

Homecoming...from Page 1A



TCHS 2018 Football Homecoming Queen Ella Bury, King Trent Bradshaw and Princess Taylor Cornett celebrate Homecoming together on Sept. 7, 2018.
Photo by Lowell Nicholson

of the football game, at which point one of them will be crowned 2019 Homecoming Queen in front of a very proud community.

2018 Football Homecoming Queen Ella Bury is expected to return to crown this year's queen after the big announcement Friday night.

The 2019 Senior Girls Homecoming Court includes Jamison Wood, Julia Chinkhan, Anya Bury, Sophia Shook, Kaitlyn Davis and Rylee Kitchens.

Joining the six senior girls this year are freshman Eden Hill, sophomore Macy Brinson and junior Vanessa Floyd.

The 2019 Senior Boys Homecoming Court consists of Alex Lim, Ryan Tyler, Shane Sparks, Christopher Boggus, Jacob Kinsey and Seth Nichols.

"Most of them are standout students who play

sports and are involved in several other activities," Perren said. "I think that is one of the strengths of our school. We have so many students who are involved in the community, involved with several activities at school, all while maintaining their schoolwork."

During the week, students will participate in several fun activities and competitive games geared toward promoting school spirit, with kids encouraged to dress up to match a different theme for each day of the week.

Monday was 'Merica Day featuring red, white and blue; Tuesday was Throwback Day; Wednesday is Meme/Vine Day; and Thursday will be VSCO/Tik-Toc Day.

Friday, of course, will be Spirit Day, and each of the separate student classes will wear a specific color in hopes of out-spiriting their fellow classes.

At 2 p.m. Friday, students will gather for a pep rally in support of the Indians Football Team as the Boys in Blue try to get their first win of the season against the Eagles later that night.

The 2019 Football Homecoming King will be crowned during the pep rally Friday. Former Indians quarterback Trent Bradshaw served as 2018 Homecoming King, and he is currently attending college at Georgia Coastal in Brunswick.

After the football game, the students will dress up in their best formalwear and gather for the annual Homecoming Dance at the Recreation and Conference Center.

The students are looking forward to this week, Perren said, with every day holding a special significance to Homecoming and the pride that comes with being a Towns County Indian.

Shriners...from Page 1A

spine; brittle bone disease; and complications related to spina bifida, cerebral palsy, dwarfism and muscular dystrophy.

Rehabilitative programs offered to patients of Shriners Hospitals involve a complete range of therapies, fitness programs, psychosocial guidance, and experiential activities aimed at assisting patients to develop skills for living independently.

Additionally, a multidisciplinary team of medical professionals provides support to child-patients and families during transitions back to everyday life.

That's why it is no exaggeration to say that the nonprofit Shriners Hospitals are in the business of safeguarding the future by changing lives, and they do it by dramatically improving the quality of life for society's most vulnerable and precious members: its children.

Once a child receives a referral to a Shriners Hospital, he or she can start to receive world-class medical care regardless of the family's ability to pay.

Covered costs include all medical procedures, tests, follow-up visits and therapies, travel expenses to and from appointments, as well as intrahospital room and board for parents, with over-the-road and flight transportation provided if needed.

Since the Shriners are always looking for children to help, local Appalachian Club members encourage families to reach out to them if they have a need for specialized care, or if families with children in need don't know a Shriner, they can call 800-237-5055.

In addition to its child-patient care mission, Shriners Hospitals also conduct innovative medical research and offer many teaching programs for medical professionals.

As one might imagine, providing such a high level of care and support to children suffering from any number of life-altering conditions is costly, especially when factoring in the cutting-edge medical research and educational programs backed by Shriners Hospitals.

Each year, approximately 85% of Shriners Hospitals' operating budgets go directly toward funding Shriners International's overall mission of patient care, research and education, with last year's budget of \$965 million going to serve 255,000 patients in 2018.

And because acceptance into a Shriners Hospital is based solely on a child's medical needs and never on ability to pay, to further their mission of making as many children well



A baby boy with a cleft lip and cleft palate before receiving treatment at Shriners Hospital for Children...

as possible, Shriners rely on local fundraising efforts carried out by the 195 temples around the world.

Here in Towns and Union counties, members of the Appalachian Shrine Club conduct two main fundraising campaigns every year to support the mission of the Yaarab Temple.

The first of these fundraisers takes place largely in the spring and goes toward the annual Big Top Circus and Fair in Marietta, attended this year by local fifth-graders in May.

Commonly considered the "World's Largest Shrine Circus," the annual event brings families together from all over for fun and fellowship while raising awareness about the Shriners and the causes they champion.

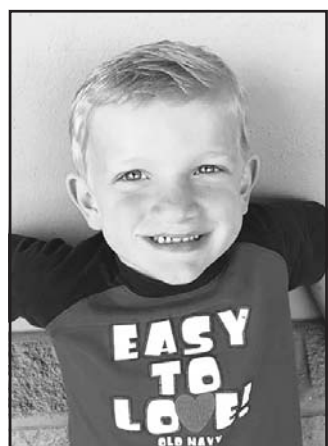
Local Shriners also hold a fundraising drive each fall in support of the Shriners Hospitals, during which time Shriners take to the community with their red fez hats and buckets to collect generous donations at intersections and various retail locations.

The Appalachian Shrine Club also hosts Blairsville's original "30 Guns in 30 Days" raffle fundraiser that goes toward, among other things, aiding Shriner "Roadrunners" to provide transportation for children and families of Union and Towns for treatment at Shriners Hospitals.

Such treatments are possible in large part due to the financial support of area residents and sponsors right here in the North Georgia Mountains, with all donations to the nonprofit Shriners Hospitals being tax deductible.

Shriners are also generous supporters of the causes they espouse, giving of their own personal time and money, though it takes the continued support of the community to help the Shriners further their charitable mission in the mountains and beyond.

The Appalachian Shrine



...And here's the same happy young man after benefiting from reconstructive surgery at Shriners Hospital, made possible through generous public donations.

Club is facing the same issue of lower membership numbers faced by many volunteer service groups these days, and as such, the local Shriners are always looking for more members to join their cause in helping to ease the suffering of children.

"It's an organization that everybody who's in it is proud to be a part of," said Dwain Brackett, a decades-long member and multi-term past president of the Appalachian Shrine Club. "Some people will ask, 'How do I be a Shriner?'"

"Well, you have to be a Mason to be a Shriner. The Masons act as our interview group, if you would, so once you become a Mason, if you want to, you can branch off over here and be a Shriner.

"Our local club has probably 30 active members at this point. We've had a lot more and we've had a lot less - it just fluctuates. And unfortunately, we've lost several over the last few years."

Added Brackett, "But what we need the most is patients. We've got the facilities right now, there's funding available. The patients that are going somewhere else because they don't know to come to us, we need to get those patients in. They're out there, they just don't know."

For the many members of Shriners International, including those based locally, the ultimate goal of the Shriners Hospitals is to make sure that no child suffers with a medical condition simply because his or her family cannot afford treatment, and all donations go toward funding that goal.

For more information on how to donate, visit the Appalachian Shrine Website at appshriners.org.

The Shriners meet on the second Thursday of every month, with fellowship starting at 6:30 p.m. in their Club Building at 68 Industrial Blvd. in Blairsville.

Seaplane...from Page 1A

inquiry.

"The Federal Aviation Administration investigation into the operation of the seaplane N9292 depicted in the video you sent us shows no violations of Federal Aviation Regulations," an FAA spokesperson said.

"The aircraft is operating under a FAA Letter of Authorization to conduct scenic flights in the area.

"The agency issued the authorization more than three years ago. To date, the FAA has not confirmed any incidents of non-compliance with the Federal Aviation Regulations."

According to the FAA, "a seaplane is considered a motorized vessel when it is

operating on Lake Chatuge," that is, when it's on the water and not flying over the water, "and it is under the jurisdiction of the federal, state or local agencies that manage the waterway."

Continuing, the spokesperson said the FAA had no jurisdiction "to prohibit or restrict motorized vessels and/or their operating area on Lake Chatuge," and that U.S. Coast Guard Boating Right of Way rules for vessels on the water apply to seaplanes.

"The FAA has counseled the seaplane operator on responsibilities of following the Federal Aviation Regulations and the USCG Boating Right of Way rules and good

neighbor policies for operating on Lake Chatuge," the FAA spokesperson concluded.

Lake Chatuge comes under the federal jurisdiction of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which allows seaplanes, though enforcement falls under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard, represented locally by U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 2-3.

The seaplane has been the subject of a number of "for" and "against" letters to the editor in the Towns County Herald, and the newspaper hopes that the official statement by the FAA helps to clarify this matter for readers and residents.

Superior Court...from Page 1A

Levins started his public service with the Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office in 2012, though he transferred to the Tallapoosa Judicial Circuit nearly two months ago.

Morris served eight years in White County as a senior assistant district attorney of the circuit, and she is now working with Todd L. Lord in private law practice.

The Enotah Judicial Circuit representing Union, Towns, Lumpkin and White counties consists of three Superior Court judgeships, and

the nominee selected by Kemp will join Chief Judge Raymond George and Judge Joy Parks on the bench.

George became the new chief judge on Oct. 1 following Gunter's last day in office on Sept. 30.

"The Superior Courts of Georgia is a court of general jurisdiction handling both civil and criminal law actions," according to GeorgiaSuperiorCourts.org. "Superior Court judges preside over cases involving misdemeanors, contract disputes, premises liability and

various other actions.

"In addition, the Superior Court has exclusive equity jurisdiction over all cases of divorce, title to land, and felonies involving jury trials, including death penalty cases."

GeorgiaSuperiorCourts.org is managed by the state-created Council of Superior Court Judges of Georgia, "which assists the Superior Court judges and the judicial circuits by providing administrative support, research, IT services, court automation and communications."

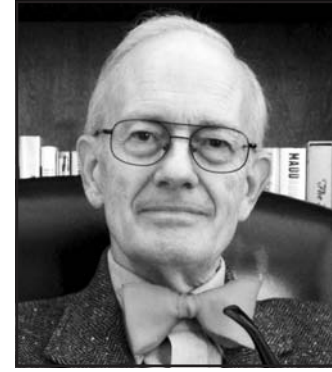
Local Writers featured Friday night, October 11th

Poet Linda Grayson Jones and fiction writer Alan Cone take the spotlight at this month's Writers' Night Out. Their reading is followed by an open microphone where audience members can share their own poetry or prose. The free event takes place on October 11 at 7 PM at the Union County Community Center in Blairsville, GA, and is open to the public.

Cone is the author of many short stories and a novel, *The History of the Decline and Fall of Roland Arnheiter*. He explains that he "comes to North Georgia by way of Texas, on our nation's frontier, where a man writes with both fists or perishes." Cone's work is anchored always in a common man's self-effacing humility. His penchant for dry humor and sarcasm is reflected in his artist's statement: "With acuity and wisdom, with perceptiveness and whimsy, I usher audiences through an odyssey of freshman-level erudition and beyond. My quietly courageous abasement of the writer's dais will leave you challenged, thoughtful, hungry for less." He also admits that he does not actually smoke a pipe.



Linda Grayson Jones
Dean of Math and Science at Young Harris College. She has read and written poetry since childhood and recalls reading *The Highwayman* by Alfred Noyes to her third-grade classmates. With a B.S. in Biology from Stetson University, an M.A. in Biology and a Ph.D. in Pathology from Vanderbilt University, her career path was primarily in academic biomedical research, but in 2009 she returned to her first love—teaching. She remains a reader and writer of poetry and is a member of the North Carolina Writers' Network. She credits North Carolina poet Nancy Simpson (1938-2018) for encouraging her to use Grayson Jones as her published poet's name.



Alan Cone
place on the second Friday of the month from April through November. Anyone wishing to participate in the open mic on October 11 can sign up at the door to read for three minutes. The event is sponsored by North Carolina Writers' Network-West. The Union County Community Center is located at Butternut Creek Golf Course at 129 Union County Recreation Rd., Blairsville, GA, off Highway 129 near the intersection of US 76, phone (706) 439-6092. Food and drinks are available for purchase in The View Grill, but please arrive by 5:30 PM to get served. For more information on Writers' Night, contact Karen Holmes at (404) 316-8466 or kpaulholmes@gmail.com. NT(02/25)CA

Trial...from Page 1A

Richard W. Story dismissed 47 counts in the indictment against Gowder and Heaton involving prescriptions allegedly filled in North Carolina and Tennessee.

Gowder's defense team had filed a motion in March requesting those counts be dismissed for "improper venue," arguing the alleged acts occurred outside the jurisdiction of the Northern District of Georgia.

In his dismissal order, Story seemed to side with federal prosecutors on venue, citing a legal provision stating that any offense against the U.S. begun in one district and completed in another may be "prosecuted in any district in which such offense was begun, continued or completed."

"There is, however, a problem with this indictment," Story wrote in his Sept. 19 order. "The counts at issue here do not actually allege that the prescriptions were prepared in the Northern District of Georgia."

He stated that the case would go forward on the remaining counts.

Also in his Sept. 19 order, Story denied a request originally filed by the two defense teams in 2018 to "sever" their clients as co-defendants to allow Gowder and Heaton to be tried separately.

"The court has ample faith in the jury's ability to keep them apart," he wrote.

In an oral order posted on Sept. 17, Story also denied a motion for a non-jury trial for Gowder filed by his attorney in March.

As of press time, the court had yet to file any rulings on a joint motion by Gowder and Heaton's attorneys to exclude from trial certain evidence introduced earlier this year involving allegations that Heaton prescribed medications in exchange for sex with some female patients.

crimes, or acts of professional misconduct, that are outside the scope of the charged offenses in the indictment," while the prosecution has said the evidence "is intrinsically intertwined with the conduct charged."

Story will rule on the request to exclude the evidence after a review of supplemental filings by both sides in the case.

According to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta, which is trying the government's case, Heaton and Gowder are presumed innocent of the charges, "and it will be the government's burden to prove each defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial."

The charges against them stem from allegations of illegal activity surrounding prescriptions written and filled between May 2013 and October 2015.

Heaton and Gowder were initially arrested on Feb. 4, 2016, following an extensive investigation by the Union County Sheriff's Office conducted jointly with various other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

That investigation also led to the arrest of former hospital ER director Dr. David Gowder - Mike's brother - the same day, and the three were named as co-defendants in an

April 2018 federal indictment, to which they pleaded not guilty.

Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley is representing the state's case against the men, and he told the North Georgia News and Towns County Herald at the time that his office was working closely with U.S. attorneys.

"Both cases can be prosecuted," he said. "But certainly, we're going to coordinate our work with the federal prosecutors."

In a "Change of Plea Hearing" in March, David Gowder avoided criminal trial by pleading guilty in federal court to one count of prescribing oxycodone for a patient for no medical reason.

He is still awaiting sentencing and faces a maximum of 20 years in prison for his crime, though the prosecution said at the hearing that it may recommend a downward adjustment of that sentence, which could come with a fine of up to \$1 million.

As part of his plea bargain, David Gowder agreed to cooperate with the government's investigation and to forfeit his medical license.

A superseding indictment removing David as a co-defendant in the federal case was subsequently issued in March to feature the current charges against Mike Gowder and James Heaton only.



Woman's
ENRICHMENT CENTER
706-745-7518
218 Jones Street • Blairsville, GA 30512

Question: Who were the winners of the North Georgia Talent Search Fundraiser?

Answer: Summer Rahn, Alex Higgins, and True Youngblood were our winners of the NGTS. Congratulations! All the contestants who performed were incredible. The fundraiser was a huge success. We want to thank all of our sponsors, judges, contestants, audience, Board of Directors, volunteers/staff, and supporters. And a special thanks to Steven Phillips at WJUL 97.7 for all of the publicity and for being the emcee of the event.