

Towns County Herald

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 92 Number 39

Wednesday, July 28, 2021

Benefit for deputy raises over \$10,000 after house fire

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sheriff Ken Henderson and his staff hosted a benefit picnic and silent auction for one of their own at the lower pavilion of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Friday, July 23.

The purpose of the benefit was to raise money for Investigator William Conway and his wife Robyn, who lost their home to fire on Monday, June 28. Conway has been with the Sheriff's Office for going on six years this November.

Working the event were the men and women of the Sheriff's Auxiliary, with Auxiliary Member Anna Denton reporting that the benefit raised

\$10,187 thanks to donations, purchases of barbecue plates and raffle tickets, and the silent auction.

Due to the home being made of all-wood construction dating to the late '60s or early '70s and located in a remote area south of Brasstown, North Carolina, the house and everything in or near it, including vehicles and outbuildings, were destroyed.

At the time, Conway's stepdaughter Lexie Dean and her husband Kyle were living there with their five children, making nine inhabitants counting William and Robyn. Miraculously, none of them were hurt, and even their pet survived.

"I believe God played a part in that," Dean said.

And while the family is grateful no one was hurt, Conway said they are as heartsick over what was in the home as they are over the loss of the house itself: irreplaceable family pictures and mementos, clothes, furniture, appliances, vehicles, computers, the kids' things, and much more.

"It's all stuff you don't think twice about until it's gone," Conway said, adding that many of their belongings were not covered by insurance.

Dean said her grandparents had originally owned the home, which she grew up in as a little girl.

"That was mine and my granny's house, and a lot of good memories there," she said.

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William "Bill" Conway, Robyn Conway, Alexis Dean, Paityn-Lynn Dean, Kyle Dean, Hunter Dean, Gabriel Dean, Gavin Dean, Caleb Dean, Tammy Dean and Greg Dean.
Photo by Mark Smith

Memory Lane Auction & Show revs into gear Friday

From Staff Reports
Towns County Herald

Get ready, gearheads, for the Memory Lane Classic Car Auction & Car Show on Friday, July 30, and Saturday, July 31, to benefit local charitable giving.

Sponsored by the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, Jacky Jones Ford and the Towns County Convention & Visitors Bureau, the classic car extravaganza will be held at the Old Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Headquarters at 1360 Main Street in Young Harris.

Activities will take place between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. each day, to include live music, food trucks, arts and crafts, drinks, prizes for guests, trophies for participants, and of course, plenty of classic cars.

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The Memory Lane Classic Car Auction & Car Show promises to be a weekend full of family fun at the Old EMC Headquarters in Young Harris.
Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Home & Garden Show a huge win for area homeowners in 2021

By Allison Youngblood
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – The Georgia and Western North Carolina Home & Garden Show returned to the area this past Saturday and Sunday, July 24-25.

From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, and 12 p.m. on Sunday, visitors browsed vendors specializing in home improvement and repair, essential services, and decoration for homes and gardens.

Dozens of booths lined the roughly 15,000 square feet of space inside the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park, with each booth filled with advanced services and unique wares.

Expo Management Inc. President Bill Anderson estimated that about 4,000 people made their way through



Several thousand people attended the annual H&G Shows last weekend for home improvement ideas.
Photo by Lowell Nicholson

the numerous displays over the two-day event, marking the successful completion of one of 19 H&G Shows each year from Knoxville, Tennessee, to Naples, Florida.

Anderson said that last year's circuit was cut down

by nine shows throughout the Southeast region due to COVID-19, but that this year's been busier than ever.

The goal of the expo is always to bring home

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Jet ski crash sends 2 to hospital, shuts down US 76 for helicopter

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

A jet ski accident on Lake Chatuge sent two people to the hospital July 23, requiring a roughly 30-minute shutdown of US 76 in the vicinity of Papa's Pizza to allow a medical helicopter to land for transport to Gainesville.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division investigated the crash with assistance at the scene from the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

Though the exact circumstances surrounding the crash were not available at press time, the Towns County Herald did learn that one jet ski carrying two males collided

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This jet ski took some damage during an accident that sent two people to the hospital Friday.
Photo/Facebook

Berrong, Perren give school update in weekly meeting

By Allison Youngblood
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

It seems like just yesterday that Towns County Schools let out for summer break – but just like that, break time is over for students, who will be returning to classes next week on Thursday, Aug. 5.

Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong and High School Principal Roy Perren visited the Mountain Movers and Shakers to speak on the upcoming school year in the civic group's weekly meeting July 23.

Berrong confirmed that the Towns County School District was one of the few in

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Heads up, students – school starts back next week, per Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong and High School Principal Roy Perren.
Photo by Allison Youngblood

Bradshaw thanks employees, updates on courthouse renovation

Towns declared a 'Purple Heart County'

By Chad Stack
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

All Towns County Employees have received a bonus as a thank you from Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw for their hard work, dedication and efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

After receiving federal money earlier this year as part of the American Rescue Plan, Bradshaw said he spoke with County Attorney Robb Kiker about how the funds could be spent.

Kiker researched the matter, giving Bradshaw the go-ahead for his plan of offering every full-time county employee a \$2,000 bonus and every part-time employee a \$1,000 bonus.

When Bradshaw hand delivered the bonus checks with thank you notes a few weeks ago, he said it was one of his proudest moments since taking office.

"Our employees worked through the pandemic," Bradshaw said. "We didn't have employees calling in and not coming to work. All of our employees worked right through



Purple Heart Veteran Ryan McPherson approached Bradshaw about becoming a Purple Heart County and joining the Purple Heart Trail, pictured here in the July county meeting.
Photo by Lowell Nicholson

it, and we're very thankful for them. So, I knew I wanted to give them something."

Only county employees received the bonus, Bradshaw said, noting that not a single elected official got any of the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

"I know it helped a lot of people, but they're very deserving of it," Bradshaw said. "So, when you see the EMT guys out, your sheriff deputies out, the road department guys out,

any of the county employees, if you have a minute, thank them for what they do."

Also in the meeting, Bradshaw updated guests on the progress of the plans for the Towns County Courthouse renovation and addition.

"The architectural company that we hired to do the renovation and the addition on the courthouse are that close to being finished," Bradshaw said. "So, in this process, I've

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EMC meetings open to members; fiber optic availability to expand

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors voted in June to open its regular meetings back up to member attendance following COVID-19, with the first open meeting in more than a year taking place on Thursday, July 15.

No one from among the general membership attended the meeting.

Heading up meetings is new General Manager Allan Glidewell, who assumed office

in March after former general manager Jeremy Nelms stepped down last September to take the CEO job at Flint Energies serving the Warner Robins area.

Throughout the pandemic, Glidewell said the EMC has carried out its mission of upholding "the interest of our membership through innovative and sustainable energy and technology solutions."

"There were a lot of challenges that it presented," Glidewell said of the pandemic. "One of the big ones was how

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Allan Glidewell
EMC General Manager

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included the Chief Superior Court Judge Raymond George to have his input on the drawings.

"We've also included the Clerk of Court Cecil Dye, because nobody knows his office better than he does. Also, the Probate Judge David Rogers and your District Attorney, Jeff Langley, have all had input on their offices and the way it's going to be laid out."

When the architects came a couple of weeks ago, Bradshaw said everyone was very pleased and approved the final plans.

"We're so excited," he said. "This is going to be beautiful, and it's going to be a lot more functional."

Bradshaw did mention one change in the plan to cut the initial time estimate for the renovations down from an 18-month project to a 12-month project, which will help in lowering the costs of the renovations, he said.

The original plan was for the addition to be built first, which everyone would then move into to enable the main courthouse renovations, Bradshaw said. Now, all the courthouse offices will be moving into the Old Rec Center, with court to be held in the Civic Center during construction.

A start date for construction will be announced when available.

The commissioner also signed a proclamation declaring Towns County to be a Purple Heart County, signaling his support of the veterans in the community in the meeting last week.

According to purpleheart.org, the Purple Heart is specifically a combat decoration for U.S. military.

"The Purple Heart Medal is awarded to members of the armed forces ... who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action," per the website.

Purple Heart recipient Ryan McPherson, a Union County resident, was on hand to accept the proclamation.

McPherson attended the June meeting of Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, who signed a similar proclamation, and he did the same in the July meeting of the Blairsville City Council, with plans for the same in Hiwassee and Young Harris.

Taken together, the proclamation from Towns County, Union County and Blairsville put the area one step closer to becoming an official part of the Purple Heart Trail,



In the July 20 county meeting, Towns EMT Jim Shirley, with Ag Agent Jacob Williams, showed off a new stretcher that can be operated by one person instead of multiple.

an initiative being championed by McPherson.

"The purpose of the Purple Heart Trail is to create a symbolic and honorary system of roads, highways, bridges, and other monuments that give tribute to the men and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal," according to purpleheart.org.

In other business, Bradshaw approved the agreement between the Sheriff's Office and the Board of Education to provide school resources officers, who are Cpl. Donnie Jarrard at the Middle and High Schools, and Elementary School SRO Sally Tanner.

Jarrard has been a Towns County SRO for more than 25 years, and Tanner was added in 2018 because, at that time, Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong, the Sheriff's Office and Bradshaw felt it would be prudent to add another officer to help cover the comprehensive campus.

The School Board pays 75% of SRO salaries and the county pays the other 25%, Bradshaw said.

In other business, the commissioner approved the local share commitment letter for Legacy Link for their services at the Senior Center in the amount of \$12,450.

"This is money that we pay to the company, but we pay them for administrating the state funds, and all the counties in the region pay the same amount," Bradshaw said.

Also in the July 20 meeting, Bradshaw read and signed a budget amendment resolution for the revenues from the sale of Sheriff's Office surplus equipment in the amount of \$30,450, including older cars that are no longer in use.

The budget amendment also included \$83,900 for

Photo by Lowell Nicholson sheriff Capital Expenditures, and \$53,000 for the public safety service detail, which is detainee labor Bradshaw said the county didn't get until halfway through the year, creating savings that will be passed on to the Sheriff's Office.

Bradshaw will hold his next regular county meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 17, at 5:30 p.m. inside the county courthouse.



Benefit for Telida Lovell
July 30th - Plate Pick-Up Starts at 10:30 AM
in O'Reilly's Parking Lot
Tickets are \$10 a Plate
Pre-Sales call 706-897-5503



Bar-B-Que Plate:
BBQ, Slaw
Brunswick Stew
Dessert



Memory Lane...from Page 1A

The car show will run until 4 p.m., then the auction will go until 6 p.m., with at least 100 cars scheduled to be auctioned over the two days. Proceeds from the show and auction will go toward various causes in the community, including veterans and local organizations.

Each day of the car show, guests will have the opportunity to win flat screen TVs, gift baskets, shirts, and 10 tickets to Saturday's Dwight Yoakam concert at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

There is a \$20 registration fee for anyone looking to enter their car into the show. This fee will cover both days, and all participants will receive a Memory Lane Classic Car Show and Auction T-shirt.

The cost for spectators to enter the car show will be \$10 each day, with children under 12 admitted free.

Towns County High School students will be selling tickets for a 50/50 drawing, with the proceeds there also going to local giving.

Anyone looking to put their car up for auction will need to pay a \$100 fee for each vehicle, and there will be a 3% buyers and sellers' fee for each car auctioned.

Auctioning the cars both days will be award-winning auctioneer and Towns Countian Taylor Osborn from Southeast Auction Company.

Organizing the car show is the nonprofit Memory Lane Classic Car Museum, owned by Jerry and June Smith.

The Smiths opened Memory Lane locally about a year ago in the old Fun World location next to the movie theater in Young Harris, to showcase a revolving selection of over 100 classic cars, hot rods, motorcycles and more, all to raise money for the community.

For more information on how to register for the car show or to have a car auctioned off, contact Gabi Nguyen at 706-994-5474 or gabi.nguyen26@gmail.com.

People may also visit www.memorylane-classicmuseum.com or the Memory Lane Classic Cars Facebook page for more details.

As for Dwight Yoakam, the concert has sold out all indoor seating tickets, but there's still a chance for people to win tickets at the Auction and Show, or they can purchase a standing ticket for outside and bring a folding chair.

Tickets are \$47 plus fees and can be purchased by navigating to the event page at georgiamountainfairgrounds.com or by swinging by the Fairgrounds Main Office.

Opening for Yoakam is young country music star Drake Milligan, widely known for his impersonations of Elvis Presley. Admission begins at 7 p.m. this Saturday.

"Dwight Yoakam has sold more than 25 million albums worldwide, and he is a 21-time nominated, multiple Grammy Award winner," per the GMF website. "He has 12 gold albums and nine platinum or multi-platinum albums, with five of those albums topping Billboard's Country Albums chart and another 14 landing in the Top 10. Nearly 40 of Yoakam's singles have charted on Billboard, with 14 peaking in the Top 10.

"Yoakam is a recipient of the Artist of the Year award from the Americana Music Association, the most prestigious award offered by the organization, and he was inducted into the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame in the Songwriter/Artist category at the 49th Anniversary Gala on Oct. 14, 2019, in Nashville.

"In addition to his musical career, Yoakam is a formidable film and television actor who has appeared in over 40 feature films, including 'Sling Blade' and 'Panic Room.' In 2016, he recurred in David E. Kelley's Amazon series 'Goliath.' Recently, he appeared in director Steven Soderbergh's film 'Logan Lucky' with Channing Tatum and Daniel Craig.

"Yoakam is capable of seamlessly melting into his roles and impressively standing toe-to-toe with some of the world's top thespians over the course of his storied and successful acting career, including Jodie Foster, Tommy Lee Jones, Jared Leto, Forest Whitaker and Matthew McConaughey."

Moonshine Cruiz-In coming to Blairsville this weekend



Rakes Parrish, pictured here in 2016, is the organizer behind the Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

BLAIRSVILLE – The 13th Annual Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In is coming to Meeks Park this year, where the classic cars, vendors and spectators can really spread out.

Running July 29, 30 and 31, this year's Cruiz-In promises to be "Bigger & Better" than ever, with a larger venue, more vendors and additional off-site activities.

Per www.gammoonshinecruizin.com, "Enjoy three fun-filled days of good ole mountain hillbilly fun. Fantastic venue, swap meet, cruises, live music, real moonshine still in the works, mountain crafts, and plenty of hot classic cars, trucks, bikes, rat rods and more!"

General admission to the event is \$10 each day, with children 12 and under allowed in free.

For many years, the Cruiz-In was held at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiwassee. But the event has grown to the point where more room has become necessary, and Rakes Parrish, who runs the show, said competition with other events was a factor also.

"We like Meeks Park," Parrish said. "We think that will work well for us since we'll be the only event there."

"We like the restaurants, being able to run to Walmart to grab what we need for the

show, and then there's so much more that's offered to us, plus the help from the community seems to be great."

Parrish said he has been particularly impressed with the assistance he has gotten from the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, including President Steve Rowe and Director of Operations Crystal Wagner.

"I'm looking forward to working with everybody in Blairsville, and I think the people will love that area and the restaurants and all that Blairsville has to offer," Parrish said.

Touching on COVID-19 concerns, Parrish said his company, Flip Flop Promotions, has managed to hold other events safely during the pandemic, including last year's Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In.

"The age group of our participants are pretty much all vaccinated. They're concerned just like you and me. We do all the precautions," he said, adding that masks are by individual preference and people are encouraged to observe safe practices.

"We've been successful with three different shows (during the pandemic), and I don't know of any kind of outbreak that's occurred from our event."

On Thursday, July 29, classic cars participating in that day's cruise will be lining up at the Farmers Market at 1:30 p.m. to pull out at 2 p.m. Local country music

legend Tommy Townsend, who owns Granddaddy Mimm's Distilling Co., will be hosting a "Sour Mash Welcome Bash" at his Wellborn Street business in Downtown Blairsville Thursday evening to kick off the Moonshine Cruiz-In weekend.

Music starts at 7 p.m. featuring Townsend and beloved local musician Rick Davenport, and additional parking will be available throughout the downtown area.

The distillery will be hosting its renowned facility tours, and Two Country Hens will be on-site to provide hot dogs and barbecue to feed hungry guests.

Then on Friday, the Moonshine Cruiz-In will welcome spectators and participants between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at Meeks Park, to feature live music throughout the day before wrapping up with a barbecue party at the Farmers Market at 6 p.m.

Festivities re-commence at 8 a.m. Saturday, with even more music that morning and afternoon leading up to the big awards ceremony at 4:30 p.m., to include cash and prize drawings.

There will even be a block party on the Downtown Blairsville Square Saturday evening, with live music slated for around 7 p.m. People will want to park on side streets and not in the main part of downtown to make way for classic cars to park.

School Update...from Page 1A

the state to have remained open every day from the beginning to the end of the school term last year.

This feat was achieved by school leaders observing trends on campus for the spread of the COVID-19 virus, Berrong said, leading to the conclusion that staff members, and not children, were transmitting the virus among themselves.

The superintendent credited the custodial staff with keeping up a meticulous cleaning regimen that included all classrooms, buses, and even the playground equipment, which Berrong said helped limit the spread of germs.

To start the 2021-22 school year, Berrong said that classes for all students will be in-person on campus, with an exception for kids who have legitimate medical reasons for maintaining online-only instruction.

Masks will not be mandated, however, teachers and students who decide to wear them will be able to. COVID-19 sick days, which allowed staff members 10 days to be absent without penalty,

will no longer be in effect due to vaccine availability.

Berrong said the Elementary School had been completely repainted for the first time in years this summer, and the floors had been stripped and waxed as per usual.

Other modernization projects have been made at the school buildings in the last three years after the district received a multimillion-dollar modernization grant.

Switching gears, Berrong touched on the recent \$3 million grant acquired by the Union County School District to build a College and Career Academy, which students of Towns County will be able to utilize.

The academy will help to improve cohesion between local school districts in providing vocational training for students of the area. If classes in the chosen vocational pathway are not offered at a certain school, students can attend classes virtually in another school to earn credits.

"We're all working together to try to make sure we're producing the best

workers we can possibly produce," Berrong said.

Principal Perren praised the district's ability to persevere and stay open the entire school year, allowing for students to have as fulfilling a year as possible.

He pointed out that, because the schools kept their doors open yearlong, extracurriculars were particularly appreciated by students, especially seniors, who got to experience full sports seasons, prom and an outdoor graduation ceremony.

Test scores from the last school year were good for the circumstances, Perren said, but several factors, such as virtual learning students not having to take the tests, discounted scores from being used to gauge overall student performance.

"Our emphasis (for the upcoming school year) is on closing the gap on achievement and having a normal school year – as normal as possible," Perren said.

The Mountain Movers and Shakers meet every Friday at 8 a.m. inside the Sundance Grill in Hiwassee.

Accident...from Page 1A

with another jet ski carrying two females, resulting in injuries to both females that morning.

One was taken via ambulance for treatment Friday while the other was life-flighted to Gainesville, and a man purporting to know the victims said on a Sheriff's Office Facebook post Saturday that both girls had been released from hospital and were expected to recover fully.

Other details were not known at press time, including how the accident happened, where the individuals were from, if DNR would be pressing charges, or the official conditions of the parties involved.

Responding to the accident were DNR Law Enforcement, the Sheriff's Office, Fire Department, EMS, and Air Life Georgia 14 out of Blairsville.

Sheriff Ken Henderson is asking people to practice safety as it pertains to keeping adequate distances between boats and other watercraft, especially important in the busy summer months.

He also wants people to make sure they have working

fire extinguishers aboard all vessels and to not drink alcohol

when operating boating and other equipment.



Meet Me
at
The Market
Mickey Cummings
& Kristy Peney

We now have both sweet corn and tomatoes at the Union County Farmers Market. So, the produce you can now find at the Farmers Market are pole and snap beans, cabbage, potatoes, hot and sweet pepper, yellow squash, yellow and green zucchini, carrots, collards, peaches, leafy greens, as well as sweet corn and tomatoes. Remember we are open on both Tuesdays (2-5 pm) and Saturdays (7am-1 pm). So come out and meet us at the market.

Also, the Trash to Treasures Yard Sale is held each Friday from 7:30 AM until 1 PM. To participate simply come to the Market and find an empty spot. The cost is \$15 except on the first Friday of each month when the cost is \$10. You can find anything from clothing to tools as well as sporting goods

at Trash to Treasures.

The Canning Plant is in full operation and we will hit our peak in the next 3 weeks. We are canning green beans, vegetable soup, peas, butter beans, peaches, tomatoes and collards. We have also processed a lot of peach jam over the past couple of weeks. If you wish to participate call 706-439-6043 to make a reservation. We are open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. However, next week we will be open on July 28 (Wednesday) and July 29. And the first week of August we will open Monday, August 2 and Thursday, August 5. The cost of processing is 35 cents per quart and 25 cents per pint.

We look forward to seeing you at the Union County Canning Plant.

EMC Meetings...from Page 1A

we accommodate people's service needs without requiring their attendance here at the office. So, we had to devise various means for that, and I think we were good at that. We segued into a new generation that prefers to do business remotely, so that stood us well from that standpoint.

"A curious thing with regard to the overall service of the electric load is, we're a primarily residential community, and the load is primarily residential. COVID had the effect of having people come to second homes (here) outside of the large cities, and that increased the usage per existing home, and that was a good thing.

"The second thing was, even people who lived here routinely were (indoors) more, and that increased the usage there as well. What this allowed (the EMC) to do, for the same amount of investment in terms of the plant build to serve (customers), is more utilization of it, and that means better efficiency. So, our members have benefitted from that in terms of the load."

Glidewell is from West Tennessee, where he rose through the ranks in an electric cooperative environment. He

worked in that environment for over 23 years in operations and engineering before spending seven years with the Tennessee Valley Authority as an engineering consultant.

When the opportunity arose to return to the cooperative environment, Glidewell took it.

"It's very much like coming home, not geographically, but culturally," he said. "So, I'm really enjoying it. This is a large (adjustment), but I'm settling in. I've been well accepted and supported.

"You couldn't ask for anything better. The board is superb, the employees here are exceptional, and the membership is great. What we've got in front of us are opportunities. I'm looking forward to the next step."

One next step is the expansion of rural internet, which is always a hot topic, and Glidewell was happy to report renewed interest in "a complete and total buildout to all our members" of the EMC's high speed fiber optic network.

"We have a program now called Neighborhood Network," he said.

The program effectively enables members to have fiber optic cable extended into their

area if they can get at least four neighboring homeowners to commit to adding broadband service at their location.

"It's very positive for the cooperative in that, suddenly, neighbors are talking to neighbors about how to get service," Glidewell said. "They begin to understand this idea of building a significant amount of fiber to one person is a different animal than building to a block of people."

For more information on this program, call 706-379-3121.

The EMC Board meets the second Tuesday of each month starting at 6 p.m. at the Young Harris headquarters.

To attend, members must fill out the form titled "Member Notice of Intent to Attend a Board Meeting" at <https://www.brmmemc.com/my-cooperative/board-meetings/>.

This form may be filled out and submitted directly online, though members must complete the form at least 48 hours before the start of board meetings to attend.

Members who wish to address the board during meetings will need to fill out a separate form called the "Member Petition to Present at Board Meeting," due in the same time frame.

H&G Show...from Page 1A

improvement businesses with quality products to an area with interested customers, in the process attracting people to travel to Atlanta or Knoxville for the products and services they need around the home.

"Your home is the greatest asset most people own. It's really important to them to make their house comfortable, pretty, and enjoyable," Anderson said, noting that increased time at home during the pandemic had led people to put more effort into improvements.

Nancy Purser of "Nancy's Treasures" out of Andrews, North Carolina, is passionate about connecting customers with antiques and repurposed furniture. She feels the annual show is not only about selling décor but giving folks new ideas to implement around their houses.

And though 2021 was the first year in attendance for Karen Pattillo's "Family Affair," she said it was evident the Home & Garden Expo was bringing crowds of folks into the region to support the area by buying locally made goods from artisans and other vendors.

Emery and Norma Foote from Young Harris are building a home in Hayesville, North Carolina, and they stopped by to see what the community had to offer for their new build. They



Nothing improves a home quite like a full body massage chair, pictured here at the 2021 Home & Garden Show.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

found the worm castings booth particularly interesting, as they plan to start a garden at their new home.

Chris Carlson from "Mountain Time on Main Street" is one such vendor emphasizing the importance of investing in local talent, as the outdoor living store supports around 55 artisans and artists selling handmade furniture, wood carvings, paintings, jewelry, blown glass and more.

To Carlson, the best part of the event was bringing local businesses together with residents and guests of the area, all while getting to know

customers and what they want inside their homes.

All told, the Home & Garden Show featured top to bottom improvement services, from roofing to house foundations, gutter guards to hot tubs, yard art to kitchen wares, antiques to jewelry, and information on internet providers, solar panel installation and professional cleaning services.

For more information, and to stay on top of news regarding next year's Home & Garden Shows in North Georgia and Western North Carolina, visit <https://expomanagementinc.com/>.

Army Veteran Douglas Carlton of Blairsville receives Quilt of Valor



Douglas Carlton and family

On July 20th, Homestead Hospice of Blairsville presented Douglas Carlton of Blairsville with a Quilt of Valor for his service in the Army.

The Quilt and Pillowcase were donated by the Quilt of Valor Foundation and locally made by the Misty Mountain Quilters Guild.

The ceremony was held at his home in Blairsville surrounded by his family.

Shannon Larsen of Homestead Hospice read about the Quilts of Valor, sharing their meaning and their history and quilted Mr. Carlton. Veteran and Homestead Hospice Office Manager, Dawn Lively pinned Mr. Carlton as an Honored Veteran. Congratulations to Mr. Carlton and we thank him deeply for his service!

Conway Benefit...from Page 1A



The fundraiser to assist TCSO Inv. Conway after his home burned down was a tremendous success on July 23.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

tearfully. Fortunately, firefighters were able to contain the blaze to the property, but that left Conway and eight members of his family in need of new lodgings.

They do plan to rebuild, Conway said, but for now, he and Robyn are living in a camper at

the Fairgrounds, and Lexie, Kyle and their children are staying with Kyle's parents in Towns County.

"People have been just so generous," TCSO Captain Eric Wood said. "I mean, they've donated a lot of money, items, clothes - just all those necessary items that they might need to live

life daily. We're just so proud of the way that people have responded."

Concurring, Dean said everyone "has been so wonderful."

"I feel so loved from this community because they've all reached out, they've all been wonderful to us," she said, adding that the family has even had help from people in South Georgia, where they originally hail from.

The benefit was attended by members of the Sheriff's Office, including Sheriff Henderson and Chief Deputy Gene Moss; members of the Towns County and Clay County, North Carolina, Fire Departments; and residents of Towns County and Clay County, North Carolina.

Sheriff Henderson thanked all who turned out for and supported the benefit, including the Gwinnett Retired Firefighters, who cooked hotdogs and hamburgers for over 500 people, with supplies provided by Osborn Farms and Correctional Resource Group.

People looking to contribute further donations to the cause may contact the Sheriff's Office at 706-896-4444.