

# Gabby...continued from page 1A

season in an early February game at Athens Academy when she included six treys in a 24-point performance in leading the Lady Indians to a 65-43 victory.

Of course, many such performances have followed over the last two years and the start of this season. The highlight of her sophomore season was a twenty four point performance in a Battle of the States semi final 68-67 overtime win over Class AA Fannin County who entered the game with a 10-1 record. The aforementioned record setting 43-point game against Commerce must be considered the highlight of her junior year but with numerous other outstanding and often clutch performances which could be cited.

One such performance deserving mention here is an incredible clutch run by the Lady Indians in the semi finals of last year's Region 8-A Tournament against Hebron Christian at Athens Christian School. The Lady Indians, with a 25-1 record entering the game, were considered by most observers to be heavy favorites, but found themselves trailing Hebron 45-32 past the minute and a half mark of the third quarter before engineering an incredible run, scoring 14 straight points the final 1:25 of the quarter for a 46-45 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Included in that run were an early steal and old fashioned three-point play and then two treys in the final 19 seconds by Arencibia, giving her team that one point lead entering the fourth and final quarter. The Lady Indians continued on for an overall 19-0 run for a 51-45 lead and led by as few as one and as many as 11 points the rest of the way in withstanding a couple of Hebron runs for a 68-64 victory.

The Lady Indians went on to defeat Prince Avenue the next night for their second region tournament championship in two years, only the second and third in history for the Lady Indians. Of greater significance than Gabby's personal accomplishments are her contributions to an overall 79-17 Lady Indian record during her years on the team, including a 4-2 record this year through the Saturday Union County game with three state tournament appearances and the two Region Championships included.

Arencibia becomes the 19th Lady Indian, beginning with Diana Barnard (Hazelton) during the 1965 season, known to have reached the 1,000-point total although it is likely others reached this total in earlier years but with no verification possible due to scorebooks no longer being available. Jordan Moss, now playing basketball at Young Harris College, was the most recent Lady Indian to reach the magic mark in January of this year. On the Indians side, 12 Indians are known to have reached the magic total with the first known player being Bob Bryson during the 1955 season and Robbie Elliott and Jared Wright the most recent in 2005.

It has been common through the years for Lady Indians and Indians to be following in the footsteps of parents and other relatives who have displayed prior athletic excellence in Towns County as was much in evidence when Jordan Moss reached 1,000 points. Arencibia is no exception to this rule although likely a surprise to many readers in view of her having moved to the county with her family as a first grader in 2000. Perhaps a bit of explanation is needed as most of the prior athletic excellence by family members in Towns County did not occur at TCHS but at Young Harris College.

Gabby's father, Joey Arencibia, arrived at YHC in the fall of 1979 from Cedartown, Georgia, and enjoyed an outstanding two year career in varsity tennis under legendary head coach and player Bob Nichols. Coach Nichols, a member as a tennis player of the Georgia Tech Athletics Hall of Fame, recently expressed the highest praise for his former player, commenting that Joey was and is "an extremely good player, even today, but I never coached a finer young man", adding that he was the number three singles player on a state runner up team while at Young Harris.

Joey was followed in 1980 at YHC by two freshmen students of great importance to him, his brother Raul and a young lady named Ann Ray who arrived from Clarkesville, Georgia. Raul was also a fine tennis player for Coach Nichols for two years who fit the high praise of being a fine young man with Joey and Raul being described by Coach Nichols as "two peas in a pod" and evi-

dence of fine upbringing by their parents.

Of immense long range significance, Joey and Ann would meet while at Young Harris and it might be said that the rest is history as folks in Towns County now know the former Ann Ray as Ann Arencibia. Word from her home county indicates that Ann was a noteworthy basketball player at Habersham Central High School but with no opportunity to possibly continue her career as YHC did not have varsity basketball at that time. The Ray family was represented in sports activity at YHC, however, as Ann's brother, Mike, played basketball with distinction for legendary head coach Luke Rushton in the late 1960s, not long before Rushton's retirement and the school dropping the sport until last year.

Following their time at Young Harris College, both Joey and Ann graduated from the University of Georgia with Joey then graduating from the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis, Tenn. Following several years as an optometrist in Toccoa, and Atlanta, the lure of Young Harris brought the Arencibia family back to Towns County where Joey set up his Georgia Vision Center practice in Hiawassee.

More recently, Gabby's older brother and sister, Bart and Alexia, played basketball at Towns County Recreation and Towns County Middle School but shifted their focus to tennis in high school. Her younger brother, Grant, is a most promising basketball player as a freshman at TCHS who has displayed what might be called the Arencibia shooting touch in leading his team in scoring in the preseason scrimmage game against Blue Ridge High School and in two regular season games, at Dawson County and at home against Rabun County.

With most of her senior season yet to be played, it will be interesting to see just how much additional success Gabby and her team can achieve. No matter what the future holds, congratulations are extended to Gabby Arencibia for a job well done in reaching a most notable milestone and best wishes are extended for the future from this reporter and the Towns County Herald.

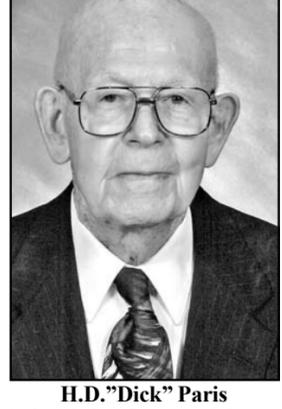
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"Mr. Paris was a cornerstone of the Towns County Community. Original owner of the Hiawassee Hardware since 1947, he was a tireless worker in the hardware business, a Bank of Hiawassee Board member, a Lifetime Lions Club member and avid supporter of the Georgia Mountain Fair. He was a vivid, energetic, and integral force in the community," according to the statement.

"Dick loved the Hamilton Rhododendron Gardens and previously donated a memorial in honor of his deceased wife Reese Paris that now resides in the gardens. Any Towns County residents or other persons or organizations desiring to contribute to his memorial should contact the Georgia Mountain Fair office at (706) 896-4191. Or, you can mail your contribution to Georgia Mountain Fair, P. O. Box 444, Hiawassee, GA 30546. Please designate it is for the Dick Paris Memorial," according to the statement.

In 1951, Mr. Paris was elected mayor of Hiawassee.

A member of the Towns County Lions Club, Mr. Paris was a driving force



**H.D. "Dick" Paris** behind the Georgia Mountain Fair, serving on the Georgia Mountain Fair Authority. He spent 61 years promoting the Georgia Mountain Fair - the Georgia Mountain Fair is 61 years old.

Mr. Paris also played a pivotal role in the development of Towns County Hospital, serving as a member of the Towns County Hospital Authority for many years. He served as president of the Bank of Hiawassee from 1953 to 1981 and served as a bank board member faithfully for 57 years.

An active member of McConnell Memorial Church in Hiawassee, Mr.

Paris worked tirelessly to help the church grow along with the community.

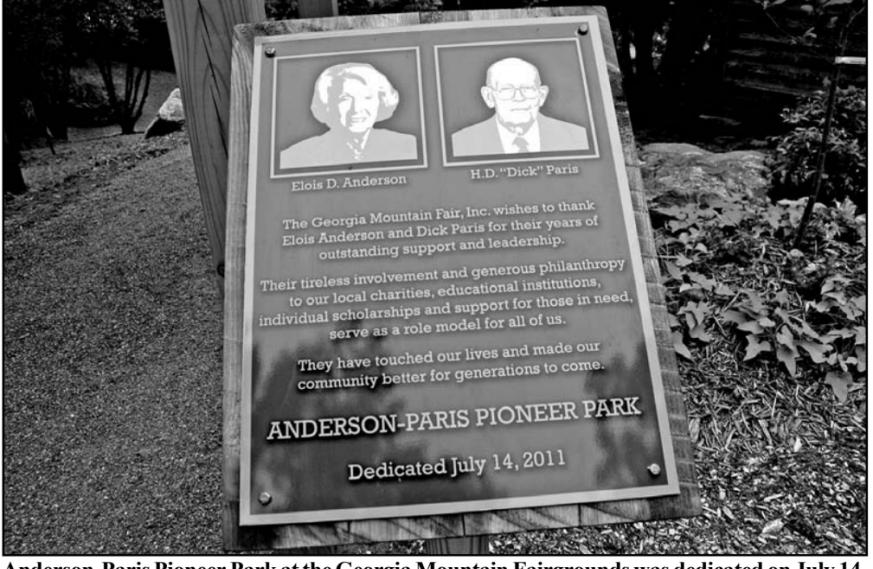
Mr. Paris played a pivotal role in Towns County Schools, supporting the construction of the Towns County High School football and baseball fields, Commissioner Kendall said.

Last, but not least, Mr. Paris endowed the Ragsdale Lecture Series at Young Harris College to honor the journalistic career of family member Warner Ragsdale, a 1917 graduate of Young Harris College. The Ragsdale Series brings prominent speakers of national stature to Young Harris College to speak about government and political affairs.

Mr. Paris also supported many youth groups, including the Boy Scouts and the school programs.

On Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Mr. Paris along side another Community Icon, Elois Anderson, were honored with an announcement that a park bearing their name at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds would soon be dedicated.

Anderson-Paris Pioneer Park became a reality on July 14 at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.



Anderson-Paris Pioneer Park at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds was dedicated on July 14. Another memorial for Mr. Paris is in the works. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

# Pearl...continued from page 1A

If U.S.N. Chief Petty Officer (retired) Bud Johnson, 89, of Hiawassee had his way, America would remember Pearl Harbor the way it remembers veterans on Veterans Day.

"Dec. 7, it's a forgotten day," Johnson said. "Not forgotten by veterans, but the folks who fought in World War II are getting fewer by the day. Pearl is the reason we entered World War II. It's the reason that a million young kids enlisted in the

U.S. military.

"It was one of the greatest acts of terrorism this Earth has ever known," he said. "And it was on our soil. Forget? Not me."

Johnson wasn't a Pearl survivor, but he was at Iwo Jima a few years later. He wouldn't have been there if not for the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl.

"You have to trace every battle fought by a U.S. military man in World War II back to Pearl," he said.

# Empty Stocking...continued from page 1A

soul the most is that there could be a lot of children out there doing without. They don't understand the economy, all they know is that Santa Claus overlooked their house."

The sheriff said that some local organizations have contacted him and let him know that Christmas money is on the way. Sheriff Clinton is still waiting to hear from the BMW Motorcycle Club that annually brings toys for local children. "We're going to do our best and make Christmas for as many young children as we can this year," he said. "Jesus is the Reason for the Season and as in years past, I believe the Lord will provide."

Sheriff Clinton understands that times are hard and that economically, businesses and residents have struggled to stay above water, in terms of fiscal matters. He also understands that rough economic waters also make for tough times for small children who don't

quite understand that the economy isn't doing too well.

"We hope the giving spirit of the people of Towns County will be able to help and assist us as we continue in this endeavor," Sheriff Clinton said.

Meanwhile, the annual Christmas Parade rang in the holiday season and helped collect toys for needy girls and boys throughout the county. Folks still realize that the Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund remains a needy community project as locals and businesses continue to recover from the hard times of economic recession.

The program got a small boost from Saturday's Annual Christmas Parade.

The crowd began to gather around 5p.m. in anticipation of a 6 p.m. start.

The parade came through Downtown on Highway 76. It wasn't long before the blue lights from Sheriff Clinton's patrol vehicle lit up the skyline. Floats sponsored by United Com-

"President Roosevelt was right, it was a date that lived in infamy. It's time that each year we should honor the almost 4,000 that were killed or wounded on Dec. 7, 1941. It's no different than Sept. 11, 2001; it was just 60 years before the attacks in the Northeast.

"Same thing, both were acts of terrorism and both sent us to war," he said. "We remember the 9-11 victims, but we've almost totally forgotten the Pearl victims. That's a shame."

community Bank, North Mt. Zion Church, Turpin's Wrecker Service, the Towns County Lions Club and the city of Hiawassee were among this year's participants, along with other local organizations and businesses that lined the streets, lighting up the evening with carefully arranged Christmas lights.

Most float riders tossed out candy to the children along the streets, watching the festivities in awe.

Heading up the rear of the parade was the jolly old elf himself, Santa Claus.

The children watching the parade screamed and waved as he passed by. The jolly old elf is well liked in Towns County, Hiawassee and Young Harris.

On Christmas Day, the young children of Towns County will hope that Santa remembered them as they smiled and waved to him in the annual Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund Parade.

**From the Desk of:** Sheriff Clinton of Towns County

**Avoiding Internet scams** According to FBI reports, credit/debit card fraud, computer fraud, confidence fraud, and financial institutions fraud, round out the top seven categories of complaints referred to law enforcement. Internet fraud and email scams can be expensive, disruptive, and even dangerous. Consider using the following guidelines suggested by the FBI for avoiding Internet fraud or email scams:

Only purchase merchandise from reputable dealers or establishments.

Try to obtain a physical address rather than merely a post office box and a phone number; call the seller to see if the number is correct and working.

Send them an e-mail to see if they have an active e-

mail address and be wary of those that utilize free e-mail services where a credit card wasn't required to open the account.

Consider not purchasing from sellers who won't provide you with this type of information.

Purchase merchandise directly from the individual/company that holds the trademark, copyright, or patent.

Beware when responding to e-mail that may not have been sent by a reputable company.

Be skeptical of individuals representing themselves as Nigerian or foreign government officials asking for your help in placing large sums of money in overseas bank accounts.

Do not believe the promise of large sums of money for your cooperation.

Guard your account information carefully. Don't give out your credit card number(s) online unless the site is a secure and reputable site. Sometimes a tiny icon of a padlock appears to symbolize a higher level of security to transmit data. This icon is not a guarantee of a secure site, but might provide you some assurance.

TDec7,K1)SH

# Free food distribution

As always, the Towns County Food Distribution will be Tuesday. The distribution will be held at The Towns County Food Pantry from 2 p.m.-6 p.m. All that are in need of food assistance are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to pick up your food, please contact the pantry at 706-896-4783 prior to distribution day so arrangements can be made to deliver your food. All clients and inquiries are confidential. TDec7,F1)SH

# Free activities for students

Young Harris Family Development Center at the Stephens Masonic Lodge Community Center is offering on Tuesdays from 3 - 7 p.m. offered free of charge to school age students enrolled in Towns County. We offer: tutoring, games, snacks, meals, counseling services, parenting workshops and activities.

For more information or to enroll your student contact Towns County Family Connection 706-896-4131 ext 1233. TDec7,F1)SH

# Cold water survival drills at Union General Wellness

Citizens boating and fishing on the local lakes in Towns and Union counties and their families can rest a little easier this winter. The Coast Guard Auxiliary Instructors trained fifteen members of the Towns County Fire and Rescue's new Water Rescue Team and Coast Guard Auxiliary's Northeast Georgia Search and Rescue team members at their annual Cold Water Float training class held at the Union General Wellness Center in Blairsville Saturday afternoon, December 3, 2011.

The Cold Water Float is an exercise that trains first responders in preparation to rescue lost or stranded citizens on the lake in extremely cold weather and water conditions. The Flotilla instructors taught participants in the water maneuvers and formations as well as ways to rescue stranded victims. Protecting themselves from the harsh conditions during their rescues is very important as the rescuer can easily become a victim if actions are not properly done. Formations such as the caterpillar and the two man swimmer's assist help the responders tow weak or unresponsive victims across the water in times of an emergency.

The First Responders put on "Mustangs," cold water survival suits, and slowly enter the water, allowing water to seep slowly into the suit. In situations where the water



Miriam Murray of the Union General Wellness Center, Union General Hospital, watches as Fire and Rescue and Coast Guard Auxiliary members learn to exit the water releasing more than 75 pounds of water from their survival suits. Incoming Flotilla Commander Bob Garrett explains to Ms. Murray the technique.

is extremely cold, it is essential for water to be trapped in between the suit and warmed by the body slowly to prevent cardiac arrest. After the body warms the water it allows a person to be in cold water for extended periods of time. The suit adds 20 pounds of positive buoyancy which keeps responders floating face up, conscious or not. A manually inflatable neck float is attached to the suit along with a cold-resistant hoodie. Knowing the proper way to use these suits effectively is the key to saving helpless victims and themselves. Did you know the first ever Mustang survival suits were invented in 1967? Almost

half a century of improvements made to the suits are giving current first responders much better protection from freezing air and water temperatures. In addition to Mustangs the students also practiced with Float Coats and High Speed Personal Flotation Devices for use when responding to an event rapidly across the water.

With the newly formed Towns County Fire and Rescue's Water Rescue Team and the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary's Flotilla 2-3 learning more and more about rescuing victims in every kind of weather and water conditions, the safety of our on-the-water citizens is increasing dramatically. NMD07/214