

Science teacher brings moonrocks to the classroom

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

At the Towns County Board of Education meeting on Monday, Nov. 9, the board got not one, but two separate presentations regarding the school system's curriculum.

The first, from middle school technology teacher Melissa Brumbaugh-Sudduth, focused on an "out-of-this-world" opportunity.

"Last February, I went to the Georgia Science Teachers Conference in Macon, and I went to about 10 or 15 little classes," said Brumbaugh-Sudduth. "I went to one class because they had lunar rocks and meteorites, and we were sitting in there and the gentleman who was making the presentation was from NASA."

Everyone sitting through that particular class got certified for life to request and host lunar rocks and meteorites in the classroom.

"The kids really enjoy seeing them," she said.

The next presentation came from high school English teacher Brooke Whitt regarding Senior Capstones.

Several years ago, the board voted to require a senior project in order for students to graduate. Every senior is required to do a Capstone, or a final project, that showcases a range of skills in his or her chosen field.

"I felt that the term Capstone wrapped everything

into a neat concept," said Whitt. "We want to show a range of skills that our students can use to be successful in the world after high school. The idea of a capstone reflects the belief that the processes inherent in learning are at least as important as the products. The capstone reinforces essential processes that we want to make sure students leave our school with."

Hoping to foster community involvement in her students, Whitt will be asking several community organizations to get involved in the Capstone projects.

"Whether it be judging or mentoring, it's a wonderful opportunity for our students to network with our community members who can be great mentors or possibly even bosses one day, or maybe even a person who can train them into a leadership position to run that company," said Whitt. "So hopefully students find someone in their community, someone they can connect to and brings them back after they go to college."

Whitt said that the lessons learned during Capstone projects are not arbitrary – to the contrary, they have far-reaching positive effects on students.

"I wanted students and community members to see the reason for this, that is to foster character development within the youth, and therefore students need to complete a service learning project to



Melissa Brumbaugh-Sudduth

receive a diploma. I like the idea that there's purpose in it, that it's not just a hurdle, that there is a reason for doing this and it's beneficial to both students and the community," she said.

After the presentations, the board passed its regular business items. Foremost was its 2016 meeting schedule.

"Pretty much we're trying to hold true to the first Monday of the month being work session meetings and the second Monday of the month being regular meetings," said Towns County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Darren Berrong.

One exception is that the meeting scheduled for July 11 will be pushed back until the Thursday of that week.

Further, the board approved the recommendations for five substitute teachers and the recommendation for a special education paraprofessional, Taylor Meyer.

Iwo Jima...from Page 1

"When we recall our American history, we find that since the first English Pilgrims landed at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, there's never been a generation of men who grew into adulthood without facing war in some form. This year, when we send out our Christmas cards, wishing peace on earth and all those good things, it's still a work in progress, it's still somewhere out there in the future," Gibson said.

"But fortunately we still have good, quality, brave young men and women who are volunteering their service and willingly going into harm's way. Even though their better judgment might tell them that it's not a good risk, they still do it. And Towns and Union counties each will put several more into the service this year," he added.

He went on to explain the importance of symbols inherent in our history, especially symbols of war.

"Every conflict and every war is recognized by some of the prominent symbols.

We remember the portrait of General Washington crossing the Delaware River. And we remember the pictures of the Doughboys going off to France in World War I. But of all the symbols of all the wars, I can't remember a single one that has been as remembered and as revered as the one we're going to unveil today," he said.

The symbol in question, depicting five Marines and a Navy Corpsman raising the U.S. flag at Iwo Jima, is one of the most recognizable and evocative pictures to come out of any war in American history.

Clarence "Bud" Johnson, a World War II Veteran of the Navy, was aboard a ship stationed just offshore the day the flag was raised at Iwo Jima.

"The smoke from the artillery got so heavy and thick, we had to call a 24-hour ceasefire, because the smoke was so heavy. We had all been at our battle stations for several days at that time. The smoke was so heavy up on my bridge that I couldn't breathe. So I

watched for three solid days the United States Marines and our Corpsmen trying to get up that hill," he said.

"On the third day, they got to the top, and they had an old steel pipe with a small flag – somebody always carried a little flag. They attached that, and it was five Marines and one Navy Corpman," he said.

The ceremony included a candlelit moment of silence, after which the North Georgia Honor Guard advanced the colors outside, to Foster Park, where the Iwo Jima monument stood waiting.

Veterans from all branches of the U.S. military unveiled the Service Emblems of each branch – Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard.

The flag presentation and the raising of the flag was followed by a rifle salute by the North Georgia Honor Guard, and a rendition of "Taps" played by William Lovelady of the Towns County High School Marching Band.

Veterans...from Page 1

"With the start of World War II in 1941 to today, that's 75 years. That's some conflict. But do you realize how many conflicts we've been involved in since that period? There are 12 more, for a total of 18 conflicts," he said.

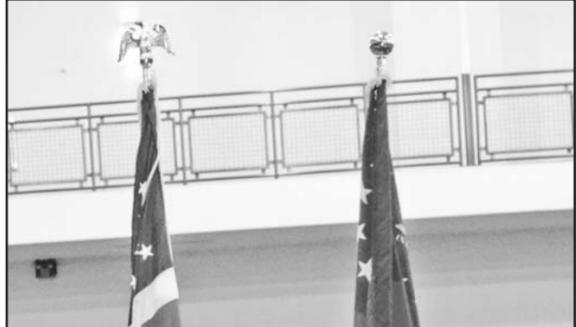
In a world rife with conflict, Shumway said that the need for soldiers and veterans is now greater than ever.

"We need a strong national defense," said Shumway. "We always will need a strong national defense. We live in a dangerous world. There's somebody out there always wanting to take our freedom from us. We have to have a strong national defense. What is a strong national defense? You think of the hardware and so forth, the weaponry and so forth. No, it's more than that. It's people. It's the men and women who serve our national defense. They're doing it every day.

"And you know who else it is? It's you veterans. You are part of our national defense. You're in the organizations that you belong to, the military organizations, the civic organizations you belong to, the church affiliations you belong to. The activities that you perform, the projects that support this school, the good citizen projects. Good citizenship is part of the national defense."

He had a kind word especially for veterans of the Vietnam War, as Shumway himself was a veteran of that war and was among the last to leave when America pulled out of Vietnam.

"In March of this year, our governor, Nathan Deal, issued a proclamation saluting our Georgia Vietnam Veterans," said Shumway. "Our governor realized that our Georgia Vietnam Veterans did not receive the respect and gratitude they deserved for serving our nation. He asked Georgia citizens to properly



Honor Guard

welcome all veterans home, and he established with that proclamation the Georgia Certificate of Honor, and we'll be giving that to all Vietnam Veterans here today."

He then asked all Vietnam Veterans present at the ceremony to step forward to accept their certificates.

After the presentation of the Certificates of Honor, Billie Krueger, James Hoyt, and Ann

Griffin, all veterans, held the recognition of new names upon the monument wall.

The wall, which honors Towns County veterans who have passed away, now bears 15 new names. This year is notable for the addition of Mason L. Goring, Women's Army, Auxiliary Corps, the first woman to be engraved on the wall.

Chamber to county residents: 'avoid the mall, shop small'

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

This holiday season, the Towns County Chamber of Commerce will be skipping Black Friday in favor of Shop Small Saturday, Nov. 28.

On Thursday, Nov. 5, the chamber hosted an event to get businesses and individuals interested in shopping locally.

"It's an open house for businesses in the area to collect items for Shop Small Saturday. We encourage everybody to shop local instead of going to the mall. In fact, part of the slogan is 'Avoid the Mall.' Avoid the mall and shop small," said Chamber President Candace Lee.

The open house featured an assortment of small items that individuals and businesses could pick up and show off on social media, thus spreading the "Shop Small" slogan.

"We have shopping bags to hand out. They can collect handkerchiefs to go around dog collars, and signs that you can hold up and take a picture of and put it on Facebook. And we have balloons, we have crayons, we have stickers. And customers, if they get a Shop Small sticker at one of the businesses in town, can go to any of these businesses on Shop Small Saturday, and get a discount or a free drink," said Lee.

"And what we end up doing with any pictures like this that we get from businesses or shoppers, is we're putting them on Facebook and we're going to go around to the businesses that day and take pictures, but we can send those to American Express. This is their project. This is to get everyone into small businesses, to support them. So what we do is send them to American Express and we put them on their Facebook page," she added.

Shop Small Saturday is



Candace Lee and Vicki Ellis

not just a local phenomenon. Every year, it takes place all over the country. The emphasis on social media will be good for small towns like Hiawassee and Young Harris, said Lee, because it makes the shops and the area itself more visible nationwide.

"A lot of towns are doing this. Just go to Facebook and search for Shop Small Saturday. It's got incredible stories of programs done by small towns across America, and it's to get people really downtown and shopping local and to really realize that out of every dollar spent, 90 cents is kept locally. If you spend it locally, it remains local. If you spend a dollar at the mall, zero percent comes back to the county that person lives in," said Lee.

Shopping locally, in this case, doesn't just mean Towns County, but also Hayesville and Blairsville.

"We're just encouraging people to stay in the North Georgia area, avoid the big malls, and support those people that you go to shop with, that you go to church with, that you go to school with. You're helping support your neighbor," said Lee.

"Besides knowing that you're supporting the families that your child goes to school with, you are supporting the people you see every Sunday in church, it is helping your community thrive. It is helping your hometown make it another day. You are helping keep a business in business another day. You should get a warm fuzzy feeling about that," she added.

Schmidtke...from Page 1

who weren't allowed to know anything," he recalled.

His very first assignment was to design a bomb release for an aircraft – but not just any aircraft. The bomb release he designed would ultimately loose the Fat Man atomic bomb onto Nagasaki, the second Japanese city to be hit with an atomic bomb, which resulted in the Allies winning the Pacific Campaign.

"The next assignment I get is working on the Fat Man bomb itself. And what was left was the firing mechanism, the radar system, and some miscellaneous things. And that's just a routine engineering job. But we don't know what the stresses are going to be when it comes out of the plane and hits the airstream," he said.

So Schmidtke, at the time a young man with "a pretty good education but not lots of experience," went to the chief design engineer, a man

with 30 years of experience.

"I showed him what I'd been doing, and he says, 'Dick, I think we can go with what you're proposing, but remember, I never designed one of these things, either,'" Schmidtke recalled.

The complicated math involved took the team of engineers weeks to complete.

"What this involved is you had to make some very active calculations, which now you can make on a computer. A laptop could do it and get the thing calculated in a day or two. Here it took weeks. We did the calculations to eight decimal places. And if you want to go crazy, that's a good way to do it," Schmidtke said.

His calculations led to Fat Man being dropped on Nagasaki on Aug. 9, 1945, effectively ending Japanese involvement in World War II – an event that prevented the deaths of countless American service members.

Shop With a Cop...from Page 1

and Amy Rosser of Family Connection were able to coordinate to take 46 children shopping, many of whom purchased gifts for the rest of their families before selecting items for themselves.

Rosser coordinates with a committee within the school each year to make sure the appropriate children get referred to Chief Wright and Shop With

a Cop. Rosser and Family Connection also take referrals from families and others within the community.

Donations can be made in the form of cash, checks or Walmart gift cards, and checks should be made payable to Hiawassee PD Shop With a Cop or simply Shop With a Cop.

City and county residents can drop by Hiawassee City

Hall with their donations, or mail them to 50 River St., Hiawassee, GA 30546.

This year, Shop With a Cop will take place on the last day of school leading into Christmas break, which is Friday, Dec. 18, so remember to make a donation as soon as possible to help children of Towns County to have an extra special Christmas.

Benton MacKaye Trail celebrates 35th Anniversary

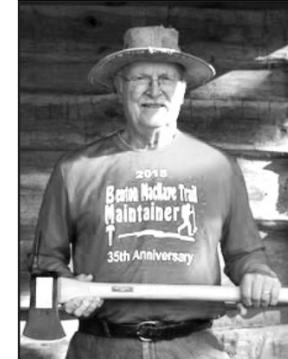


Maintainer volunteers

On November 7th, the BMTA's Annual Meeting not only celebrated the 35th year of the Benton MacKaye Trail, but it also honored 51 Trail Maintainers, who gave generously of their time and talent by working on the Benton MacKaye Trail a combined total of 4,674 hours in GA/TN/& NC (including travel & work hours). Red maintainer shirts were given to all volunteers with 30+ hours on the trail. The Top Ten Maintainers, with the most number of hours, were also awarded retired BMT trail signs.

BMTA's Trail Worker of the Year for 2015 was awarded to Ralph Heller. He received the association's special Pulaski (trail tool) which he keeps until next year's meeting. The Pulaski holds engraved names of present and past Trail Workers of the Year.

The BMTA can always use more maintainers to help with trail work. For more information on how to participate in the BMTA, on and off the trail, group hikes etc. go to www.bmta.org and/or Facebook.



Ralph Heller