



Jingle Joy the Clown is flanked by Towns County Historical Society members Polly Simpson and Susan Wyman.

painting team Will and Kay Lake, and fiber artist Linda Bell, all of whom were members of the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild.

Vendors brave enough to set up booths outside included Victoria's Bake Shop, Pine Grove Baptist Church, Georgia Mountain Farmers Market, Order of the Eastern Stars, and Linda R. Westergard.

Local leaders spoke to the crowd during the festival. TCHS president Lynn Marshall introduced Sheriff Chris Clinton, Hiawasse Mayor Barbara Mathis, Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby, and Commissioner Bill Kendall.

Later on Saturday night, an almost sold out crowd attended the Percy Sledge, Clarence Carter, and The Tams concert at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Concert promoter Mike Blackwell said he was pleased with the turnout. Blackwell and fellow promoter Charles Stevens brought Merle Haggard to the fairgrounds in March, and they plan to bring

Josh Turner, The Little River Band, and a musical on the life of Conway Twitty to the Anderson Music Hall in the next few months.

Radio stations WCNG 102.7 and WACF 95.1 attended a press conference with Sledge on Saturday afternoon. During a live interview with radio personality Dennis G. Blakemore, Sledge said he loves Hiawasse, but it looks like he brought the rain with him. Sledge said he has been to Hiawasse before, but he could not remember if he had played a concert here. Gene said he saw Sledge perform in Hiawasse in 1966, soon after Sledge's biggest hit *When a Man Loves a Woman* came out.

Sledge said he would perform many of his gold records, as well as covering popular songs by artists such as Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding, and The Temptations.

"It is such a pleasure to be back in this part of Georgia singing my songs," said Sledge.



The Parker Brothers performed at the 4th annual Arts and Heritage Festival last Saturday. Photos by David Seckinger

Career...from page 1

gram. The students remain in a self-contained class most of the day, except when taking an exploratory class such as physical education, fine arts, or vocational courses. Therefore, they establish a real bond with their primary teacher.

Their paraprofessional, Linda Duckworth, who recently completed her special education masters program, helps the students with their communication skills with things like job interviews. Like most pre-teens, the students are shy when being asked about future goals and careers. Duckworth coaxes the students to sit up, look forward, and think about their answers.

Nelson said the students have visited with the Towns County EMTs, Fire Station #1, and Fred's. She said when they reach high school, the students will take jobs as part of their Community Based Instruction, which provides hands-on learning so they can acquire the skills to function in the world as working adults.

Clay...from page 1

along when the Towns Development Authority assumed control of the former Clay-Towns Authority property.

The Towns Development Authority currently is in the process of borrowing enough money to pay off the remaining court judgment against the property.

The property also has recently undergone a "facelift" with county workers completing the landscape scheme within the park on Industrial Boulevard.

"The park is really taking shape," Towns County Industrial Development Authority Chair Morris Phillips said.

Lowe's...from page 1

sewer capacity. However, the city also has a moratorium on its sewer connections.

Should there be enough capacity within the park to accommodate Lowe's sewer needs, the Hiawasse City Council would have to approve a shift in sewer capacity from any business to Lowe's, Stencil said.

"To get something done before June 1, the council would have to have a special called meeting," Stencil said.

"You can count on the Towns County Industrial Development Authority being present at that meeting," Phillips said. "This is important and something that we need to make happen."

Commissioner Kendall agreed.

"We've got several things to work out," Kendall said. "The main thing is finding 1,100 gallons a day in sewer for Lowe's and then sitting down with the city and working out a long-term solution for future sewer capacity."

"The county government is not affiliated with the Towns County Water and Sewer Authority; that's an entirely separate entity," Kendall said. "The county and the city of Hiawasse are going to have to sit down and develop a long-term service delivery strategy to avoid problems like this in the future."

Dye...from page 1

tions," said Dye. "What they did was a shame, to try and discredit a good man."

"I have been in office for 24 years as Towns County Clerk of Superior Court. I have been reelected six times by the voters," stated Dye. "I am disappointed, confused and a bit angry about misinformation and innuendo that has been published and promoted in regards to my past salary."

"I, like all other elected officials of Towns County receive my pay from the commissioner's office. I do not set or pay any salary to myself, said Dye. "I got my raises the same as every other employee for the county. That's the way Commissioner Dayton worked," said Dye. When they got one we all did." Dye said in the Official Code of Georgia concerning Clerk of Superior Court it states, The county governing authority may supplement the minimum annual salary of the clerk of the superior court in such amount as it may fix from time to time; but no clerk's compensation supplement shall be decreased during any term of office. Any prior expenditure of county funds to supplement the clerk's salary in the manner authorized by this subsection is ratified and confirmed. Nothing contained in this subsection shall prohibit the General Assembly by local law from supplementing the annual salary of the clerk.

"My salary has been gradual, not a big amount as has been said, a \$20,000

supplement to the position. The state does not recommend the amount of county salaries for elected officials, it does provide for a required minimum compensation to be paid elected officials.

"Every day I come to work I think of what I can do to better the county. I have never gone over budget and do not go asking for what the county can not afford during these times. I have only two employees beside myself in an office that needs more help. I strive to keep the cost down to the taxpayers.

When Richard Belcher came to Towns County with WSB to inquire about the salaries of former Sheriff Rudy Eller, former Probate Judge Wayne Garrett, and Dye, Commissioner Bill Kendall told them that auditors brought up to him that the state recommended minimums were lower than those salaries being paid in Towns County. Kendall stated that he was passing an ordinance to set how Towns County would handle salaries to elected officials in the future. He told them that there was really no story as far as he was concerned. Kendall tried to discourage them and told them that he would be no part of a story that would disparage the integrity of Towns County, its officials and citizens." "I informed WSB, that according to the auditors and legal sources, there was no evidence of any kind of intentional wrong doing or criminal activity concerning the salaries," said Commissioner Kendall.

HCC...from page 1

tion from the state to reduce the total repair costs. If the city receives a second emergency grant, the authority requests that those funds also be used to reduce the repair costs.

Stencil informed council members that this is the first time the authority has attempted to make any payment for water plant equipment costs or repairs.

"This is a significant good faith step," Stencil informed council members in a written memo. "I will review the costs we invoiced and then make a recommendation as to a final amount due."

"I will also recommend that any funds received go into a reserve account solely for use at the water treatment plant," Stencil wrote.

In other business, council members were locked in a 2-2 tie over the proposed first

reading of the Dangerous Dog and Rabies ordinance. Mayor Barbara Mathis abstained from the vote. Council members Joan Crothers and Annie Johnson supported the ordinance, which would support legislation already enforced in the county; council members Janet Allen and Junior Chastain did not. The tie vote killed the ordinance as proposed.

Council members also heard from Lola Peck with Big Sky Apartments. Grace Nicholson, district manager, did a presentation on the apartments. A one-bedroom apartment, which consists of 762 square feet, rents for \$332 a month. A two-bedroom unit, which consists of 1,078 square feet, rents for \$361 a month. The complex is for persons 55 years old and older. Applications currently are being accepted. For more details, call (706) 896-2934.

Shooting...from page 1

Two Towns County sheriff's deputies are on administrative leave related to the shooting, according to Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton.

The shooting incident, which involved two sheriff's deputies and two Young Harris College Campus Police, happened after they responded to a 911 call regarding a gunshot victim.

The gunshot victim was shot prior to law enforcement's arrival, according to a press release by Sheriff Clinton.

After local law enforcement arrived, multiple shots were fired resulting in a police vehicle being struck, as well as a pickup truck being driven by the brother of the gunshot victim. A YHC Campus officer was sent to a local emergency room for medical treatment of a minor injury and was later released.

A GBI forensic investigation will determine who was responsible for the shootings after law enforcement officers arrived at the scene.

Two men, Larry Shook, 52, and Terrence Shook, 25, both of Young Harris, were arrested and charged with obstruction of law enforcement officers in relation to the incident.

The shooting incident remains under investigation by the GBI, Ayers said.

was made by David Sellers, seconded by Terry Ingram to rebid the financing and have a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 19th, at 7:00 P.M. to open the bids; five in favor; J. Mulkey opposed.

Steven M. Conrad with Enrico's Italian Restaurant had applied for a Business License to operate a restaurant at 637 Main Street. A motion was made by David Sellers, seconded by Tim Ingram to issue the license; five in favor, D. Keys abstained. Conrad and his builder Bob Dernehl had applied for a Building Permit to add an addition to the front of Enrico's Restaurant. The Planning Commission recommended approval as long as they met the parking requirements. Since the new edition will not effect seating, a motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by John Kelley to issue the permit; five in favor; D. Keys abstained. Morteza Hafezalkotob had applied for a Business License to open a restaurant at 1149 Main Street. A motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by David Sellers to issue the license; all in favor.

The City's Engineer, Chris Poje was present to discuss the tabulation of the bids received on April 16, 2009 for the Water System Improvements. He noted that the bids were below budget so he is recommending that the City request that U.S.D.A. Rural Development allow the City to use the excess funds for the demolition and removal of the old college tank and the installation of a radio telemetry system (SCADA) to the project scope. He gave the mayor and city council proposals describing the additional work. The Mayor will send a letter to U.S.D.A requesting the excess funds for this work.

After discussion, and upon the recommendation to Engineer Poje, a motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by David Sellers to adopt a resolution accepting Townley Construction Company, Inc. of Dawsonville, Georgia, as the low, responsible, responsive bidder for Division One, with a bid of \$191,434.49 with Addition A-1 and Deduction D-2 and Crom Corporation of Gainesville, Florida, as the low, responsible, responsive bidder for Division Two, with a bid of \$400,375.00; all in favor. Once all this is received and approved by the U.S.D.A Rural Development, they will release the funds for construction to begin.

The Council discussed an application by John Cochran to rezone 2.2 Acres on Highway 66, across from the old City Hall, from Residential to Commercial. The application had been completed and the Fee paid as requested at the previous month's meeting. A motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by John Kelley to set a Public Hearing for the rezoning on June 2, 2009 at 6:30 P.M.; five in favor; J. Mulkey abstained.

Young Harris College is in the process of applying for a building permit to construct a new Campus Recreation Center. They have met with the Planning Commission and submitted all required documents. Young Harris College President, Cathy Cox answered some questions from the council and discussed additional information that will be presented to the Planning Commission. At the June 2nd meeting the Planning Commission will make a recommendation and the council will have a vote on the Permit.

Mayor Gibby had presented the city council with a quote of \$5600.00 from Turnipseed Engineers for the completion of Standard Details and specifications for the requirements of the City of Young Harris Water System. Council member, Matt Miller had agreed to call Chris Poje and discuss with him how comprehensive these Standards would be for this amount of money. Matt Miller reported to the mayor and council that he thought the Standards are definitely something that would be beneficial for the city to have. Council member Jennifer Mulkey was concerned about the cost. Engineer Poje agreed to do the Standards hourly with a cap at \$5600 to possibly save cost to the city. A Motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by Donald Keys to accept this proposal; all in favor. The city will receive two Manuals, one for Water and one for Sewer. The city will also receive the Standards on CD.

Ken Hapner presented the Mayor and Council with pictures of the fence surrounding the Mayor's Park. He said the fence is rotting and falling apart. He had gotten several quotes so they would know what expenses they are looking at. He noted that the fence should also be extended to close the space between the College property and the City property because of safety issues. A motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by Donald Keys to bid the project with the addition of the fence between the College and City properties; all in favor. The project is to include: Furnishing all equipment, labor, and materials to remove, and dispose of the old fence; furnishing all equipment, labor, and materials to construct a new fence, including an additional 75 feet between the Young Harris College property and the City's Property; Materials to be used, 6 x 6 pressure treated posts placed two feet in the ground with concrete on 7 ft. centers, 2 x 8 smooth cut pressure treated boards for a three board fence. Boards should be attached with galvanized screws. A motion was made by John Kelley, seconded by Matthew Miller that all sealed bids should be turned in by 3:00 P.M. on Friday, May 29, 2009; all in favor.

Young Harris College had applied for rezoning of the property located at 4900 Thomas Town Road, formerly known as the Arnold Keys property. Attorney Cox presented the Second reading of an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map of the City of Young Harris, with the proposed change from Residential to Institutional. A motion was made by Matthew Miller, seconded by Donald Keys to approve the Rezoning; all in favor.

In a petition from Young Harris College, to rezone a lot on Oak Street, where the Predatory Beetle Rearing Lab is located, Jennifer McAfee noted that the 2001 Zoning Map for the City of Young Harris shows this lot as already zoned Institutional. City Attorney, Cary Cox noted that there is a conflict in the two most recent maps as to which one has been officially adopted by the City Council and as such would be the Official Zoning Map for the City of Young Harris. Since there is so much confusion and the City is in the process of completing a new Zoning Ordinance and Map and upon the recommendation of the City Attorney, Cary Cox, a motion was made by John Kelley, seconded by Donald Keys to adopt the most recent, 2001 map as the Official Zoning Map for the City of Young Harris with the exception of property owned by David Sellers and used as his Art Gallery, be changed to Institutional as Documents that are available show it should be zoned; all in favor. Attorney Cox reported that he has written letters to the property owners on the road to Old Union Tank that will be affected, asking for permanent easements. He said that he has also discussed it with E.P.D. Cox reported that he now has the information he needs to begin the process on the BRMEMC property annexation. He just needs to get the Meets and Bounds. Cox said that he has met with the City of Hiawasse and Towns County concerning what are the Geographic Zones of each entity. Gary Willer, John Kelley, and Matt Miller will coordinate with David Sellers, who has agreed to draw a map of the City's Watershed Line, which Cox feels should be the city's geographic zone.

Gary Willer reported that he had nothing unusual to report, but he did note that it is encouraging to see all the things that are being accomplished. The rates for the Connection Fees for 2, 3, and 4 inch meters were discussed. A motion was made by Matt Miller, seconded by Tim Ingram to charge \$3000 plus any additional cost for installation; all in favor.

Brasstown Valley Resort is asking the city to approve of them holding an Old Fashioned Walking Parade on Saturday Morning, May 30, 2009, covering an area from The Refuge on Plottown back to Brasstown Valley. A motion was made by John Kelley, seconded by Terry Ingram to approve the holding of the parade as long as due diligence is followed and documented; all in favor.

Information used in this story came from the minutes from the City of Young Harris Council meeting