

Towns County Herald

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Barrett Miss Georgia Mountain Fair

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Drum roll, please – and the 2016 Miss Georgia Mountain Fair is Amaira Barrett.

She was crowned the winner of this year's pageant after an evening of swimsuit competition, followed by a question and answer session, which took place at the pageant on Monday, July 18, in Anderson Music Hall.

Barrett is a Towns County local and represented her area proudly throughout the pageant.

"It was a little overwhelming at first," said Barrett. "I knew two days before orientation that I was going to do the pageant. Even though it was such short notice, I thought, 'Why not.'"

"I've grown up here and it has a lot of sentimental value

to me, so of course, I would do it. And, what girl doesn't like to dress up in a fancy gown and feel like a princess?"

"I definitely don't regret that I ended up participating. It really hasn't even set in yet that I've won. When I was a little girl, I would always see those beauty pageants and always really want to be those girls."

"Now, today, I finally am one of those girls. I feel super honored because I'm a local girl. I grew up here. This is my home."

"Just being able to represent my family and all these good people, that's something I can't believe. It's wonderful. I'm truly honored."

Barrett, 17, is an upcoming senior at Towns County High School. After graduation, she hopes to attend college to become an occupational therapist.

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Mia Manto, Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2014, crowns 17-year-old Amaira Barrett as Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2016. The competition was an experiment in family-fun entertainment. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

No petition candidates ahead of EMC elections

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – Unlike the elections held at the last two annual meetings of the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, the meeting this September will feature not a single petition candidate for the EMC's board of directors, according to EMC Board Chair Steven Phillips.

But that's because petitions are no longer necessary.

"When somebody contacted the Nominating Committee this year, they were nominated," said Phillips, who was elected two years ago as a petition candidate. "Over the years past, they had a little bit of trouble out of that being nominated – that's why I went in by petition, and most of the



Steven Phillips

people on the board went in by petition up until now.

"But now, if the Nominating Committee was

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January ethics complaint leads to ordinance rework

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – Last year's municipal election for the City of Young Harris resulted in an interesting council dynamic, bringing the total number of councilmembers employed by Young Harris College up to four out of six.

These four council members are: Angi Smith, who was sworn in during the October 2015 regular meeting ahead of an uncontested special election; Jared Champion, who defeated longtime council incumbent Terry Ingram in the Nov. 3 Municipal Election; Stuart Miller, who ran uncontested in the Nov. 3 race; and Samuel Leslie, whose term was not up for reelection in November.

The same day as the January 2016 regular meeting of Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby and city council – the first meeting to include all four of the above as voting members – Deb Edwards, who chairs the



Councilman John Kelley, left, and Councilwoman Angi Smith hear from a representative of the Provident Group in the July 5 meeting of Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby and city council. Provident Group is looking to develop dedicated student housing for Young Harris College on Main Street in Young Harris.

city's Planning Commission, made a formal request for ruling on the Young Harris Code of Ethics Ordinance,

which she filed with the city's two-person Ethics Committee.

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Cruiz-In cruises in to fairgrounds Thursday

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Rev your engines, Towns Countians, and clear out your weekend calendars – the Cruiz-In is coming to town.

The Eighth Annual Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In will be rolling into the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds this week, featuring plenty of classic cars and countless other activities.

Running from Thursday, July 28, through Saturday, July 30, the Cruiz-In promises a weekend of fun for the entire family.

"This is really bringing some people from far off to the Towns County community that probably would never come here," said Cruiz-In Organizer Rakes Parrish. "I have several people from overseas that have actually seen this show and heard about it. They're flying in to Atlanta."

"There are some from



For the eighth year running, Rakes Parrish has organized the Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

Europe – one from England and one from Germany. They're flying in just to come and see this show.

"I thought that was kind of neat for someone to come that far just to see this show. Of course, I have plenty of people

from Texas, Ohio and other states that are further away.

"So, it's bringing a lot of long distance people. It's good that we're reaching out that far to bring people into the Towns County community."

See Cruiz-in, Page 6A

Family needs new home after Bell Street fire



The Towns County Fire Department arrived within three minutes to put water to flame at this home on Bell Street. No one was seriously injured as a result of the fire, but the home did not survive the intense blaze. Photo by Lowell Nicholson.

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Thankfully, everyone escaped the raging inferno that completely destroyed a home on Bell Street last Wednesday, July 20.

The unfortunate part is that a family with five children now needs a new home.

Mary Weaver, owner of Mary's Southern Grill, has been coordinating much of the local assistance for the family, and she said that the outpouring of community support has been overwhelming.

"We're still accepting donations," said Weaver. "Right now we need a house, though, to get them in to, so

they can move all the things that they've been given to see where we're at."

Should anyone know of any three- or four-bedroom homes for rent, Weaver asks that they contact her at the restaurant by calling (706) 896-1048.

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Voluntary water restrictions become mandatory

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis and city council heard several orders of business in their July regular meeting at city hall, including dealing with the high summer demand of water.

City council approved a first reading of an ordinance implementing outdoor landscaping watering restrictions.

Currently, the city has urged voluntary landscaping watering restrictions, which will remain in place until the council votes to make restrictions mandatory.

According to a notice released the week of the meeting, "the City of Hiwassee is considering the use of mandatory outdoor watering restrictions."

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Councilman Jay Chastain and Councilwoman Liz Ordiales share a moment in the July regular meeting of Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis and City Council. The council heard the first reading of an ordinance requiring water restrictions that Thursday, July 7.

July Term Grand Jury Indictments

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The following were indicted during the July Term 2016 of the Towns County Grand Jury:

James Adel Lacera, possession of marijuana with intent to distribute; possession of firearm during commission of a felony; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce; driving without a license;

window tint violation; possession of drug-related objects.

Michael Reid Mullins, serious injury by vehicle; reckless driving; disregarding traffic control device; text-based communication while operating a motor vehicle.

Joshua Luke Garrett, cruelty to children in the first degree; aggravated assault; cruelty to children in the third degree; criminal damage to property in the second degree;

six counts disorderly conduct.

Kelly Matthew Norville, distribution of methamphetamine; possession of methamphetamine; possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance.

Misty Dawn Ekeberg, aka Misty Stephens Ekeberg, possession of methamphetamine; possession of a controlled substance; possession of a Schedule IV

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Friends and family surprise the fire chief

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

When Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland woke up last Tuesday, it was business as usual throughout his day – business as usual, that is, until he walked into his surprise birthday party.

Chief Copeland, known lovingly by many as "Big H," celebrated 60 years of life on Tuesday, July 19, at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center, with more than 30 of his closest friends, family members and colleagues.

"I was very surprised," said Chief Copeland. "I'm incredibly honored and humbled. I've seen a lot of change and growth in the county over the years, and there are so many good people in this community. I'm overwhelmed. We're all family."

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Towns County Fire Chief Harold "Big H" Copeland got the surprise of his birthday when he walked in on friends and family gathered in his honor at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center on Tuesday, July 19. Pictured here with his adorable granddaughter. Photo by Lily Avery.

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Chatuge 1,923.00
Nottely 1,771.65



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