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With candy for kids, GMF parade a sweet success

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The 66th Annual Georgia Mountain Fair landed in Hiwassee last Friday, and since then, thousands have been entertained with music, carnival rides, arts and crafts, authentic old-time mountain life demonstrations and more.

And that's just what's inside the fairgrounds, which started Friday, July 15, and will run through Saturday, July 23.

On Saturday, July 16, hundreds of locals and visitors alike lined both sides of Main

Street in Hiwassee to watch the long procession that has made its way through town around this time each year for decades – the Georgia Mountain Fair Parade.

From floats to horseback riders and a seemingly endless stream of classic cars and hotrods, those in the parade waved to their gathered counterparts, and many tossed candy to the children eager to snatch up a sweet summer snack.

This year's Parade Grand Marshall was none other than the Towns County Lions Club, which is celebrating its 75th

year in Towns County.

Riding on the bright purple and gold float was Towns County Lions Club President Janice King, with members J.T. Wilson, Dr. Lanier Nelson and Steve Holmes – the float was pulled by L.G. Taylor, who runs the Saw Mill in Pioneer Club.

The Lions Club and its members have acted as perennial stewards of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, and so it only makes sense that, during their 75th anniversary year, the club received the honor of grand marshaling the

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Classic and vintage cars of every make and model took to the streets of Hiwassee in support of the 2016 Georgia Mountain Fair Parade

BOE yes to raises for non-certified employees

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Board of Education held its monthly meeting at the Anne "Oliver" Mitchell Auditorium on Thursday, July 14.

One of the major pieces of business for the July monthly meeting was the approval of amended FY 2017 Non-Certified Salary Schedules, to provide raises for those within the school system who, according to the board, go above and beyond, such as bus drivers and cafeteria staff.

Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong and the entirety of the board found the amendment to be reasonable, and the board approved the salary schedule.

This will affect the 90 non-certified staff members within Towns County School System – 29 of whom were employed in the last year – who might not be seeing a proper payout for the amount



Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong and Towns County Board of Education member Bob Gibby listen as the principals inform them that they are already ready for the new school year to begin

of work done on a daily basis, according to the board.

"This conversation is

something that's been occurring since I started, in trying to find

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The Association headlines GMF music lineup

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

When it comes to entertaining crowds, The Association certainly knows what it's about – they've been doing it, after all, since 1965.

The Association will be the star of the show at the Georgia Mountain Fair, performing at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Saturday, July 23, one show at 3 p.m. and another show at 7 p.m.

Jim Wood and The Georgia Mountain Fair Band will perform before The Association at 2 p.m., and then after The Association at 8 p.m.

While this will not be The Association's first rodeo in Georgia, it will be their first trip to Hiwassee, and according to founding member Jim Yester, the group has plenty of love for



Look for two shows by The Association on Saturday, July 23. The Association formed originally in 1965, and has enjoyed many hits over the years, including "Windy," "Cherish," "Never My Love" and "Along Comes Mary."

Georgia and is looking forward to the North Georgia Mountain experience.

"We're having so much fun right now with what's going on with the group," said Yester. "We had like a re-birth over the last year or so, and it's back to the same feeling as it was in the '60s. We're just

having a great time with it."

The music industry has taken quite a turn since The Association first began performing, shifting from the personal one-on-one feeling of the '60s to a more business approach, in terms of the

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Run-off election Tuesday, Vote early through Friday

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Early voting for the July 26 Republic Primary and Nonpartisan Run-off Election continues this week, the last day of which will be Friday, July 22.

The runoff races in question are as follows:

– The office of 8th District State Representative in the Georgia General Assembly, where voters will be deciding between Republican candidates Matt Gurtler and Kent Woerner.

– The office of Towns County Board of Education Post 5, between Nonpartisan candidates Nathan Noblet and Kilee Smith.

Those interested in voting early can do so now through Friday, July 22, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. each day.

Early voting takes place in the office of the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration at the Old Rock Jail, between the Towns County Courthouse and the Towns County Public Library in Hiwassee.

Tuesday, July 26, will be

the actual Election Day for the runoff. Voting will run from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. that day, and voters will be voting at one of the four predetermined polling precincts on Election Day.

The Towns County Board

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Barrett fully qualified after petitions verified

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Brandon Barrett has joined Henry Chambers and Linda Curtis in fully qualifying as an Independent candidate for the Nov. 8 General Election.

Barrett turned in his nominating petitions last week by the July 12 deadline to do so, and the Towns County Board of Elections was able to verify that he had acquired the necessary 340 signatures of registered voters in order to finish the

qualifying process.

Barrett and Curtis both are running as Independents for the office of Towns County Sheriff, while Chambers is running as an Independent for the office of Towns County Sole Commissioner.

Chambers, Barrett and Curtis met the Friday, July 1, deadline to turn in their Notices of Candidacy to run as Independent candidates come November.

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Carnival workers benefit from local churches

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Year after year, the churches of the Hiwassee Baptist Association provide a unique service in the form of a local ministry – they do what they can to help migrant carnival workers who come to town for the Georgia Mountain Fair.

The B&K Carnival Company pulled into town the Monday evening before the fair, and they started their setup ahead of their Thursday debut.

McConnell Memorial Baptist Church, one of the association's members, treated carnival employees to a big welcoming dinner, which is a ministry McConnell Memorial has carried out for going on two decades.

And for the next three days leading up to the opening of the fair, the association provided health care and dental services free to carnival



From left to right, church volunteers Gloria Wilson and Dot Heard serve up some fine fixings the morning of Friday, July 15, to a carnival worker who goes by "Country."

workers, as well as breakfast and lunch.

Also integral to the carnival ministry and outreach were two other leading churches in the association, Macedonia Baptist Church

and Woods Grove Baptist Church.

Keith Ivey of the Mountain Area Missions Program, a regional grouping

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Gowder, Heaton are granted continuances in NC

By Shawn Jarrard
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MURPHY, NC – Following a July 11 Administrative Session held by North Carolina Superior Court Judge Bradley Letts, former Union General Hospital CEO Mike Gowder and Blairsville physician Dr. James Heaton received continuances in their Cherokee County, NC, criminal drug cases through Nov. 7 of this year.

Gowder and Heaton were arrested in North Carolina on Wednesday, March 2, following indictment by a Cherokee County, NC, grand jury, both for five counts of trafficking in Opium or Heroin, and five counts of obtaining a controlled substance by forgery, according to Cherokee County, NC, Sheriff Derrick Palmer at that time.

Gowder was charged on Feb. 4 in Union County with three counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, one count of conspiracy; Heaton was charged



Mike Gowder

with 40 counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances, one count of conspiracy.

Also charged in Union County, Mike Gowder's brother, David Gowder, on 36 counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, seven counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances. Three other Gowder



Dr. James Heaton

family members were charged in connection with the incidents in question.

When asked about the Gowders and Heaton cases in Union County, which did not appear on the July Term 2016 Indictments of the Union County Grand Jury, Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley said that the cases were undergoing additional investigation

GMRC career coach pays Towns County a visit

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission sent out a team member from its Georgia Mountains Workforce Development to the Towns County Public Library on Thursday, July 14, to assist local residents with job applications, resumes, any questions concerning career development and higher education assistance.

The mobile unit for the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development is a federally-funded program under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. The unit visits Towns County Public Library every other month.

Outside of the mobile unit, the primary focus of the program is tuition assistance for those who want to receive

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Donna Dalton of the Georgia Department of Human Resources joins Keith Krauth of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission on Thursday, July 14, at the Towns County Public Library, to speak with people looking for jobs as well as tuition assistance.

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Lake Levels
Blue Ridge 1,682.63
Chatuge 1,923.13
Nottely 1,771.95

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Veteran's Center

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every other
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presents
Dancing With
the North Georgia
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Affair on the
Square
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