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Towns County observes Memorial Day in Veterans Park

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Memorial Day is a day set aside to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice to their country.

Thousands upon thousands have bravely laid down their lives in service to their country as members of the U.S. Armed Forces, and many gathered across the country on Monday, May 30, to commemorate those sacrifices.

Towns County paid its respects to such servicemen and women with its annual ceremony at Towns County Veterans Park.

The ceremony began with recognition of all veterans present, those who served during the Vietnam War, Korean War, World War II, and American War of the Military, as well as local officials and service members.



Col. Walter Shumway U.S. Army (Ret.)

The keynote speaker was retired U.S. Army Col. Walt Shumway. Shumway served 32 years in the military – 28 years of active duty with the remainder of his time spent in the National Guard and Army Reserve.

During active duty, Shumway served three combat tours: 1965 in the Dominican Republic as an Airborne Company Commander; 1967 in Vietnam as a Company Commander; and 1972 to 1973 in Vietnam as an advisor to a South Vietnamese Army Battalion.

Shumway retired in 1989 and has lived in Hiwassee for 22 years.

"Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, fellow veterans, I am honored to be here today to speak to you on one of our great national holidays, which we remember and honor the service members who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country," said Shumway.

Shumway continued: "I want to share with you my thoughts of when I see my colors presented and hear our national anthem. I think about the freedom and the protection our country provides to all of



The laying of the Memorial Wreaths at the conclusion of the Memorial Day Ceremony, as conducted by the many veterans' service organizations in Towns County

us, and I think about the origin of Fort McHenry. That poem would later be the basis for the national anthem today, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"Today we face a new threat from the Middle East called ISIS," said Shumway.

after the fires had died down at Fort McHenry. That poem would later be the basis for the national anthem today, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"Today we face a new threat from the Middle East called ISIS," said Shumway.

"They have attacked Paris. France. They say they're coming to America."

"Only this time, our first line of defense is going to be different. It is going to be our

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TCMS scores earn school another award

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Middle School received a notification from the Governor's Office of Student Achievement recently, alerting Principal Erica Chastain and Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darrell Berrong that their school had accomplished something special.

The middle school has earned the Greatest Gains School Award in Bronze for the 2015 school year, meaning that the middle school achieved a "three-year average of student growth in at least the 93rd percentile in the state," according to Gov. Nathan Deal's office.

"Receiving the award for Greatest Gains School is a wonderful honor for Towns County Middle School," said TCMS Principal Chastain. "It is a reflection of the hard work and effort from the teachers and students."

Superintendent Berrong

couldn't agree more.

"As far as the middle school goes, it's actually very significant," said Dr. Berrong. "Before they changed from AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) to now the new CCRPI (College and Career Ready Performance Index), Title I schools were given Title I distinguished school awards, and Towns County Middle School typically won those every year."

"Back in 2012 when CCRPI came around and took the place of AYP, they started naming schools as Title I Reward Schools, and they rewarded you in two different areas – one was in Greatest Gains and one was in Highest Achievement. That very first year, the middle school actually made both lists."

At the time, being recognized as both a Greatest Gains and a Highest Achievement school put TCMS in rare company – they were one of only two schools in the state to make both lists



Erica Chastain

that year.

"The following two years they were still on the Highest Achievement reward list, so this is the first year they've fallen off of the Highest Achievement, but they went back and got on the Highest Gains list," said Dr. Berrong. "So in four years of this being

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Kenzie Jenkins named All-State athlete

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Lady Indian Kenzie Jenkins has received the post-season honor of having been chosen as an All-State athlete, coming fast on the heels of her Runner-Up victory at the 2016 GHSA Class A Public School Individual State Championship.

Jenkins is no stranger to success – she has won low-medalist in many competitions over the last few years, including third in state in 2015, and was a key player on the 2014-2015 Lady Indians team that won the 2015 GHSA Class A Public School State Championship.

Heading into her senior year, she looks to continue her string of successes in the upcoming 2016-2017 season.

Jenkins has played the game of golf for 11 years, having started as a youngster with her dad, with whom she still plays to this day.

"I love golf because it's such a peaceful sport, and you can go outside and just have fun with it," said Jenkins. "It relies a lot on the individual as much as it does the team competing all together."

This past season, Jenkins was the only Lady Indian golfer – her State Championship teammates were Class of 2015 graduating seniors.

Despite the added pressure of not being able to rely on teammates to boost her scores on any given day during the 2015-2016 season, Jenkins continued to do what



Kenzie Jenkins is an upcoming Towns County High School senior and golf star who placed second in the 2016 GHSA Class A Public School Individual State Championship, and was honored recently with the announcement that she was chosen as an All-State player

she does best – compete.

And she's able to compete at such a high level practice regimen, both during and in between seasons.

"When I'm outside of the house, normally I practice anywhere from four days a week, and I practice all year around except for the winter, because it's too cold to go outside," said Jenkins, adding that she's been known to hit up a golf simulator to practice her swing in bad weather. "I

do play tournaments in the summer, and I play a few tournaments in the fall also."

On top of team practices during the season, Jenkins said she gets extra time in on the weekends going out golfing with her dad, though her studies remain equally important in her eyes.

"I do prioritize my studies very highly, because I know that if my studies aren't up, then I won't be able to

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Sheriff Clinton to kick off Eighth annual fundraiser

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton spoke in the weekly meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers on Friday, June 3, discussing the upcoming Eighth Annual Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes Trap Shoot.

First, the sheriff briefed those present with information from his office.

"Since 2007, crime in Towns County is remarkably down," said Sheriff Clinton. "We achieved state certification back in 2012, recertified back in 2015, and we're still one of only 20 sheriff's offices to have accomplished that out of 159."

Moving on to a subject that has always been near



Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton

and dear to him, Sheriff Clinton shared information on the Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes.

"A lot of people hear that



William Bob Terebayza of the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts

phrase and they think these are juvenile delinquents, kids that have been in trouble, but that's

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First ever Seafood Festival makes waves

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Seafood in the mountains may seem far-fetched to some, but that did not stop the hundreds of festivalgoers from coming out last weekend to take part in the first year of many to come of the North Georgia Highlands Seafood Festival in Young Harris.

The festival was held at the Mayor's Park in downtown Young Harris, Friday, June 3, to Sunday, June 5.

At 6 p.m. on Friday, Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby officially kicked off the festival with a thank you

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Lobster and crab art pieces from RJ Oceans on display, some reaching epic proportions, at the North Georgia Highlands Seafood Festival on Friday, June 3

Thousands flock to Home & Garden Show

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Last weekend's Western North Carolina Home & Garden Show by Expo Management Inc. provided local businesses and service providers an opportunity to be front-and-center of more than 4,000 patrons.

"It's been a great show with 76 companies here, and we're scheduled to be back October 15 and 16 for our Fall Home & Garden Show," said Bill Anderson, president of Expo Management. "We have plenty of free parking and the admission is free, so there is no reason not to come. The neat part of this event is, it's one-stop shopping. You can come here and see about everything that you need."

The show, held at the Fieldstone Event Center, also featured seminars from Jim Parks, the host of HGTV's remodeling show "New Spaces." Parks hosted three seminars on both days, covering an assortment of how-to topics and current trends in housing.



Jim Parks of HGTV puts on a demonstration for show goers at the 2016 Spring Home & Garden Show at Fieldstone Event Center on Saturday, June 4

According to Anderson, the majority of the vendors at the show are from the Western North Carolina market of Murphy, Hayesville and Andrews, then Blue Ridge, Blairsville and Hiwassee in Georgia.

One of the vendors was Hometown Sleep Center, a brand new mattress business in the Tater Ridge Shopping

Center in Hiwassee, and according to owners Ron and Irene Lambright, the Home & Garden Show has allowed them to get the word out.

"People have just been driving by our store, even after we put up the sign," said Mrs. Lambright. "But at this show, we've handed out 250 fliers and

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