

BOE...from Page 1A

Page. "She is a go-to teacher. The students always ask about Mrs. Julie and always want to be with her."

For the middle school level, Gina Chambers was awarded the honorary title of Teacher of the Year. Before pursuing her love of teaching, Chambers worked as a park ranger throughout the park system. Currently, Chambers teaches sixth-grade language arts, where she serves as a daily inspiration for both her peers and her pupils.

"This Teacher of the Year works hard every day," said TCMS Principal Erica Chastain. "She works hard to teach our students and loves her job. You can easily see that when you go into her classroom."

"She's very giving and caring and is a mentor to other teachers. She is kindhearted and understanding. She often gives students second chances and encourages all of them to participate in class."

"She is amazing. We are honored at Towns County Middle School to have her as a teacher."

Christa Houser received the great honor of not only being nominated as the Towns County High School Teacher of the Year, but also Towns County School System Teacher of the Year.

Houser graduated from TCHS in 1993 and taught 10 years in public education before taking time to raise and homeschool her three children. Last year, Houser rejoined the world of teaching at TCHS and has since received innumerable praise for her efforts teaching English.

"When I interviewed Christa for her job, there is something I will never forget," said TCHS Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs. "She said that she was born to teach literature. I know that for a fact. She volunteers to do anything and everything, from helping with homecoming activities to prom decorating."

"A real testament to her is, I had students giving up classes they had been wanting



TVA prevented Towns County Schools with a \$5,000 grant to aid all three of the system's robotics teams



Towns County Schools Superintendent Darren Berrong gives his monthly report to the rest of the Board of Education

to take just so they could be in the classroom for a second time. She's a hardworking teacher and challenges students to be great thinkers."

Houser will go on to represent Towns County in the State Teacher of the Year competition.

At the start of this month's meeting, Charles Spencer with the Tennessee Valley Authority presented a check in the amount of \$5,000 to aid in funding all robotics programs throughout the school system.

"TVA started a program about a year ago to assist schools with their robotics

programs," said Spencer. "We want to encourage schools to either begin a robotics program or help schools sustain the programs. Here in Towns County, I think it's more expansion of the program than anything."

"We hope that the funds we're going to donate both help the existing programs and help expand the programs for the future."

Along with the \$5,000, TVA has provided Towns County Schools with grants to cover the costs of registration fees as well as competition field set-ups for all three robotics teams.

Gas...from Page 1A

example, the Ingles gas station was completely out Saturday, with employees saying it could be a week before the next gas delivery. However, a shipment did arrive over the weekend, and customers were fueling up for \$2.01 a gallon until the supply ran dry again Sunday afternoon.

The pattern so far shows that gas is available, it's just not available everywhere at once—deliveries are being made to the various gas stations, and customers are lining up until the gas is gone.

At gas stations that did have fuel over the weekend, lines often backed up into the street, and residents crossed county and state lines in search of gas.

Locally, some stations ratcheted up their prices in order to control the supply, while others imposed gallon limits on a per customer basis.

Many residents filled up gas cans and took multiple vehicles for fill-ups where they knew gas to be, which contributed somewhat to the local craze and gas selloff through the weekend.

The crisis has left the

region in limbo, with citizens not knowing where their next gallon of gasoline will come from.

In order to combat the shortages, Gov. Nathan Deal signed an executive order last Wednesday to allow fuel truck drivers to operate under extended hours in order to keep gas flowing into the state.

Gov. Deal extended that order on Friday to last another week, and the governors in nearby states have followed suit.

The shortage is due to a break in a major fuel line that delivers gas from Gulf Coast refineries in Texas all the way to the East Coast in North Carolina, where it continues on up to New Jersey.

Colonial Pipeline operates the line in question, which was shut down on Friday, Sept. 9, following the discovery of a massive leak of somewhere between 250,000 and 340,000 gallons of fuel in Shelby County, Alabama.

It's been nearly two weeks since the leak was discovered, and repairs to the pipeline have reportedly been stalled due to bad weather and fumes, though the company did announce Saturday that it had begun construction on a bypass line to allow its main

line to "return to service as quickly as possible."

No timeline has been established for when the bypass will be completed, but experts believe that the supply will only be effected for another week or so.

Tom Kloza, who heads up Energy Analysis for Oil Price Information Service, told AAA that the Colonial Pipeline could be shipping a normal volume of gas as early as this week.

"I do not anticipate areas where motorists won't be able to find gasoline," Kloza said.

Until Colonial Pipeline gets a steady supply of gasoline running again—hopefully this week—the *North Georgia News* and the *Towns County Herald* recommend that residents call ahead to gas stations before heading out to fill up, especially for residents who are already low on gas.

Fuel prices will likely continue to fluctuate until a normal supply of fuel has been reestablished.

The last time the southeast experienced a major interruption in gas supply was when Hurricanes Gustav and Ike shut down most of the Gulf Coast oil refineries back in 2008.

Hiawassee...from Page 1A

and that it would be prudent to go ahead and adopt the mayor's suggestion.

There will be a public hearing on the millage rate reduction this Thursday, Sept. 22, at 5:30 p.m. at Hiawassee City Hall. The mayor anticipates the adoption of the new rate in the Tuesday, Oct. 4, monthly council meeting, which will also begin at 5:30 p.m.

Also in the September meeting, the council entertained several distinguished guests.

First, Mayor Mathis read from a proclamation honoring Lynn and Leslie McPeak of TATA On Main, whose consignment business has brought in several hundred thousand dollars in sales over the past couple of years.

The McPeaks are currently selling specialized decorative license plates that celebrate the "Lake and Mountain Paradise" that is Hiawassee. Many will recognize the design, which matches the banners that have sprung up around the Town Square.

Each plate costs \$16 and is available at TATA On Main, and the McPeak sisters would like everyone to know that they are selling the plates on a nonprofit basis in order to fund beautification projects around the city.

Also in the meeting, General Manager Hilda Thomason of the

Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds gave a small presentation on the upcoming "Mountain Country Christmas," a themed holiday light show that will be coming to the fairgrounds this holiday season thanks to the county's hotel/motel tax.

Thomason asked the city to consider a joint decorative effort to help connect what will be going on at the fairgrounds with adjoining Hiawassee proper.

Towns County Chamber of Commerce President Candace Lee gave a report on the city's hotel/motel funds that have been distributed to the chamber according to the chamber's fiscal year, which is the calendar year.

"So my figures are for the whole year, and total received to date from the city is \$74,900," said Lee. "Out of that money, print and digital advertising done with the city's money is \$59,000. Out of the total of \$74,900, the chamber has used to date \$18,000, and that's to keep the visitors center running."

"And that's to go toward the cost to run the visitors center, and the copies made and the printing made, and things like that."

According to Lee, chamber visitors have nearly returned to pre-recession levels, sometimes up to 45 people a day during these busier summer months.

Also in the monthly



Hilda Thomason, general manager of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, spoke to the council about the upcoming Mountain Country Christmas, asking if the city would think about putting up similar decorations to get a theme going.

meeting, Sis Jarrard was appointed Elections Superintendent for the upcoming Special Municipal Election in November; the council approved a second work session for each month in order to have more time to discuss council matters before monthly council meetings; and councilmembers voted to borrow up to \$450,000 from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority for the replacement of water meters.

Jail...from Page 1A

In the early 1970s, the Old Rock Jail was replaced by a newer jail that would serve as a joint building to be used by both Towns County and Union County. By 1980, the Old Rock Jail was officially renovated for other purposes and continued as such until now.

The only problem that could arise from the Towns County Historical Society gaining control over the jail is the issue of where to move the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration Office, which is currently occupying the space.

According to Commissioner Kendall, there are plenty of options for finding a new location for the Board of Elections when the time comes. As for now, the Board of Elections will remain in its current building until a newly elected commissioner determines a location at the beginning of 2017.

"I want to make sure that someone is going to protect this jail and other historical buildings," said Commissioner Kendall.

The first reading of an ordinance giving custody of the Old Rock Jail to the Historical Society was held at this month's meeting and will officially be instated by the October meeting.



Jason Edwards, Commissioner Bill Kendall and Jerry Taylor at the most recent county meeting. Edwards was appointed as the Deputy Historian for the county. Taylor, County Historian, was recognized for his 17 years of hard work.

Recognitions and appointments were also given to two Towns County Historical Society members at the monthly meeting. Jerry Taylor, official Towns County Historian, was recognized for all the work he has done in the years following his commission.

"It's an honor to present this certificate of appreciation to Jerry," said Commissioner Kendall. "This certificate is for the work you've done in the 17 years since your appointment as County Historian in 1999,

and for your continued efforts in preservation and publication of the history of Towns County. We appreciate all you've done and for all you do."

Jason Edwards was also awarded a special honor at the meeting, as he was appointed as Deputy Historian of Towns County.

Edwards works closely with Taylor on many projects, including the recent renovations to Bell Mountain and the current Historic Old Rock Jail project that the Historical Society will soon undertake.

Rabies...from Page 1A

needed to expand their resources to include a fall clinic due to the recent rise in rabies cases.

The clinic was brought to Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall at the August monthly meeting, where he signed a Rabies Proclamation stating that, according to the Towns County Rabies Ordinance, all pets must be vaccinated.

At the event on Saturday, residents were given the opportunity to vaccinate their pets for only \$10, a flat rate for both cats and dogs. Feline leukemia and distemper shots were also available at the clinic for an additional cost.

"We think this is a great thing to be able to get our pet vaccinated now," said local Richard Davis, who brought his dog Happy to be vaccinated. "Most everywhere else we've tried to get her in we have to wait at least a month, so this is nice."

PUP, the event sponsor, is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to assisting to decline of unwanted and euthanized pets in the area by providing financial assistance to pet owners where it is needed.

"This is an event sponsored by PUP, and each year we have a Mums sale in the fall, and we thought we'd combine the pet blessing and the rabies clinic," said Joan Crothers, PUP volunteer. "So, people can come and get three for one. We sold mums yesterday and had a real good day. "What we do is we make money so we can help people in Towns County spay and neuter their pets or their feral



Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital technicians volunteered their time Saturday to vaccinate pets against rabies in light of the recent uptick in the virus county wide

pets that they feed. I don't know an exact number of how many people we've helped this year but it's been significant."

"Our pet blessing is being performed by Pastor Sam Hamby from the Hiawassee United Methodist Church. Basically, people can go and have their pets prayed for and blessed."

Also participating in the event was Wholly Cats, a locally based kitten rescue and adoption organization founded and operated by Nancy Ede.

Ede takes in orphaned, abandoned and stray kittens to nurse back to health before finding them a forever home. She has been working with local veterinarians, setting up adoption opportunities at Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital and Hiawassee Animal Hospital. Two of her kittens were up for adoption at the clinic on Saturday.

"She raises the kittens until they're able to be spayed

or neutered," said Sandy Hazen, PUP Treasurer and Wholly Cats volunteer. "They're very social cats. She'll take sick cats. She doesn't care."

"She pays for all the vet expenses by herself, though she does have friends who help out with litter and cat food, that sort of thing."

"We are always looking for responsible people who are willing to take kitties. They're free to an approved home."

Further information on Wholly Cats can be found at www.whollycats.org.

With plenty of pet-friendly knowledge to go around, the event ended with smiles from participants and excitement from volunteers for an accomplished day and plenty of pets properly vaccinated.

"We love our pets as part of our family," said Crothers. "They need all the help we can give them."

Daniels...from Page 1A

made in areas like Hiawassee to that of a homecoming.

"We've been to Hiawassee several times and I love it," said Daniels. "It's my kind of place. I'm a small-town guy and I like rural areas. I was raised in that kind of atmosphere. I feel right at home there."

While the music industry has grown and changed throughout the years, Daniels does not see this progression as negative, but rather as a challenge to continue creating music that can still pluck the heartstrings of listeners.

Daniels' latest endeavor, his recently released album "Nighthawk," draws fans into the typically unseen world of the everyday cowboy, sans gun slinging and bar fights.

"Nighthawk is something that's been in the making for a while now," said Daniels. "I'd always intended to do a cowboy album. I tried to get songs that I felt would lend themselves to what I was trying to say with the album."

"It's a working cowboy album, not so much about gunfighters and that sort of thing, but songs that tell stories. I kept collecting songs for about 15 or 20 years, and after a while I had enough to create the album, so I just went ahead and did it."

With Daniels' trademark lively jumping fiddle playing and swinging banjo picking, this new album gives fans a look into the softer edges of life that Daniels holds so dear.

Concertgoers can rest assured they will hear some of these new tunes at the Saturday

show, along with traditional Daniels hits.

"Nighthawk" is not the only big thing happening in Daniels' life this year.

Recently, Daniels was informed he would be receiving the honor of being one of the 2016 inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame, accompanied by fellow musicians Randy Travis and Fred Foster.

"About any good adjective you can think of applies to it," said Daniels. "It's something that I never had any way of knowing would ever happen to me. It's such a big moment for me."

"It's hard for me to articulate just how I feel about it. It's all been so much fun, and the industry has been very good to me."

"God has blessed me with something that I really do enjoy doing for a living. To be recognized by your peers, it's a tremendous blessing."

The Country Music Hall of Fame Museum will also be paying tribute to the Country

Music legend with an exhibit in his honor, "Million Mile Reflections." The exhibit is scheduled to open Sept. 23 and run through March of 2017.

Along with the accolades of the year, Daniels will celebrate his 80th birthday in October. While this might be a moment of reflection for some, Daniels says that he strives to live in the present and focus on what is right in front of him—the music.

"Going out in front of people and performing songs that I've written, and having people react to the songs and enjoy them, that's what I love," said Daniels. "When I say this, it's not a cliché, it's an absolute truth—I love this business."

"I love getting on stage in front of people. I love entertaining people, and them loving what I do and having a good time. I'm really addicted to it."

"That's why I have no intention of ever retiring. I have no desire to retire. As long as it's the good Lord's will and people want to hear me, I'll be out here playing this music."