

Towns County Herald

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Local heroes gather for annual fire department dinner

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Fire took some time recently to gather its firefighting family around fellowship and good food, as firefighters met for their annual dinner on Thursday, Dec. 8.

Put on jointly by the fire department and the Towns County Fire Corps, the event took place at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center at Foster Park.

Those in attendance – firefighters, their spouses and significant others, their children and their friends – broke bread with one another and generally enjoyed the occasion of social gathering.

Fire Chief Harold Copeland led the program that ran side by side the dinner,

which was prepared by Epic Catering.

Capt. Harold Koppel also shared in the emcee duties.

Firefighters received many personal accolades that evening, including two promotions to East and West Battalion Chiefs and six promotions to Lieutenant.

Robert Lownie and Justin Turner received recognition as Rookies of the Year, while Duane Ledford, along with Wayne and Chianne Nelson, received the Chief's Award for contributions to their departments and the community.

Many individuals were thanked and given pins for their years of service, some having served upward of three decades.

Tyler Keyes was awarded a Safety Commemorative Award

by Sid Turner and Paul Danner of the Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter Sons of the American Revolution, "in recognition of accomplishments for outstanding contributions to protect human life and property by preventing injuries or casualties due to fires."

The Blue Ridge Mountain Sons only give out one Commemorative Award a year to a first responder, cycled between their counties of Towns, Union, Fannin and Gilmer. This means that Towns County won't have another recipient of the award for another four years.

Matt Turpin of Turpin's Wrecker Services received special recognition by the fire chief that evening, for his help in training the fire department in extrication techniques, and the chief thanked Sally and



Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland, pictured here with his daughter Meka and granddaughter Marlee, shares a few words with Commissioner-Elect Cliff Bradshaw.

Council terminates employment of longtime city manager

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Rick Stancil has served the City of Hiwassee in one way or another for more than two decades, first as the city attorney and most recently as city manager.

Jan. 31 will be Stancil's last day of employment at Hiwassee City Hall.

At the tail end of the regular meeting of Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis and city council on Tuesday, Dec. 6, the council voted 3-2 to terminate Stancil's employment.

The vote occurred in open session, following a nearly two-hour executive session discussion labeled simply, "Motion to go into Executive Session for Employee Evaluation" on the meeting agenda.

Per audio made available to the *Towns County Herald*, Councilpersons Liz Ordiales,



Hiwassee City Manager Rick Stancil

Anne Mitchell and Kris Berrong voted to terminate Stancil's employment following the executive session, while Councilman Jay Chastain Jr. voted against the motion.

Councilwoman Rayette Ross attempted to abstain from the vote, though Stancil

told her that she must take a stand on the issue, according to meeting audio. She voted not to terminate.

This was Councilwoman Ross' first official regular meeting as a Hiwassee City Councilwoman following her

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World War II Veteran Johnson remembers Pearl Harbor

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Wednesday, Dec. 7, Americans paid tribute to the countless brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice, dying for their country, on that very same day in 1941.

Observed nationwide as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Dec. 7 is reserved in honor of those who suffered the terrors of an attack on American soil during the "date which will live in infamy."

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the event that would bring the United States to join the Allied Forces and into the skirmish of World War II.

Towns County resident and World War II veteran Bud Johnson was aboard the USS Rhind (DD-404), a destroyer



Bud Johnson, center, with Todd Kimsey at the October opening of Bell Mountain County Park. Both Johnson and Kimsey are two Jima veterans who live in Towns County.

attached to the U.S. Navy Atlantic Fleet when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

"I was on my second destroyer during the attack," said Johnson. "I joined the Navy in 1939, two years before

Pearl Harbor. I had just made Third Class Petty Officer, over in the Atlantic."

"I didn't get over into the Pacific until 1944. I spent the last year of the war in the

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Hiwassee Police Dept. arrests six more on felony drug charges

News Special
Towns County Herald

The Hiwassee Police Department has continued its drug interdiction effort during the month of November, which has resulted in six additional felony drug arrests and two vehicle seizures.

Hiwassee PD is pleased to be working closely with the Towns County Sheriff's Office and their newest K-9 Deputy, Hunter, a Belgian Malinois.

Hunter, along with his handler Deputy Jay McCarter, assisted the HPD on a traffic stop and alerted the officers to the presence of drugs that would have otherwise not been located.

Since the beginning of September, 21 individuals have been arrested on felony drug charges within Hiwassee City limits.

An additional nine were arrested on misdemeanor drug charges.

The following individuals were arrested and are presumed innocent until proven guilty:

Marcia Howard, 64, of Hiwassee, possession of controlled substance; drugs to be kept in original container.

Brandon Mount, 29, of Dawsonville, possession of methamphetamine, possession of less than one ounce marijuana (a misdemeanor), possession of drug related object.

John Beni, 26, of Atlanta, possession of more than one ounce of marijuana (a felony); distribution of controlled substance.

Cody Nelson, 25, of Hayesville, NC, possession



Marcia Howard



Brandon Mount



John Beni



Cody Nelson



Clinton Genarie



Thomas Repp

of more than one ounce of marijuana (a felony); distribution of controlled substance.

Clinton Genarie, 22, of Murphy, NC, possession of more than one ounce

of marijuana (a felony); distribution of controlled substance.

Thomas Repp, 35, of Hiwassee, possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug related object.

Sen. Wilkinson talks government, thanks voters for support

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – Area residents heard from District 50 State Sen. John Wilkinson concerning state government in the Mountain Movers and Shakers weekly meeting at Mary's Southern Grill on Friday, Dec. 9.

Recently re-elected Republican Sen. Wilkinson spent the early morning hours with his beloved Towns County residents, sharing the ins and outs of the General Assembly and what he hopes to continue to bring to the citizens of the county.

Of the many things Sen. Wilkinson shared with the

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Sen. John Wilkinson

July Term grand jury indictments continued

The following individuals were indicted during the July Term 2016 of the Towns County Grand Jury, which met in October for the second time:

Willie Joe Gibson, two counts fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer; reckless driving.

Kimberly Dawn Garrett, possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; possession of marijuana less than an ounce; two counts possession of drug related objects; turn signal violation; failure to wear seat safety belt.

Christopher Marion Woodward (AKA Marion

Christopher Woodward, Marvin Christopher Woodward), possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; two counts possession of methamphetamine; two counts possession of marijuana less than an ounce; two counts possession of drug related objects; giving false information to a law enforcement officer.

James Robert Gooch, three counts theft by receiving stolen property; two counts theft by deception.

Ashley Elizabeth Bowers, two counts theft by unlawful appropriation; two counts theft by deception.

Jimmy Lee Lumley Jr., burglary in the first degree; burglary in the second degree; three counts theft by deception;

two counts theft by unlawful appropriation; guilty plea entered Nov. 15 to burglary in the first degree, one count theft by unlawful appropriation and one count theft by deception.

Justin Dale Eller, cruelty to children in the first degree; battery against a female who is pregnant; battery, family violence.

Richard Glenn Scroggs, possession of methamphetamine; possession of firearm during commission of a felony; two counts possession of drug related objects; expired tag.

Brandon Derek Shook, aggravated assault; aggravated assault, family violence; three counts battery; three counts battery, family violence.

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Free Christmas Meal Delivery to Homebound Residents December 22nd
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Free Food Distribution Thursday, Dec. 15th N. Mt. Zion Church
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Basketball
Thurs. Dec. 17 vs. Christian Heritage 6 & 7:30 PM
Tues. Dec. 20 @ Lumpkin County 6 & 7:30 PM