

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Wednesday, March 22, 2023

## Historical Society celebrates Towns' 167th birthday

By Brittany Holbrooks  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Towns County Historical Society held its monthly meeting on March 13, kicking off the start of a month of celebration for Towns County's 167th anniversary. The primary presentation was a recording of the July 7, 1956, "Century of Progress Parade."

Towns County turned 100 that year, and several members of the audience last week could recall being at the parade or at least knowing those who were involved. While the film had no audio, Historical Society Vice President Jerry Taylor was a great narrator.

The scene opened with a crowd rumored to be made up of 10,000 people on the town square. The event was a big deal in its day and was said to have been recorded by a professional from Atlanta.

A few voices rose above the excited murmur of those gathered at the Civic Center to view the film that Monday, as people pointed out old buildings that no longer stood or structures that housed entirely different businesses back in the day.

Participating in various parts of the centennial parade were women adorned in the heavy hand-sewn dresses and bonnets of yesteryear, and Taylor noted specific faces identified among the crowd.

As for the gents, they also sported period clothes. Some wore top hats and suits while others dressed in work clothes carried shotguns. And they were "required" to grow beards or risk "imprisonment" at the Old Rock Jail.

According to Taylor, dressing up and "play-acting" was a big part of the fun, especially when one considers how the play was laid out. From

start to finish, the floats represented integral moments – or people – in Towns County's history chronologically.

Where one float highlighted the first trades between white settlers and Native Americans, another showcased a miniature version of an old Appalachian home, complete with smoke coming out of a tiny chimney.

As familiar names like old Hiwassee Mayor Homer Hunter and former Gov. Marvin Griffin popped up with their respective faces, those who could remember being present that day pointed out where some of their deepest memories had been collected.

After that visit down a worn yet warm pathway of the past, the concessions started. Like any other birthday party, special cupcakes were baked for the occasion. In fact, a fun new prize hunt made sure to intrigue new and old Historical



Longtime Towns Countians and relative newcomers alike gathered to celebrate the county's birthday on Monday, March 13. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Society members alike.

Among the cookies, cupcakes, and other finger foods was a cupcake containing blue icing on the inside. Whoever got the treat also received a lifetime membership to the Historical Society, and

Bob Williams was tickled to pick the winning pastry.

"It's awesome," Williams said about winning. Although he grew up in Oklahoma, Williams has family still living in Hiwassee. Now that he is home, he has a chance

to explore his roots further through the resources of the Historical Society, and as a lifetime member to boot.

The birthday celebrations were only beginning that night, as the organization

See County Birthday, Page 8A

## Easter Basket Raffle to help boy undergoing surgeries

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

Family members and friends of an 8-year-old boy with ties to the community are raising money to help offset expenses for the family as he continues a series of major medical treatments on his spine and heart.

Before he was even born, Brayden Shiflett's mother Megan began intricately chronicling his medical journey to "connect with other mothers and families that are going through the same things I am so we can support each other," per <https://www.facebook.com/braydensstory>.

Brayden is a happy, brave little boy who has undergone more in just 8 years than most people do in a lifetime. He was born with a congenital heart defect that required open-heart surgery as an infant, and he suffers from other birth defects and scoliosis, a severe curvature of the spine.

He is currently being treated for his scoliosis with a



Brayden Shiflett sporting a smile earlier this month while wearing a surgically implanted "halo" device to help straighten his spine. Photo/GoFundMe

"halo-gravity traction device," which consists of a metallic ring surgically implanted around his skull, to which

weights are attached via a pulley system to gently stretch and straighten his spine.

See Shiflett Raffle, Page 8A

## Abby Pate delivers speech; Glidewell discusses EMC

By Brittany Holbrooks  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Friday, March 17, marked an extra special morning for the weekly meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers thanks to a surprise appearance by a contestant who will appear in the Annual Top of Georgia Speaking Contest this week.

The Speaking Contest is designed to be a fun, engaging way for students to develop and hone their public speaking skills, providing a six-session training course taught by experienced local leaders in the run-up to the big contest with cash prizes.

And last Friday, Dr. Gerry Chotiner introduced those gathered for the breakfast meeting to dual-enrolled Towns County High School Senior Abby Pate, who is heavily involved in local youth organizations like Student Council and hopes to one day attend Western Carolina University.

Pate attended to offer a treat to the Movers and Shak-



Blue Ridge Mountain EMC General Manager Allan Glidewell spoke with the Movers & Shakers on Friday. He came on board to lead the EMC in March 2021. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

ers in the form of practicing her speech before a live audience.

What proceeded was a fascinating lesson on body farms and anthropology. Some grim statistics opened the talk; since 1980, there have been over 250,000 homicides in the United States, and since June of 2022, 21,000 people have been reported missing.

"Each of these people have family and loved ones who don't know what happened to them," Pate said. "Through extensive research with body farms, we can help provide these families with closure."

Body farms are research facilities where donated corpses

See Pate/Glidewell Speak, Page 8A

## City Hall saves money by switching health insurance



Members of the Hiwassee City Council in a recent work session. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

In their March regular meeting, Hiwassee City Council members approved the new UnitedHealthcare plan for city employees, up-coming sidewalk repairs by Frisk Contracting, and a third-party inspection policy.

Continuing with An-

them Blue Cross, the current provider, would result in a 90% increase from the current rate of \$916.44 per month for each employee to \$1,741.26 per month for each employee.

This prompted officials to "shop around" for some better options.

At the February work session, Tim Barrett of Barrett Insurance advised that, after

getting quotes from multiple companies, UnitedHealthcare presented the best option from a cost to benefits standpoint, including a lower deductible on the new plan.

With United, costs will still be increasing by about \$250 per month for each employee, but the new rate of \$1,162.76 monthly is just a

See Council Meeting, Page 7A

## TCSO Deputy Rich completes drone training at GPSTC

News Special  
Towns County Herald

On Thursday, March 9, Towns County Sheriff's Deputy Robbie Rich completed a 32-hour class at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth.

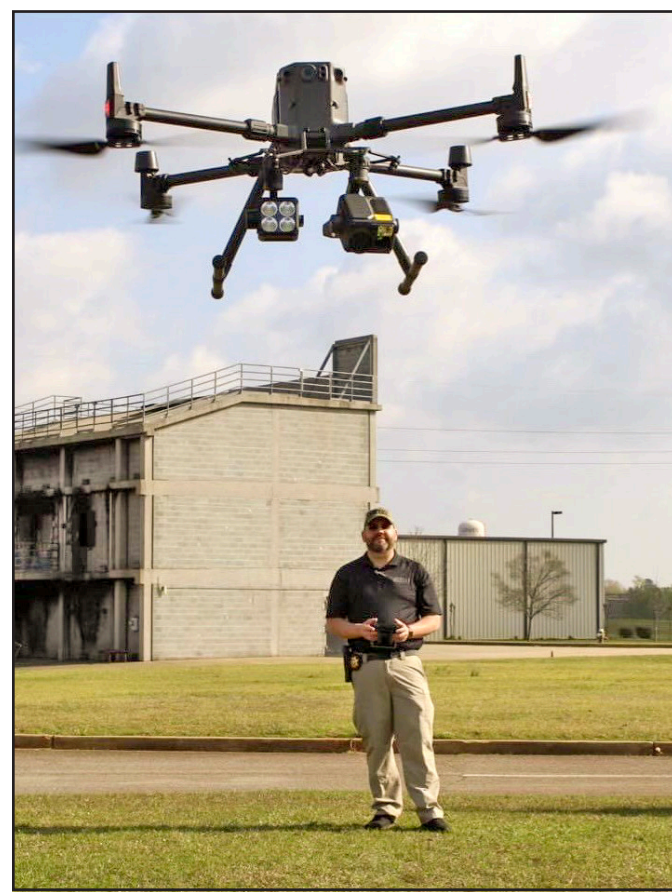
Deputy Rich works part-time for Towns County Sheriff's Office and is the Chief of Police at Young Harris College.

He is a Federal Aviation Administration Part 107 Licensed Remote Pilot, which is all the State of Georgia requires to operate a drone commercially.

Rich has also passed the Division of Aviation North Carolina Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operator's Knowledge Test and has obtained his permit to operate in North Carolina as well.

The training, "Small Unmanned Aircraft Use for Public Safety," provided students with an understanding of the operational skills for using small, unmanned aircraft flight for public safety operations.

Operations covered



TCSO Deputy Robbie Rich piloting the Sheriff's Office drone. Photo/Facebook

See TCSO Drone, Page 8A

2 Sections 16 Pages

Vol. 94 No. 21

Lake Levels

BASEBALL

TCMS FBLA Achievement See page 5A

Arrests - 2A Opinion - 4A  
Chamber - 7A Legals - 2B  
Church - 4B Obituaries - 5B  
Classifieds - 6B Sports - 2B

Blue Ridge 1,676.90  
Chatuge 1,919.39  
Nottely 1,764.17

3/24 vs. Lincoln Co. (DH)  
SOCCER  
3/24 vs. Georgia Military

Memory Lane Car Show See page 1B

State Income Tax Refund See page 3B



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# Chamber Chronicles

The official source of Towns County Chamber News

Wednesday, March 22, 2023

### Welcome to our Newest Members!!

**Abide Coffee-** Mike Young -195 N Main Street, Ste B. Hiawassee, GA – redefining community through coffee. Family owned and operated coffee shop serving locally roasted coffee, pastries and specialty drinks. (407) 919-8508 Facebook Abide Coffee Hiawassee www.abidecoffee.com

**Georgia Mountain Ice Cream-** Keith Matthews- Hiawassee, GA- Homemade ice cream since 2022- (321) 266-5691 Facebook- Georgia Mountain Ice Cream



**Ribbon Cutting- March 9, 2023 at Shannon's Floral Studio.** We had a ribbon cutting for one of our newest Hiawassee Businesses- Shannon's Floral Studio. Thank you to all that attended and

Welcomed Shannon & her staff to the Lake Chatuge Chamber of Commerce. (See Photo)

**2023 Second Quarter Business After Hours-** Cass Clinical Med Spa & Fitness – April 20- More details to follow.

Follow us: Facebook & Instagram: Visit Lake Chatuge and check out our website at www.golakechatuge.com for updates on the events in the area.

Thanks to all our members for their continued support!

Additionally, we'd like to thank these Platinum and Gold Members:

**PLATINUM MEMBERS:** Blue Ridge Mountain EMC; Century 21 Black Bear Realty; Lake Chatuge Lodge; Majestic Mountain Getaways, Inc.; Mountain Realty; The Ridges Resort on Lake Chatuge; United Community Bank; Windstream Communications.

**GOLD MEMBERS:** Blairsville Printing; Brasstown Manor; Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa; Brother's Restaurant at Willow Ranch; Chatuge Regional Hospital; Chick-fil-A of Blairsville; Dharam Auto Sales; Erlanger Western Carolina Hospital; Hiawassee Package Store; Homestead Hospice; Hughes Accounting; K. Boyer Photography; Little Bear Rentals & Property Management; Men on The Move; Mahan Family Chiropractic; NeuroSport Physical Therapy LLC; Northeast GA Health System; Paradise Bar and Grill, LLC; Peach State Federal Credit Union; Regency SouthernCare Hospice; Sanre Organic Skinfood; South State Bank; Stone Wall 66 LLC; Tri-County Office Supply, and, Young Harris College.

For information on becoming a member of the Lake Chatuge Chamber of Commerce, visit www.golakechatuge.com or call Mary Ann at (706) 896-4966 or email her at LCChamber2021@gmail.com .

## Council Meeting...from Page 1A

27% increase for the city's 15 eligible employees.

Councilwoman Amy Barrett, who is married to Tim Barrett, did not take part in the discussions or vote on March 7, but the rest of the council voted to adopt the new plan with UnitedHealthcare, effective April 1.

Also approved by the council was the new Third-Party Inspection Policy,

which will allow larger businesses or commercial developments to use third-party vendors for inspections. That said, these inspections will require approval in advance from City Hall.

Finally, the council voted to accept a \$45,940 contract with Frisk Contracting to begin repairing sidewalks around town. This comes in the wake of other spring-

cleaning spruce-ups in the city, such as fixing the fence at Lloyd's Landing and filling potholes.

The Hiawassee City Council meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. inside City Hall, located at 50 River Street.

City Council meetings are open to the public and streamed live over Facebook.

## International Association of Fire Chiefs: WUI Conference

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Conference is held in Reno Nevada in March every year. This will be my 8th trip to Reno to meet and greet the who's who in the wildfire world. This is where everyone who works in wildfire comes to share experiences and ideas with fellow wildfire professionals.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) represents the leadership of firefighters and emergency responders worldwide; whose members are the world's leading experts in firefighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search and rescue, and public safety policy. With more fire happening in the WUI, greater all-hazard challenges taxing our resources and no expectation of change soon, it's critical to come together to discuss the issues impacting our industry.

The WUI Conference brings together firefighters, researchers and leadership at the local, state, federal and tribal levels to collaborate on emerging issues and educate wildland-fire management.

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is where homes are built in or near forests and the risk of wildfire is increased because the homes are now sitting inside the natural fuel and everything in a house is fuel. This increased risk not only is due to the fuel that is around the homes, but also because of the limited access for First Responders and Emergency personnel to get into our neighborhoods with their wildfire equipment using the narrow, one lane roads that many of us

use to get into and out of our neighborhoods.

This limited access can be critical during a wildfire when citizens are trying to get out and fire fighters are trying to get in. If citizens wait too long to leave and meet a fire truck on a narrow road, not only are they in personal danger sitting in the smoke because the fire truck can't back up and this impasse creates a traffic jam and a delay getting equipment and personnel to the fire.

Firewise, Ready-Set-Go and Fire Adapted Communities offers solutions for citizens to use to reduce their risk and develop evacuation plans so everybody can survive a wildfire.

Mark Wiles is the Wildfire Prevention specialist for the Georgia Forestry Commission and the RC&D's Appalachian RCD FAC Coalition contractor for South Carolina and also the 2022 Silver Smokey award winner. Mark works out of the Elberton area with communities and groups to setup wildfire risk reduction programs all across Georgia. Part of his job (along with the local GFC rangers) is to perform home risk assessments to help citizens realize the things they can do to make their homes safer from wildfire and to write Firewise Action plans.

These wildfire awareness programs have helped keep Georgia citizens aware of the risk of wildfires in and around their communities and this awareness has resulted in fewer wildfire calls for our Fire Rescue departments. This not only keeps property losses low but saves the counties tax dollars by keeping the fire apparatus and fire fighters in the station where they are not



**Frank Riley**  
Executive Director of RC&D

burning diesel fuel and using up supplies.

These programs work as shown by the 3-year total of number of wildfires in Towns, Union, and Fannin counties which shows a definite drop in calls since we started the Firewise, FAC, and Ready Set Go programs a few years ago.

This is my 8th year attending the WUI Conference and I have presented our work to the Wildfire professionals in 5 of the past 8 years. Wildland Fire professionals from Washington, DC to rural California know about the success we have achieved in Towns County of reducing the risk of losing our property or lives from an errant wildfire.

This conference is like a reunion of wildfire professionals from all over the world. You know you are doing something right when the Deputy Chief of the US Forest Service and the Undersecretary of Agriculture tells us that they hear about "our great work down here in the Appalachians".

The main reason we go to these conferences is to learn from others, share what we have learned, visit old friends, and be seen by the folks from DC who control the dollars that fuel our programs. It benefits all the citizens down here in the Appalachians to be recognized for doing things that help these government agencies protect the public forests and citizen's homes.

For more information on IAFC or WUI contact us at www.info.crcd@gmail.com or www.iafc.org. NT(Mar22,Z16)CA

## Georgia Mountains Regional Commission Meetings for March



The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission's Council will hold its regular monthly meeting on Thursday, March 30, 2023 at 6 PM, at the Towns County Recreation Department located at 150 Forest Park Rd, Young Harris, GA 30582.

For catering purposes please RSVP no later than Friday, March 24, 2023. To RSVP, call Gina Kessler at 770-538-2607. NT(Mar22,F3)JH

Bill Nusbaum, Northeast GA Manager, will present a program update on the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership at Georgia Tech.

For catering purposes please RSVP no later than Friday, March 24, 2023. To RSVP, call Gina Kessler at 770-538-2607. NT(Mar22,F3)JH

## Narcotics Anonymous group

Narcotics Anonymous has relocated in Blairsville! The "Hardcore Hope" group now meets on Tuesday and Thursday through Sunday at 6 PM at 75 Hunt-Martin Street, Blairsville, GA If you think that drugs are a problem in your life, come see if we can help! For further information about Narcotics Anonymous, please call the NA Help Line at 1-888-947-7262. NT(Mar22,Z1)CA

## 2023 Officers for SCV Sworn into office at recent meeting



(L-R): Pete White, treasurer; John Fusco, chaplain; Greg White, lieutenant-commander; Jessie Pinson, adjutant; and Mike Pettus, commander.

The David W. Payne Camp 1633, Sons of Confederate Veterans, recently swore into office its officers for 2023. Camp 1633 was chartered in 1993 in Blairsville where it meets the second Thursday of every month at the Davenport Veterans' Building at 7PM. The public is always welcome. T(Mar22,Z4)CA

## Blairsville Cruisers Monthly Members Meeting Thursday



The general membership meeting for the Blairsville Cruisers Car Club will be held on Thursday, March 23rd at 6 pm in the Clubhouse on The Murphy Highway north in Blairsville.

All members are encouraged to attend. There will be a \$25 door prize awarded with a drawing held for members who attend the meeting. Members only are eligible for the door prize drawing.

Non-members interested in the club are invited to attend to see what the club is about and for information on joining the club. You are not required to own a collector car to join us, just have a desire to enjoy collector cars or a desire to help the children in need in our local communities.

Agenda for the meeting will include discussion of events for the upcoming 2023 season as well as general business discussions and reports regarding the club. Renderings showing the design for the new wrap on the club trailer will be on display. Flyers for the 2023 schedule, the raffle car and the Salute to Veterans Car Show will be available for members who wish to take some for distribution to friends and potential members. Raffle Tickets will be available for members who wish to sell tickets to

## Your Patriot Reflection



**Joshua 24:15**  
One of the two guiding scriptures of Joshua's Warriors is Joshua 24:15 which says, "And if it seems evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom you shall serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!"

Joshua is at the end of his life and has called all the tribes of Israel together to recount the mighty works of God so that they would be encouraged to continue serving God. It was part history lesson and part rallying cry, but the intent was to glorify God and proclaim that He had not changed and would continue to guide them.

In our nation we have lost sight of all that God has done for us! We are quick to testify of all that WE have done, with no acknowledgement of God's work in sustaining this great nation.

It is time that we start giving credit, where credit is due, and proclaim that we will serve God in our country, and in our homes. We were created first and foremost, to glorify God with our lives.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuawarriors.org. NT(Mar22,Z7)CA

## Local Al-Anon meetings

Are you troubled by someone's drinking? Al-Anon Family Groups (for friends and family) meet every Tuesday at 12 noon at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, 1114 Main Street, Room 105, Young Harris, GA For details call 404-687-0467 or visit aa.org NT(Mar22,Z1)CA

friends and relatives. Members are encouraged to sign out a packet of tickets for the fund raiser that helps children in need in the community.

The car show season kicks off with a cruise- in Saturday April 1st at the Union County Farmers Market at 3 PM and lasting until 6 PM. Be sure to attend as we expect upwards of 100 cars for this opening event. Please be sure to update your information on any change in email, address,

cars you own and other important information so that our members roster is up to date and accurate.

Members may pay annual dues and update their information at the meeting or during the April 1st cruise in.

We look forward to seeing members and guests on Thursday, March 23rd. Please call club president Dick Couture at 706-400-1036 with any question you may have about the meeting. NT(Mar22,Z9)CA

## American Red Cross Volunteers

Make a difference in your community! As a volunteer with the American Red Cross, you can help families recover after a home fire, train individuals in first aid and CPR, support America's military families, or take on any number of other roles

that make our communities safer, stronger and more resilient.

Get started at https://www.redcross.org/local/georgia/volunteer.html or call your NWGA chapter office to ask about volunteer opportunities 844-536-6226. NT(Mar22,Z1)CA

## Longtime Sons of Confederate Veterans' Member Honored



(L-R): Adjutant Pinson and Camp 1633 Commander Mike Pettus. The David W. Payne Camp 1633, Sons of Confederate Veterans, recently awarded the SCV's "Distinguished Service" medal to Jessie Pinson for his long record of outstanding service to the 127-year-old heritage organization. Since retiring to Morganton, Pinson has served as Camp 1633's adjutant. T(Mar22,Z4)CA



## TCHS Student of the Week



**Sarah Vardo and Laura Mauldin**  
The TCHS PBIS student of the week is junior Laura Mauldin. Health Care Science teacher and HOSA adviser Sarah Vardo states: "Laura's ability to lead and her self-motivation is what makes her successful. I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching her. She has shown me great responsibility and honesty, and she is very deserving of every opportunity that will help her be a successful contributor to society."

Laura enjoys all her classes, but she especially likes mathematics as there is always a correct answer and English as it allows readers to escape and imagine. Out of all of her CTAE classes, she enjoys healthcare the most as she loves helping people. After graduation, she hopes to attend a four year university while playing collegiate level softball before entering graduate school to obtain a degree in the medical field. Laura plays softball, basketball, and soccer for the Indians keeping her busy and active year round. She also participates in many school-based clubs including SADD, NTHS, Robotics, FCA, and Junior Board of Government Officials. She serves as an officer in many school-based clubs including FBLA, HOSA, and BETA Club. Outside of school, she participates in the Sheriff's Youth Advisory, Leo Club, and Girl Scouts. She loves agriculture, especially working with cows and around the farm. She loves to read, cook and back, and crochet. Her proudest accomplishment is that she has clocked 745 hours of community service starting from her freshman year. It is impressive how she is able to find time to help people in her community with such a packed schedule. Out of the TRIBE characteristics, she believes that she tries to use and apply all of them (Teamwork, Respect, Integrity, Bravery, Excellence) as this helps her be successful.



## Shiflett Raffle...from Page 1A

The treatment will last about six weeks, all of which he must spend in the hospital, and the halo is simply a first step on the path to correcting his scoliosis, with spine surgery to follow.

When he finishes his spine procedures, Brayden will have to undergo his second open-heart surgery to replace a valve due to enlargement of his heart.

Megan is staying in the hospital with her son until he finishes his spine treatment on April 11, and his father Cody is regularly making the roughly five-hour drive back and forth from their home in Warne, North Carolina, so he can work and take care of the couple's other children.

To help the family with their expenses, Brayden's great-grandmother Kathleen Anderson of Hiwassee has devised a local fundraiser ahead of Easter Sunday.

Between now and Easter on April 9, people may enter a Boy and Girl Easter Basket Raffle. The tickets are \$5 apiece of five for \$20, with all proceeds going toward expenses incurred during Brayden's extended-stay treatment.

People interested in supporting this young man's cause may email his mother at mshiflett420@gmail.com or reach out over Facebook.

Towns County Finance Director Andrea Anderson is Brayden's great-aunt, and she, too, may be contacted for tick-



An X-ray taken March 1 showing the severe curvature in Brayden's spine. Photo/GoFundMe

ets, which are available at the front of the Temporary Courthouse Offices inside the Old Rec Gym in Hiwassee, and people can even swing by to see the baskets.

In addition to the Easter Basket Raffle, the family is hoping to raise funds via a

GoFundMe set up by Megan's best friend at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/medical-help-for-brayden-in-charlotte>.

The family is grateful for whatever support people are able to offer, and for those who cannot donate, "prayers are always welcomed."

## Pate/Glidewell Speak...from Page 1A

es are placed in various conditions to simulate what may happen at crime scenes, according to Pate.

By closely studying patterns of decomposition and even how nature interacts with the deceased, forensic investigators can gain a better understanding of all the fine details that may mean the difference between proper justice and a cold case.

The 2023 Top of Georgia Speaking Contest will take place over two nights this week, on Tuesday, March 21, and Thursday, March 23, beginning at 7 p.m. each evening.

Sixth through 12th-grade students will be competing from nearby counties, including Union and Towns, and the event will be held at Glenn-McGinnis Hall in the Clegg Fine Arts Building of Young Harris College.

Following Pate's presentation last Friday, Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation General Manager Allan Glidewell returned as the featured speaker to give an update on how the co-op is doing.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank you and remind you (that) you own the power company," Glidewell said. "You own a power company; if you're a member of Blue Ridge Electric, that's yours, and you in turn ... vote for our Board of Directors."

Quoting an "ancient Chinese saying" concerning hopes for living in "interesting times," it's no shock that Glidewell referred to the past three years as being full of interesting new developments.

For one, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed how the power company conducts its business. While in-person interactions used to be a requirement of the job, there are now remote ways to complete many



TCHS senior Abby Pate is a competitor in this week's Top of Georgia Student Speaking Contest, pictured here with competition organizer Gerry Chotiner. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

tasks as either an employee or a customer.

Secondly, the economic effects of the pandemic are continuing to come home to roost, becoming more apparent and widespread with time.

"Whether or not you believe that the period of increased inflation is on the way up or down," Glidewell said, BRMEMC costs have continued to trend upward.

For instance, the supply chain backlog has made the price of transformers double, further impacting business, and a lack of employees has also struck BRMEMC, bringing labor costs up, Glidewell said.

In this post-pandemic environment especially, competing with other places that are hiring on the market has made it challenging to find good hires, he said, offering a taste of yet another reason behind rising costs.

"Inevitably, anywhere I go after Dec. 23, we talk about the rolling blackouts," Glidewell said, switching gears and explaining that it was the sud-

den extreme drop in temperature that froze the lines up, not the cold itself over Christmas 2022.

Essentially, power couldn't be restored to some homes immediately because too much power would overload a larger system, causing more widespread blackouts that indiscriminately shut off heating for even more households.

Controlled rolling blackouts were the lesser of two evils, especially, Glidewell said, when one considers the situation in Texas where people died from frigid temperatures following the failure of the power grid out there.

To face similar situations in the future without the risk of cutting anyone's power off, Glidewell said the problem needed to be addressed on a national level with greater attention paid to preparedness for sudden freezes.

The Mountain Movers and Shakers meet every Friday at 8 a.m. at the Sundance Grill in Hiwassee.

## County Birthday...from Page 1A

made plans for the rest of the monthlong birthday bash, including additional showings of the "Parade of Progress" film.

A second showing took place at the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris last week, along with March 16's "Towns County History in Stitches," which told the story of this place in sesquicentennial quilting at the Towns County Elementary School.

Coming up on March 30 at 11 a.m., another birthday party will provide a fitting ending to such a celebratory month at the Towns County Public Library in Hiwassee. Again, the "Parade of Progress" film will be shown there.

And starting next month, Jerry Taylor will be leading classes for adult students at Young Harris College to offer a deep dive into local his-

tory. The classes will be April 5, 12, 19, 26, and May 3 from 2-4 p.m. Interested parties may sign up by calling 706-379-5194 or visiting [www.iclyhc.edu](http://www.iclyhc.edu).

The Towns County Historical Society meets the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. in the Civic Center in Hiwassee. Guests are encouraged to bring along refreshments if they participate.

## TCSO Drone...from Page 1A

were Missing Person Search and Rescue, Trouble Unknown/Missing Person Search

## Food Pantry Food Distribution

The Food Pantry hours are Monday - Thursday 9 AM- 12 PM with the exception of distribution day. The Distribution is every other Wednesday 11 AM - 2 PM.

Any questions or concerns, please contact Richard Thomas at [towns.pantry@ndocsbg.org](mailto:towns.pantry@ndocsbg.org) or (706) 896-4783.

and Rescue, Haz-Mat Incidents, Crime Scene/Traffic Accident Scene mapping, and Active Shooter Incidents.

This training gave the pilot the knowledge to evaluate, plan, set up, and execute flight operations.

The Towns County Sheriff's Office drone is registered with the FAA.

Sheriff Ken Henderson said he is pleased Deputy Rich has completed his training and that "our drone is ready and fully operational at a moment's notice."

Earlier this year in January, Sheriff Henderson thanked Jim and Sandy Hazen for their generous donation

that enabled the Towns County Sheriff's Office to purchase a drone valued at \$50,000. The drone is state-of-the-art with all the bells and whistles.

Drones in law enforcement have become a critical element and continue to evolve. They can be used in searches for lost persons, search and rescue, patrol deployment operations, hostage situations, and drug surveillance.

The use of drones can save lives and assist in officer safety operations by sending unmanned aircraft into high-risk situations to assess situations without having to expose deputies to unnecessary risks.