

Mayor Mathis seeks reelection...continued from page 1

bringing in of new businesses and attractions, including the building of a "Mayor's Park."

Mathis keeps working right up until the Nov. 3 general election, focusing on the daily chores that come with being mayor while trying to balance the rigors of a re-election campaign.

Mathis has scheduled a public hearing for 3 p.m. on Election Day to discuss the proposed 2009 millage Rate.

Mayor Mathis said that the City Council will set the rate after the hearing at its regular meeting sched-

uled for 4 p.m. During the public hearing, City Manager Rick Stancil will present the 2009 Tax Digest and the City's Five Year History of Levy to Mayor Mathis and the Council.

Mayor Mathis has proposed that the 2009 Millage for the City of Hiawasse remain the same as the 2008 Levy of 2.270. If approved, it would be the seventh consecutive year that the City of Hiawasse millage rate has remained the same or has been decreased.

"During these difficult economic times, now is not

the time for the millage to increase," Mayor Mathis said. "The City Council, City Manager and employees want to do our part in holding down all costs to our taxpayers."

"We believe that by seeking federal and state grants and awards, with experienced leadership and with good financial management, the City will continue to prosper and provide excellent municipal services."

Mayor Mathis also is focused on future water and sewer services.

Mayor Mathis and the City Council are weighing

an overture from the Towns County Water and Sewer Authority that would help pay for the expansion of services.

"This is something that the Council must weigh. I'd like to work with the Water and Sewer Authority," Mayor Mathis said. "There are some issues that need to be addressed regarding the future water capacity for the city and the county."

Her balance between the culture of yesterday and the modern transformation of today makes her a unique candidate in the Nov. 3 general election.

Stephen Smith Runs...continued from page 1

a bachelor's of science degree in biological science from the State University College at Brockport, New York.

He and his wife, Mary, moved to North Carolina where they raised their own family of six and began a youth ministry providing a home for at-risk teenagers while he earned a bachelor's degree in secondary science education at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC, a master's degree in mathematics education at North Georgia College in

Dahlonega, and a doctorate degree in educational leadership at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Smith's formal educational career was spent entirely in the Towns County School System.

Early in his career, he taught students at Towns County Middle School and Towns County High School in the specialty areas of algebra, geometry, biology, chemistry and computer technology.

He was chosen Star Teacher twice during those years. He was named prin-

icipal of Towns County Middle School in 1992.

During his tenure, Towns County Middle School was the recipient of the Effective Program Award by the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals in 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2002 and named one of *Time* magazine's 2001 Schools of the Year.

"I believe in service and leadership," said Smith, also an accomplished grant writer. "It's not about me, it's what I can do to make things happen."

Swett seeks seat as Mayor

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"I had no home for 20 years. I moved around. And then I came to this warm, welcoming community," Swett said. "And now I feel compelled to give back to the community that so readily gave me a home."

By trade, Swett is an oceanographer and meteorologist, but he'd trade all that to serve the residents of Hiawasse for the next four years as mayor.

Swett, a Masonic member of Unicoy Lodge, was born to be a public servant. He volunteers at the local Food Pantry, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post and of course with his Masonic Lodge.

Polls open at 7 a.m. on Nov. 3

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precincts from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Election Day.

Election Superintendent Jonni Marie Shook said that by the weekend, only slightly more than 250 residents had cast ballots in Early Voting for the General Election.

The 2009 Election has

"I think we all have a debt to our fellow man," he said. "If I can help fulfill one small part of that debt, then that is an obligation."

Swett senses an importance of improving city infrastructure and providing incentives to attract new businesses and jobs. He also wants to assure that the city's general budget provides a level of transparency so city taxpayers will know where their money is being spent.

"I also feel very strongly about reducing the baseline water rate by 25 percent to help low volume customers and reward conservation," he said. "We live

in some desperate economic times. There are people living in the city who have financial difficulties that some of us take for granted."

"If we lower the millage rate by percentage points, then we've saved each homeowner possibly \$10 a year," he said.

"If we can lower the baseline water rate, it's possible we can save folks \$10 a month and that adds up," Swett said.

"As someone elected to represent the people, I feel it is my responsibility to assure that we don't tax them right out of their boots," Swett said.

Stroud wins scholarship



On Sept. 26, Joshua Stroud, a freshman at Young Harris College was awarded a \$1,000 Scholarship from the 9th Masonic District Convention. Joshua is a graduate of Towns County High School and the son of Kenny and Trena Stroud of Hiawasse. His family would like to thank the 9th Masonic District Convention for this award that will help Josh in continuing his education.

Anderson benefit Nov. 7



A benefit for Mitchell Anderson is scheduled for 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Nov. 7 in the Towns County High School Lunchroom. Mitchell Anderson is a life-long resident of Hiawasse. He is the son of Wayne and Fannie Anderson and grandson of the Late Ilah Taylor Anderson. Mitchell Anderson was recently diagnosed with esophagus cancer and will incur large medical bills. This event is being held to help defer those costs. The event includes a benefit singing, cake walks, door prizes, a raffle and an auction. A spaghetti supper also is scheduled. A plate is \$6 and it includes garlic bread, cole slaw, a drink and dessert. Everyone is invited to attend.

Movie industry finds Towns

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include *Vampire Diaries* filmed in Covington and the popular movie *Zombieland* also was shot right here in Georgia.

"We're kind of hoping that there is a big motion picture already in the works for North Georgia," he said.

Dominey wants to include Towns County in the state's Camera Ready Initiative, which creates a network of communities throughout the state that want to be a part of the state's movie boon.

"Camera Ready Initiative allows movie companies to know what communities have to offer and the surrounding amenities," said Chamber President Long.

Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said he would welcome the movie industry to Towns County.

"This could be a boon to our local economy for years to come," he said. "I think it would be great."

Langley announces run for DA in Enotah Circuit

Chief Assistant District Attorney Jeff Langley confirmed reports that he was preparing for a possible race for District Attorney in 2010. Langley announced his intention to run for District Attorney at 11 AM Saturday morning with the current District Attorney Stan Gunter introducing Langley. Gunter described Langley as his close friend, and his long-time chief Assistant District Attorney as being extremely qualified for the position. Gunter explained that at the conclusion for his third term he will not seek re-election as District Attorney. Langley and a group of supporters with signs and campaign shirts then came to the steps of the Courthouse and officially announced his decision to run for District Attorney.

Jeff Langley said, "I know what my experience is and I know how important it is to law enforcement to have

quality leadership in the DA's office. I'm not one to play political games, I will be running for District Attorney. An effective prosecutor's office is essential to a safe community and to economic growth in our area." He promised to use his years of experience to be an aggressive but fair prosecutor. Langley, his family and a group of supporters then went on to participate in the Goldrush Parade in Dahlonega.

Jeff Langley has been an Assistant District Attorney in Union County for 11 years and the Chief Assistant District Attorney since 2001. He has practiced law for 23 years, having graduated with honors from the University of Georgia Law School. He has been married to Angela Langley for 20 years and has two children.

Contact information: Jeff Langley for District Attorney, PO Box 92, Blairsville, GA 30514, 706-455-9195.