

Chatuge...from Page 1A

level. "I spend a lot of time over there, as do other upper management people over here," said Gowder. "We're spending time over there, trying to incorporate the same policies and procedures over there that we have here, trying to make sure that that hospital is run like our hospital is run."

Chief Operating Officer Lewis Kelley and his right-hand man, John Gordon, oversee the administration of Chatuge Regional, and Gowder has utmost faith in their abilities. "They're the two top managers over there, and they have done a great job of incorporating our practices over to their hospital," said Gowder.

The vision for Chatuge Regional Hospital is "to be the go-to hospital for people in Towns County," and Gowder would like for residents to embrace the changes that are going on there. "I would just encourage them to support their local hospital, because we have no intentions of closing that hospital or we wouldn't be spending the money we are on it now," said Gowder.

Though Chatuge Regional plans on being here for the long haul, Gowder remains

realistic about what happens to hospitals that fall into disuse. "And that wouldn't be a good thing for any town or county," said Gowder. "So, I just encourage people to at least give Chatuge Regional a chance. I think once we get all this construction completed they will be amazed at what kind of facility they have over there."

Currently, Chatuge Regional offers all of the services that Union General does with the exception of labor and delivery and surgery. But if the hospital grows and demand is great enough, maybe one day Chatuge Regional could add more services like an operating room.

"They have some great doctors over there in the ER, and if they feel like they can take care of them there, they'll admit them," said Gowder. "If they don't, then they'll refer them to the appropriate place."

Towns County residents shouldn't have to wait too much longer to experience the upgrades at Chatuge Regional Hospital.

"We hope to have everything completed by the first of the year," said Gowder.

Taco Bell...from Page 1A

patrons, with 25 parking spaces and ample drive-through capacity to fit eight cars comfortably. The building, which is to be located next to Zaxby's on the main drag, will be accessible from Long View Drive.

And Taco Bell means new jobs for the area.

"We will begin operations in the neighborhood of 35 (employees), and that will level off to about an average, depending on the volume of business, around 25 to 30 - 25 being more the full-time, then five to 10 being part-time," said Cox.

Bringing Taco Bell to Hiawassee also means new property taxes, sales taxes and water and sewage utility revenues for the city and county, and by extension, to the residents through the ser-

vices provided by the city and county.

"It's our understanding that the real estate property and the improvements will represent an investment of approximately \$1 million," said Mayor Mathis.

"At least, yes ma'am," said Cox.

Hiawassee has a lot to be gained from this venture, not only in additional jobs and revenues through the restaurant's operation within the city and county, but also as something else the area has to offer to tourists and potential future residents.

"Thank you for being so generous in working with us," said Blosser. "I told Bob how much of a pleasure it's been as a builder and developer to work with your group here."

Scams...from Page 1A

Wright's billing history and couldn't find anything that might have corresponded to the claims of James and Ms. Jones.

Wright said she was advised by the hospital not to pay anything, as they send statements every month on balances due.

"We work with the patients, we're not against them," Wright said she was told by the billing department.

Chief Operating Officer Lewis Kelley of Union General Hospital and Chatuge Regional echoed these sentiments.

"Bottom line is, we're not going to call anybody unless they get two or three bills beforehand," said Kelley.

When dialed, the number in question allows for options to speak about one's account, but any attempt to reach a live person ends in a busy tone, and no business name is ever revealed.

The Sheriff's Office is looking into the matter, attempting to track the phone number that placed the calls.

"If something doesn't sound right, call us," said Sheriff Chris Clinton, who warned that older residents are most at risk for this type of scam.

Hiawassee resident Bill Myers, who will be 85 in October, nearly fell prey to a different scam altogether.

Myers received a call last week from a man claiming to be his grandson.

"I don't talk to him all the time, but it didn't sound right," said Myers.

The man said that he had had the week off from work and was partying with some friends in Miami. He had had too much to drink and ended up getting arrested with a DUI in an accident that caused damage to city property and another vehicle. Myers' actual grandson lives in Ft. Lauderdale, so the story seemed plausible at first listen.

"He said, 'I'm in jail at the detention center. They're

not going to let me go. I talked to the lawyer, and the lawyer said we can work this all out and I won't get anything on my record."

Myers then received another phone call from a man claiming to be his grandson's attorney, who said all Myers needed to do was get a Green Dot MoneyPak PayPal card for \$2,500. The man said that was the only form of payment the detention center would accept, and that Myers could obtain the card from the local drugstore and give the numbers on the back of the card to the lawyer over the phone.

About ready to head out the door, his wife and daughter came into the room.

"I said, this is one of the family, we've got to help this guy out," said Myers. "I mean, he and I are pretty close."

He explained the situation to his wife and daughter. His daughter, who is from Tallahassee and in town on family business, told her dad that this was a scam she had seen on the news in Florida.

Myers attempted to reach his grandson's cell phone, but was unable to because his grandson was actually at work and unavailable. He called his other grandson, who said that he had seen the grandson in question leave for work that morning, meaning that he wasn't actually sitting in a jail cell in Miami.

Next, Myers called the GBI, who told him to call his local sheriff.

"I talked to the Sheriff's Office, and they said, 'We've had two or three of those here lately.' I said, well, what do you do about it? And they said, 'We can't do anything about it - it's just a scam going around,'" said Myers.

Hiawassee residents should question the veracity of anyone calling to solicit money, whether the calls come from supposed family members or alleged businesses.

EMC...from Page 1A

Members from the five-county service area can vote for all three board members' seats.

Trout recently joined the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors with his appointment as a Clay County, NC director in April 2014. He fills the unexpired term of the late Elois Anderson.

His opponent, Logan, currently is on the Board of Directors for the North Carolina

Forestry Association, serving as Western Vice President of the North Carolina Forestry Association.

Payne was appointed by the EMC Board of Directors to fill the unexpired Towns County term of former Board of Directors' President Terry Taylor. Payne is a closing assistant for a local attorney's office.

Her opponent, Phillips, is the owner of Benny's Sanitation

in Hiawassee, and also serves as a local radio personality in the Towns County area. He has served on the Board of Directors of Towns County FFA Alumni Board, and Towns County Food Pantry.

Parks has been an appointed Union County director for the past 11 years, and has been elected by his peers on the EMC Board of Directors to serve as Vice-President for

the past five years.

His opponents include former State House District 8 State Rep. Charles Jenkins, of Blairsville, and Mike Patton, also of Blairsville, the owner of Patton Excavating, who has served on the Board of Directors for the Union County Board of Health, and Coosa Water Authority.

Isakson...from Page 1A

States' foreign policy interest in the Middle East. In answering, the Senator enumerated several U.S. interests in the area, including global interest in the region for being "the cradle of civilization" and having a large reserve of natural resources.

"But most importantly, it's the home of a radical Islamic terrorist sect. They're killing people and destroying people's lives, and they stand for everything that we don't stand for."

Sen. Isakson expounded further on ISIS when asked about the possibility of putting troops on the ground to deal with the threat.

"The answer is I don't think we will, my opinion is I hope we won't, but you have to let the situation dictate whether or not you do or do not ultimately do that," said Sen. Isakson.

Outlining the approach so far, Sen. Isakson talked about the U.S. Military working with and training Kurdish

Peshmerga fighters, as well as making calculated air strikes to diminish ISIS' infrastructure.

"There is no question, though, that there will be places that the only thing you can do to solve the problem is use special operations forces," said Sen. Isakson, saying that he was not aware of any U.S. involvement in that capacity, but would not be surprised if special operations were currently underway.

Sen. Isakson expressed disappointment over President Obama remarks that the United States doesn't currently have a strategy for dealing with ISIS, saying that "you've got to have a strategy."

"Our Department of Defense is always developing strategies and what-ifs, and I'm sure there is one somewhere," said Sen. Isakson. "ISIS needs to know we have a strategy. And there is one ultimate strategy for ISIS - you can't negotiate with them, you can't make a deal with them, you can't trade with them. You've got to kill them. Anybody who will kill them-

selves to kill you, or cut off somebody's head to intimidate you, is a force that you have to eradicate."

Meanwhile, on immigration, Sen. Isakson believes the first step is to seal this country's borders, then to implement a biometrically secure ID system to replace "pencil and paper" visas so that the United States is always aware of foreign presence in the country.

And when one citizen expressed concern over climate change, the Senator spoke on moderation, saying that he drives a hybrid vehicle to do his part to help decrease emissions. He also talked about using nuclear energy as the cleanest and most cost effective source of power.

Addressing the Affordable Care Act, the senator said there are some good things, like doing away with pre-existing conditions and keeping children on their parents' policies until age 26. But Sen. Isakson feels there is an overly oppressive regulatory environ-

ment.

"Take the things that are good, preserve those, then take the things that are bad and reform them or unwind them so the health care system doesn't go down the drain," said Sen. Isakson.

Sen. Isakson spoke passionately about Towns County's favorite son, Sen. Miller.

Sen. Isakson expressed appreciation for Sen. Miller, his longtime friend and colleague.

"There's nobody in politics that I've ever served with before or since that has meant more to me in my career than Zell," said Sen. Isakson. "And I appreciate very much his being here today. He's a great governor, a great senator, but most importantly, he's a great friend."

The town hall meeting came to an end with kind words from Sen. Miller to his longtime friend, Sen. Isakson.

"Thank you for being simply the best political officeholder I've known in Georgia in my lifetime," said Sen. Miller.

Hiawassee...from Page 1A

1/2 acres, pending a survey and topography mapping.

"We're getting free property. We're getting DNR to chip in money to do something to entertain folks, to bring people in. So, why would we even fathom the thought of turning it down?" said Councilman Jay Chastain in response to concerns over use of Parcel 52.

Mayor Mathis took a similar line, as she expects the park to function in a capacity much like the park in neighboring Young Harris.

"Look at the mayor's park in Young Harris, how many people it attracts, how many events they have there," said Mayor Mathis. "They have the art festivals there, they have all of this, which we can do this on this property."

It was clear from the meeting that some residents still need convincing about the utility of the park, but to those involved in the everyday de-



The Hiawassee City Council listens to discussion about Parcel 52, the future Mayor's Park during last week's Council meeting at City Hall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

tails of trying to put these plans together, the need for a mayor's park is all too apparent.

"As we work through this process, the one thing I can tell you is that this will be the

most important project for the people of this city since the water plant or sewer plant," said Stancil. "And I really believe people will enjoy having a public park for their use,

recreation and entertainment. And the fact that we can get it with the assistance and funding of TVA and DNR just makes it that much better a project."

TVA to draw down Chatuge winter pool

Towns County Herald News Special

At the request of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, the Tennessee Valley Authority is now reducing the level of the Chatuge Reservoir approximately 4 to 5 feet below its typical winter pool levels.

The deeper drawdown is necessary to allow NCDOT crews to disassemble bridge piers from the old North Carolina Highway 175 bridge as traffic shifts to a newly constructed bridge.

The reservoir should reach targeted levels by late November and will be held between 1,911 and 1,913 feet above sea level until mid-January (or as soon as the NCDOT work is complete),



The draw down on Lake Chatuge could hamper bass fishing and bass tournaments, but aid shoreline cleanup efforts. Chatuge will return to full pool by June 2015. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

when the reservoir will return to normal winter levels.

Normal spring refill will

begin by mid-March. Although entirely dependent on available rainfall runoff during the pe-

riod, the reservoir is expected to return to its normal summer levels by June 2015.

During the period of lowered reservoir levels, boaters and other users are urged to exercise extra caution when navigating as additional above- and below-water obstructions are expected.

The Hiawassee River below Chatuge Dam will be unaffected by the lower reservoir levels.

Although necessary to support the continued enhancement of vital transportation infrastructure for the area, TVA regrets the temporary inconvenience that the lower-than-normal winter reservoir levels will create for residents and businesses.

ICL Fall Courses Preview at Young Harris College

The Institute for Continuing Learning (ICL) at Young Harris College has announced a diverse array of courses for the fall term.

Fall Wildflower Rambles - starts 9/15: North Georgia's diverse vegetation—wildflowers, ferns, mosses, lichens, and trees—will be observed with particular emphasis on individual characteristics within species and their habitat preferences.

Financial Workshop - Your Source for Financial Education - starts 9/16: Financial education is an important step in helping you achieve a better future. The topics discussed in this course will be: Focus on Fixed Income, A Smart Start to Mutual Funds and Take Stock in the Market.

Tenkara - A Simple Way To Fish - starts 9/16: We will help students gain confidence in tying knots necessary to secure line to pole, line to line, and line to hook as well as selecting equipment to use in various situations. The classroom portion will be at an open air pavilion in sight of the lake that will serve as your training site. Equipment will be provided.

Hiking and Backpacking - starts 9/16: We'll discuss many short trails in the Union, Towns, Gilmer and Fannin County area. We'll talk about when to go, what to take, how to prepare and what individual trails are like including those in our local wilderness areas.

Fall Birding - class limit 16 - starts 9/17: This course will explore bird watching as a hobby to be enjoyed at any age and location. After an introduction to biology and behavior, the course will focus on the birds of North Georgia - identification, habitat and songs. Weather permitting, most classes will be field trips on and around the YHC campus. Beginners are welcome!

Who in the world is André Rieu? - starts 9/17: André Rieu is an international Music Man. Meet André and his Johann Strauss Orchestra. See clips from interviews and behind-the-scene videos. Attend performances via DVD in venues such as Radio City Music Hall in NYC and Royal Albert Hall in London.

Create Your Own Silk Scarf Design - class limit 15 - starts 9/17: Get inspired



Lue and Mary Elder - Hiking & Backpacking

in this one-day workshop to create your own one of a kind silk scarf with this fast and easy alcohol ink technique for dyeing fabrics.

Choestoe, Land of the Dancing Rabbits - starts 9/18: We will learn about the history of Choestoe. Our last week will be a Choestoe Field Trip visit to Union County Historical Society Museum and see exhibits of places and persons discussed in Weeks 2 and 3, and to the locations of a number of those places.

Boost Your Brain Power - starts 9/19: In this class you will dust the cobwebs from your brain and challenge your memory. You will learn how memories are stored, and the effect sleep, nutrition and exercise have on your brain.

For more information please visit www.iclyhc.org for registration and detailed course information or call 706.379.5194 and leave a message or send an email to icl@yhc.edu. NTSp10.Z10.JCA

Towns County Herald
For all your advertising needs
Classified ads and display ads
Call for pricing and information
706-896-4454
We also provide forms, brochures,
calendars, color copies,
and much, much more....
Call Today!