

Towns County Herald

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 96 Number 21

Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Weekend storm downs trees, knocks out power

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw is thankful that the county appears to have dodged the most significant impacts of the severe storm system that swept across much of the Central, Southern and Eastern United States March 15 into March 16.

The storm unleashed an outbreak of tornadoes and killed several dozen people before arriving in the North Georgia Mountains Saturday evening, but by press time, there were no locally reported deaths or injuries.

Hours before the storm hit, the National Weather Service was forecasting a 10%-15% chance of overnight tornadoes in the region – for perspective, those odds are

25%-50% higher than the average chance this time of year – with wind gusts potentially north of 80 mph.

It looks like much of the county ended up experiencing sustained winds of 20-30 mph overnight Saturday into Sunday, with higher wind gusts causing dozens of downed trees – many blocking roadways – several broken power poles, felled power lines from trees and branches, and isolated structural damage.

“We were so very lucky – I think that the worst of it happened to the west of us,” Bradshaw said Sunday afternoon, noting that the Road Department and first responders did a great job as usual responding to trees on roads.

Power loss was widespread, with Blue Ridge Mountain EMC working around the clock to restore electricity to

nearly 15,000 members across its five-county territory at the peak of the outage, including upwards of 3,000 meters making up 25% of the Towns County membership.

Around 2 p.m. Sunday, the EMC said the system had suffered an estimated 20 broken power poles, but “there’s much more that we haven’t been able to lay our eyes on yet.”

In Young Harris, the Georgia Department of Transportation had to shut down State Route 515 to clear downed trees and power lines. All lanes were blocked early Sunday morning, though the center turn lane was opened around 9 a.m. for traffic control as crews worked to fix the issue.

There was at least one report of a tree falling on a



EZ Store It on Lower Bell Creek Road received major damage in the storm over the weekend, but the Phillips Family business owners are just happy nobody got hurt.

Photo by David Phillips

YHC President Dr. Wells imparts educational vision

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

New Young Harris College President Dr. John Wells spelled out his vision for the Enchanted Valley and beyond in the weekly meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers on Friday, March 14.

Wells returned to the college this year after having previously served Young Harris as Provost and Interim President from 2005 to 2009, during the institution’s transition from a junior college to a senior college.

A strong believer that “an institution like Young Harris doesn’t need to just be in the region – it needs to be of the region,” Wells said people need to see and feel that “the college is not contrary to their



Dr. John Wells
YHC President

values.”

“The college is a place that is open for all kinds of intellectual exploration,” Wells continued. “But at the end of the day, our goal is to make

the lives of our students better when they graduate so that they can be very successful in life.

“How can we do that?”
See *Movers & Shakers*, Page 6

BOE promotes Thompson, hires new TCMS principal

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Towns County School District moved closer to filling out its administrative ranks for the 2025-2026 academic year with an internal promotion for Elementary School Assistant Principal and a new hire for Middle School Principal in a called meeting on Thursday, March 13.

Recent resignations and retirements left multiple vacant positions among school leadership and teaching staff, and most of the needed replacements were ready to sign on last week, so the Central Office called the meeting to coincide with scheduled board training.

Over at the Elementary
See *New Principals*, Page 7



New TCMS Principal Dr. James Epps and TCES Assistant Principal Candice Thompson in the March 13 called meeting of the School Board.
Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Child victims of Holocaust honored at Daffodil Garden

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

It was a bright, sunny day on Tuesday, March 11 – perfect for the recognition of bright, young lives full of hope and promise. The Towns-Union Master Gardeners Association came together as part of an annual remembrance ceremony for the Daffodil Project.

Ever since its start in 2008, the international Daffodil Project has served as a living memorial for the 1.5 million Jewish children murdered in the Holocaust. Each child is to be represented by a bulb, so the project has grown over the years thanks to its increasing influence.

As of early 2025, 1,146,787 daffodils have been

planted in 662 locations across the globe. Lloyd’s Landing served as one of the beds that helped reach that critical “million mark,” as noted by volunteer Maggie Oliver.

This year’s dedication and remembrance ceremony was the second of its kind in Hiwassee; the Daffodil Project does not require participating cities and clubs to hold such events but requests that they do in honor of the children the daffodils represent.

Master Gardener Grace Howard opened by reading the story of Helen Katz, who lived in Hungary before the onset of World War II. For years, Helen faced discrimination at school for being Jewish, and as political strife in Europe amplified, she began to have nightmares.

See *Daffodil Garden*, Page 7



The Towns-Union Master Gardeners Association hosted a heartfelt remembrance in the Daffodil Garden at Lloyd’s Landing March 11.
Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

TCHS agriculture students take tour of Ivy Log Meat Processing



The TCHS Animal Science Class is grateful to have received a tour at Ivy Log Meat.

News Special

Students of the Towns County Agricultural Animal Science Class recently had the unique opportunity to tour the Ivy Log Meat Processing Plant in Blairsville.

The visit provided an in-depth look at the complete harvesting, processing, and packaging of retail beef cuts, offering students a real-world perspective on the meat industry.

Plant Manager Ashley led the tour, which saw students follow the process from start to finish, beginning with the holding lots and harvest and continuing through the

cutting, curing, packaging, and labeling of meat products.

They observed firsthand the strict safety and sanitation protocols in place to protect workers, consumers, and the animals themselves. The plant’s operational system was also highlighted, demonstrating the measures taken to ensure quality control and efficiency.

A key part of the experience included a demonstration by veteran butchers, each with over 20 years of experience, who showcased the butchering process and explained the different cuts of beef.

Students gained valu-

able insight into meat fabrication and the skills required in the trade.

To maintain sanitation standards, students wore white coats and hair nets throughout the tour, reinforcing the importance of hygiene in food production.

The experience provided a hands-on connection to classroom lessons on meat science, food safety, and the livestock industry.

“This was an eye-opening experience for our students,” TCHS Agriculture, Food &

Natural Resources In-
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Nottely 1,764.97

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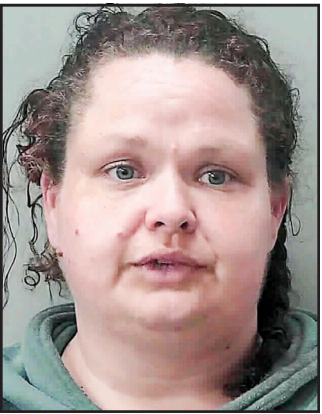
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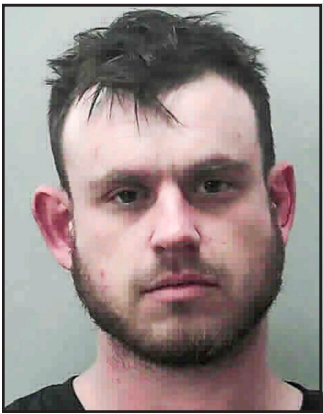
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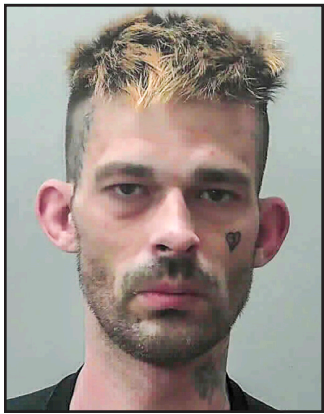
Sheriff's Office makes three more drug arrests



Christy Tallent



Jordan Wayne Campbell



Joshua Robertson

News Special

On Thursday, March 6, Towns County Sheriff's Office Drug Investigators assisted the Georgia State Patrol on a traffic stop on State Route 66.

Probable cause was developed, and a search of the vehicle resulted in confiscation of an amount of methamphetamine.

Christy Tallent, 37, of Young Harris, was arrested and charged with possession of methamphetamine and two counts possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance – all felonies.

She was also charged with the following misdemeanors: sale, distribution,

or possession of dangerous drugs; driving under the influence of drugs; driving on the wrong side of the road; possession and use of drug-related objects; drivers to exercise due care; speeding; and adult restraint law seat belt.

In a separate incident on March 7, a drug activity tip was reported to Sheriff's Office Drug Investigators about a location on Konahetah Road.

Upon investigation of the location, probable cause was developed to search the residence. During the search, an amount of a controlled substance was confiscated. Investigation is still continuing.

Jordan Wayne Camp-

bell, 32, of Hiawassee, was arrested and charged with felony possession of a Schedule II controlled substance.

In another incident from March 7, Drug Investigators followed up on a lead at a residence on Jordan Road.

During the investigation, probable cause was developed, and a search of the residence was conducted that resulted in the confiscation of a controlled substance.

Joshua Robertson, 37, of Hiawassee, was arrested and charged with felony possession of a controlled substance.

All subjects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Movers & Shakers...from Page 1

One thing we can do is continue to provide them the traditional education that Young Harris has provided since 1886."

A key to providing that education, according to Wells, is to diminish the ubiquitous role of screens that have become so commonplace for young folks especially, and re-engage students with books and the free exchange of ideas through civil discourse about what they're learning.

This is important because many of the jobs graduates will be entering in the decades to come "haven't even been invented yet," so the college must prepare students for the unknown by teaching them how to be "problem-solvers" capable of communicating and collaborating with others.

Wells said another key to improving the preparedness of students for joining the world after graduation is "making certain our students get outdoors," which is something he will be championing as college president.

"Nature itself creates a sense of humility, doesn't it," Wells said. "When you get out there on a trail, when you get out there in God's creation, you begin to see how small you are in comparison with the whole connectivity of everything else."

"You look at the secularization patterns in America, where America, at its peril, has moved away from its faith commitment, and as you look at those areas that have really made that move away, they tend to be urban areas."

"And I'm convinced it's because people are living in spaces where all they see are manmade things all the time. But we have an opportunity of living in a space where we see God's creation every single day."

Another big part of his vision for the college is "getting students all together to

feel more connected." Wells said that, according to a 2021 study from Boston University, the No. 1 adjective college-bound 18-year-olds use to describe their lives is "lonely."

And he wants to do something about that "heart-breaking" condition by fostering a campus environment that provides "a robust student experience so they are able to connect with other students their age, really explore life together, and have a long history."

"A college like Young Harris – it's not just transactional," Wells said. "It's a place where you come and live and be part of a community. You get to know people, and these are the people you're going to walk with decade after decade."

"I want to make sure that we fulfill the promise of Young Harris, and when a student graduates from our college, that they never walk alone in life – that they have developed the relationships and the friendships that they need."

Branching outward, Wells turned to his desire to "see Young Harris continue to engage the community," partly by growing the college's commitment to intercollegiate athletics, fine arts and lab sciences, all of which "really engage students in things where they have to be present."

"You can't do them through a screen," Wells said. "You've got to actually be here and be present. But I want to make certain that we are continuing to reach out to the community so that everybody knows that they are welcome on campus."

"I want you to feel like this is your place; I want you to feel like it's home. When you come to the concerts and (the athletic events and various other events) that are hosted by Young Harris, I want people to see it as a great resource in the

region.

"We intend to be a great and respectful institutional citizen of Towns County, and we've got a long history of that, but we want to lean into that and do even more of it."

Highlighting a major aspect of intercollegiate athletics in particular, Wells said that, "for students today, many of them do need direction."

In a time when young people are receiving so many mixed messages from popular culture, Wells said it is important to provide students opportunities to participate in teams where they are "pushing toward excellence and not mediocrity, attempting to achieve a shared goal together."

Speaking to a "paradigm shift" for the college, Wells said it is an absolute must that he and the college "prepare our students – their habits of mind – for the world of work."

"Work is an honorable thing," Wells said. "Work is a good thing. It's what builds character. Work is what allows us to really take control of our own future and to be able to have the wherewithal to make decisions for ourselves."

Toward that end, Wells said he is committed to instilling the notion of liberty as personal responsibility "and making certain that the curriculum at Young Harris really reflects what it means to help a student transition in life into the world of work."

Among other goals, Wells will be implementing a college-wide personal finance curriculum to keep students from "spending their 20s and 30s chasing useless debt," and he plans to increase the college's presence in area high schools and communities to boost local student enrollment.

The Movers and Shakers welcome a new guest speaker every Friday morning at 8 a.m. inside the Sundance Grill in Hiawassee.

Discover the heavens above north Georgia at Rollins Planetarium's two shows on Friday, March 28th

Learn about Native American stories on the earth, moon, and stars and explore the heavens above north Georgia this month at the O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium, at its March 28 shows.

All proceeds will support scholarships for YHC students participating in the "Marvels of Peru: Science at the Equator" study-away trip in May 2025. Contributions will help make this incredible opportunity possible!

Earth, Moon & Sun - Friday, March 28 at 7 p.m.: Help Coyote explore the relationship between the Earth, Moon and Sun through Native American stories that distinguish between myths and science in this humorous show. Learn why the Sun rises and sets and the basics of solar energy. Examine the Moon's orbit, craters, phases, and eclipses.

Skies Over Georgia - Friday, March 28 at 8 p.m.: Featuring a live presenter and using the planetarium's optical star projector to its fullest, this traditional star show allows



audiences to explore the heavens as they appear above the mountains of north Georgia. Learn how to identify the planets and stars currently visible in the night sky, take a guided tour of the constellations, and hear some of their fascinating stories.

O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium features shows for the general public on select Friday evenings. Tickets for shows can be purchased at the door

with cash or check. Tickets can also be purchased online via Eventbrite by visiting the following link: <https://www.yhc.edu/academics/math-science/rollins-planetarium/public-shows>

Purchasing tickets online in advance is recommended, since planetarium shows often sell out. Observatory open houses do not require tickets.

For planetarium shows, guests are encouraged to arrive early for best seats. Public planetarium shows, with the exception of Cosmic Concerts, include a live-narrated "season stargazing" segment in addition to the featured full-dome program.

Planetarium Admission: \$5 Adults per show; \$3 Children per show; Free for Children under 4 years of age; Free with YHC ID.

Tickets can be purchased online in advance by clicking on the show dates below. Any remaining tickets will be available for purchase at the door 30 minutes prior to showtime.

Historic Hoops, Lacrosse Success & Track Debuts: Young Harris Athletics Push Boundaries

Young Harris Men's and Women's Basketball programs both wrapped up their seasons in Spartanburg, South Carolina, March 7 & 8. In win-or-go-home fashion in the Conference Carolinas tournament, the men dropped to King in the quarterfinals and the women fell short to Francis Marion in the semifinals. Both will reflect on historic seasons and prepare for the 2025-2026 campaign.

Mountain Lion Men's Lacrosse opened conference play with a win after defeating Barton College 15-14 on March 8. Luke Olson, David Traywick, Hunter Stagg, Ben Soenen, Grady Stokes, Colburn Connelly and goalkeeper Dylan Wilbur all contributed, each finding the back of the net. Wilbur anchored the defense and added a rare goalie goal to the scoreboard, after taking an impressive shot from beyond midfield.

The YH Men's and Women's Track & Field teams competed in their first-ever outdoor competition at the Cregger Fieldhouse in Mount Berry, Georgia, March 8, marking the official debut of the program in outdoor track & field history. On the men's side, the team picked up three automatic qualifiers. The women picked up a few PRs in addition to 1500M domination by Brynley Walraven, who secured a second-place finish and automatic bid to the Conference Carolinas Championship. Additionally, Ryland Hunley earned the title of Conference Carolinas Freshman of the Month for February.

The Purple & White of Women's Lacrosse found a rhythm while on the road last week. They took down West Virginia Wesleyan 21-1 on March 10 and Davis & Elkins 17-0 on March 12. Abbie Gallagher was a standout in front of the goal. She allowed 0 goals in her last 90 minutes of play, as she locked down the goal for 30 minutes against Davis & Elkins and completed her first shut out of the season against West Virginia Wesleyan.

YHC Athletics will have the Mountain Lion Club Inaugural Spring Auction to raise funds for student-athlete scholarships in April! The auc-



Young Harris Women's Lacrosse celebrating on the field



tion will consist of a 14-day online bidding period from April 10 at 8 a.m. to April 24 at 7 p.m., plus a live event with free food and drinks on April 24 from 6-8 p.m.

We could really use help in collecting auction items, so if you have any items you would like to donate to the auction, please contact Maddie Urquiola at urquiola@yhc.edu. A donated item will get you one free ticket to the live event (1 item = 1 ticket, 2 items = 2 tickets, etc.).

Donated auction items can be everything from decorative housing accessories, electronics, experiences, furniture, home services, business services, adventures, vacations, tax or legal preparation, food/beverage, sports/entertainment memorabilia, event tickets, and much more. Gift certificates, golf outings, and other vouchers also have made great auction items in the past.

We hope that you will seriously consider assisting in this year's inaugural Spring Auction. By doing so, you are not only supporting the Mountain Lion Club but more importantly, you are helping

to raise scholarship dollars for our Young Harris student-athletes.

Tons of YH Athletics action happening in the Enchanted Valley this week!

On Tuesday, March 18, Men's and Women's Tennis will face University of Mountevallo in singles and doubles matches beginning at 1 p.m.

Women's Lacrosse will start conference play against the Trojans of Mount Olive on Wednesday, March 19, at 2 p.m.

North Greenville University comes to town for multiple sports this weekend. Men's and Women's Tennis will square off with the Trail Blazers at 1 p.m., while YH Baseball will begin Game One of their series at 6 p.m. This will be a great series, as YH is nationally slotted at No. 20 and NGU is No. 1 in Division II rankings. Games Two and Three will be played in double-header fashion Saturday, March 22, at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. One more bit of action happening that day will take place on the YHC Soccer & Lacrosse Field with Men's Lacrosse facing UMO at 1 p.m.

GEORGIA Early Turkey Hunt Opportunity for Youth and Mobility-Impaired Hunters

Before the statewide turkey season opens, youth and mobility-impaired hunters get an early chance to harvest a gobbler on private lands during a special opportunity turkey season on March 22-23, 2025, according to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Resources Division.

This early weekend hunt opportunity is available on private lands and is only for youth 16 years of age and younger, or hunters that are mobility impaired (i.e. confined to a wheelchair, hemiplegia, monoplegia, paraplegia, or single-leg amputation above the knee). Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult (18 years or older) who may call for turkey but may not take or attempt to take a turkey.

The season bag limit for turkeys is one gobbler (male turkey) per hunter per day, and a season total of two gobblers.

All turkey hunters, including those under 16 years of age, landowners, honorary, lifetime, and sportsman license holders, must obtain a free harvest record each season. Before moving a harvested turkey, hunters are required to immediately enter the date and county on the harvest record, and within 24 hours, must complete the reporting process

through Georgia Game Check. More information at GeorgiaWildlife.com/HarvestRecord-Google.



Resident youth hunters under age 16 do not need a license. Hunters ages 16 years or older (including those accompanying youth or others) will need a hunting license and a big game license unless hunting on their own private land. Get your license at GoOutdoorsGeorgia.com, at a retail license vendor or by phone at 1-800-366-2661.

The 2025 Georgia statewide turkey season opens Saturday, March 29 (Private Land) and Saturday, April 5 (Public Land). For more information, visit GeorgiaWildlife.com/turkey-info.

Chatuge Shores Ladies Golf League Season Opens May 6th

Our official season opens Tuesday, May 6 with play beginning at 9:30, and league play dates continue through September 30. To get acquainted with new members and reconnect with former members, we will have an opening day lunch at El Charro Restaurant in Young Harris after playing our round.

We have the pleasure of playing golf with vistas of Lake Chatuge and the surrounding mountains. We have a different game each week,

and members of our league are from all over the tri-county area. We like to have fun while honing our golf skills!

Membership dues are \$30, and the weekly course fee is \$35, which includes a cart. An official handicap is required. If you have no handicap established, the league can easily help you with that.

Come join us for the fresh air, beautiful scenery, and a good round of golf. For more information, call or text Debbie Estes at 352-284-8854.

Mountain High Hikers Schedule

Mountain High Hikers offers three hikes in the local area each week: Tuesdays - a long hike from 8-14 miles and a shorter hike of 5-8 miles. Thursdays we lead a leisure hike usually around 5 miles. We also maintain over 100 miles of trails in North Georgia and Western NC area and run trail maintenance hikes on Thursdays each week.

For more information visit <http://www.mountain-highhikers.org>.

Shop with a Cop Bass Tournament Fundraiser

Shop With a Cop Bass Tournament Fundraiser on March 29th at Ledfords Chapel Boat Ramp. Entry fee: \$70 prior to March 29th or \$90 at the ramp. Register by emailing Bronson.Kirby@andrewsnc.gov.

New Principals...from Page 1

School, the assistant principal spot came open as part of a broader internal shuffle, and acting on the recommendation of TCES Principal Dr. Crystal Beach, the Board of Education voted to promote Candice Thompson from her teaching position.

"She has over 20 years of exceptional classroom experience," Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong said. "Ms. Thompson has served as the Elementary School's K-3 Literacy Lead and completed numerous literacy leadership trainings."

"She is valued for her instructional knowledge and classroom management. For these reasons, her knowledge of teaching, learning and student support will be instrumental in the assistant principal role to help guide our team to its continued success."

Born and raised in Towns County, Thompson is a TCHS Class of 2000 graduate with three children currently enrolled in the system.

"Her deeply invested roots in Towns County Schools will help her continue to serve our school and our community for years to come," Berrong said.

Thompson said she is thrilled to be assuming a greater leadership role in her hometown school district.

"I've dedicated my entire career to helping Towns County Elementary be successful, and I will continue to do so," Thompson said, noting that her focus will be on increasing student achievement, supporting teachers and helping to make responsible members of the community.

And then there's the Middle School. Rollie Thomas started the year as TCHS assistant principal before being promoted to his current position as TCMS principal, though he was promoted again earlier this month to Personnel/Curriculum Director at the Central Office, effective July 1.

Last Thursday, the School Board approved new



Towns County School Board Chair David Phillips voting on a measure in the March 13 called meeting, with Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

hire Dr. James Epps to replace Thomas as Middle School principal to start next school year.

"He has been in administration since 2010 in Burke County," Berrong said of Epps. "He served in the Central Office in FY11 as the director of instructional technology. He has served as Burke County High School Assistant Principal as well Burke County Middle School Assistant Principal."

"From 2020 to the present, he has served as elementary school principal at Blakene Elementary School. Dr. Epps is also a current adjunct professor at Augusta University and an evaluator at Western Governors University."

"Dr. Epps clearly has the qualifications for this position, and the interview team and I believe he has the demeanor and personal skills that Towns County Middle School needs to continue its academic success."

Epps is new to the community, though he does have some experience already with Towns County Schools.

"My stepson's been here for a year - he's a freshman at the High School," Epps said. "We came here when we were displaced during the hurricane in Augusta, and my wife and I both fell in love with the place."

The newly hired Middle School principal said he was

so eager to get back here that he interviewed last year for the Elementary School, "but this was the right opportunity for us and our family."

"We're very excited to come join this community and just continue the success at the Middle School," Epps said.

The Central Office is still on the lookout for an assistant principal at the High School, which was the subject of an executive session that evening.

"After we get this done, I'm hoping that our administrative team is going to stay the same for several years to come," Berrong said.

Rounding out the hires last week to fill positions that were part of the recent spate of resignations and internal promotions, the School Board was able to replace multiple teaching positions at the Elementary School.

Carly Dills and Cabe Poston are Towns County alumni, and Hayley Chastain hails from neighboring Hayesville, North Carolina, and lives in Hiawassee. The three will start the 2025-2026 school year as TCES teachers.

And the School Board hired two new substitute teachers: recently retired, longtime local paraprofessional Donna Manus, and parapro Judy Davis, who has over 20 years of education experience in Cobb County.

Weekend Storm...from Page 1



Dozens of trees fell across county roads in the March 15-16 storm. Photo by Shelly Knight

home here, and winds were responsible for causing major damage at EZ Store It LLC on Lower Bell Creek Road.

Opened three years ago by the Phillips Family, EZ Store It specializes in covered storage for boats, RVs, campers, cars, trailers, etc., plus climate-controlled mini storage. Owner David Phillips said Sunday that he "lost a lot of buildings last night."

Incredibly strong winds blew the roofs off 21 boat/RV storage buildings and sent nine buildings completely across Lower Bell Creek to pile in the front yard and driveway of a neighboring home. In total, 45 of his storage buildings received damage.

Phillips said even his builder had never seen anything like it, and he thinks the property could have been the site of tornadic activity based on the way some of the build-

ings uprooted, twisting in different directions and even driving a support pole 4-feet through a stored camper.

"I've got roofs that blew to the north, and then I've got roofs that blew to the south," Phillips said, adding that the buildings are extremely heavy and fixed in the ground with concrete, so for them to be blown clear across the street, he was estimating winds there at likely over 100 mph.

He plans to report the damage to the National Weather Service to see if the agency can determine whether a tornado localized over his property, but aside from the EZ Store It, the newspaper learned of no other potential tornadic activity in the county.

"There's definitely damage, but this is material stuff - we lost no life or no limb on that. God was good to us," Phillips said, keeping a healthy

perspective. "Nobody going by on the road got hit; it was 3 o'clock in the morning or so."

"We lost a lot of stuff right there; it's thousands of dollars' worth of buildings, and some of the campers were damaged. But the good thing is, nobody got hurt - God was good to us, (as He is) all the time."

Elsewhere in the county, Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds Manager Hilda Thomason decided to open up the Anderson Music Hall as an overnight shelter for people looking to weather the storm, with eight people opting to take advantage of the offer.

Prior to the storm, Towns County Government issued a CodeRED Alert via email and phone call to let people know about the incoming bad weather. To sign up, visit <http://www.townscountyga.org/emergency-alert-system.html>.

Daffodil Garden...from Page 1

Her father made the trip to New York to try to arrange for immigration papers for his family. But they arrived too late, as Hungary, an ally of Germany, declared war on the United States. Soon after, Helen, the youngest of eight children and lovingly referred to as "Potyo," or "the dear little one," was led into a cattle car with her family and neighbors.

"It was dark inside, and she huddled next to (her mother)," Howard read, weeping. "Helen was killed upon arrival at Auschwitz on May 31, 1944. She was 13 years old."

A hush fell over the small group of attendees as several shed tears for innocents slain by hatred. Afterward, they took to the garden itself to install displays along the fence showcasing a handful of biographies. Helen Katz's story - and gentle face - was just one of 10 placed there.

On the end of the bed closest to Lake Chatuge is a barren patch, where 1,000 daffodils were planted last fall but never came up. Oliver and other gardeners suspect voracious voles to be the cause.

Volunteers replaced the bulbs in hopes that a new bunch would sprout. They have not pushed their way up from the soil yet, but there has been triumph in the garden.

Last November, the bed



Much hard work went into the creation of the local Children's Daffodil Garden, which can be seen in Hiawassee at Lloyd's Landing on Lake Chatuge. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

was expanded to allow for more flowers to grow, and they still make for a gorgeous sight against the placid blue of the lake.

The walking path around the bed has been adorned with lilies and other decorative plants, beautifying the memorial with splashes of color around the vibrant sea of yellow.

Michael Courey read the Peace Prayer of St. Francis to close out the ceremony, bidding everyone to be inspired to do good and care for others. It brought to mind the secondary

goal of the Daffodil Project - to remember and aid children currently facing humanitarian crises, so that the horrors of the Holocaust will never be faced again.

The Daffodil Garden at Lloyd's Landing is part of the Foothills of Remembrance Trail, which includes gardens in Jasper, Ellijay, Blue Ridge, Blairsville, Young Harris and Hiawassee. The biographies will be displayed for the next month, but the daffodils will stay - and so, too, shall the precious, painful memories of the lost children linger.

Ivy Log Meat Tour...from Page 1



TCHS Animal Science students suited up for their recent tour, following strict safety and sanitation protocols that are in place to protect workers, consumers, and the animals themselves.

structor Sabrina Garrett said. "Seeing the entire process from live animal to packaged product helped them better understand the importance of food safety, animal welfare, and the skilled work that goes into meat processing."

The trip not only rein-

forced the students' studies but also introduced them to potential career opportunities in the meat processing industry. The Animal Science Program is committed to providing hands-on learning experiences that prepare students for careers in agriculture, food production,

and beyond. The Towns County Animal Science class, Future Farmers of America, and Ms. Sabrina Garrett would like to say "Thank You" to owner Mr. David Christensen and all of his friendly staff at Ivy Log Meat Processing.