about my 10th time seeing him now. Anytime he's around, I always try to go see him. Out of all the songs, I love 'The Devil Went Down To Georgia,' but really I can't pick just one. I love them all."

Opening for Daniels that evening was Atlanta-based musician Thomas Fountain. Fountain, a Jasper native, has opened for big country music acts before, such as Kellie Pickler and Trace Adkins, but says nothing compares to the privilege of kicking things off for Daniels.

"He's definitely a legend and a Country Music Hall of Famer," said Fountain. "So, anytime that someone like me, an up and coming artist, gets the chance to do something like this, it's really an honor."

"Getting to share the stage with him is great. Plus, we're a little on the traditional side too, so we feel like it's a good fit. We're really excited about it."

Fountain was not the only one excited to share an experience with Daniels. Fans showed up early and stayed late, traveling from far and wide to see



The Charlie Daniels Band played at the Anderson Music Hall on Saturday, Sept. 24.

the beloved musician.

For one couple, Hal and Debbie Allen from Hayesville, North Carolina, Saturday night was not their first rodeo seeing Daniels - they remember going to his concerts back in the '70s.

"I love 'Uneasy Rider 88,'" said Hal. "That song really cracks me up. Charlie Daniels, he's a legend. This isn't my first time seeing him, but I'd never pass up getting a chance to go to one of his concerts."

While Daniels fans span the generations, he held a special place in one Towns County High School student's heart. Senior Dakota Wade patiently waited for Daniels before the Meet

and Greet, hoping to catch a glimpse of the artist that had such

Red Cross yard sale

Come on out for a good cause and get some good buys. Our local Red Cross Disaster Action Team is having its annual yard sale at its office at 1298 Jack Dayton Circle, Young Harris, right next to the EMA and Towns Co. Food Pantry, October 7 & 8th.

This yard sale is amazing, many of your neighbors have been contributing things for this sale and we can't wait to share them with you.

an influence on both himself and his father throughout the years.

"My dad, in his senior yearbook, he had a picture of him and Charlie," said Wade. "So, I want to be able to recreate that for my senior yearbook, since it was such a special thing for him. I love Charlie Daniels."

No Charlie Daniels concert would be complete without the hit that started the Daniels revolution so many years ago, "The Devil Went Down To Georgia." As Daniels fired up his fiddle, the crowd rose to its feet and sang in unison, and everyone was happy that Charlie Daniels came down to Hiwassee.

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band will be performing at the Anderson Music Hall on Saturday, Oct. 1, starting at 7 p.m. Tickets will be on sale at the gate as well as online at georgiamountainfairgrounds.com.

Don't forget to come out and get some great buys and donate to a great organization. All funds raised will assist residents in Towns County in various disaster situations and preparedness. Your help and support would be greatly appreciated. Come on out and join us!

Giant Annual Yard Sale - Friday 10/7 and Saturday 10/8 (both days from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.).