

# Towns County Herald

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## Organizers anticipate largest ever car show at Fairgrounds

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Memory Lane Classic Car Show organizers gathered at Jerry and June Smith's Classic Car Museum on Tuesday, April 6, to plan for the upcoming major event running April 30-May 1.

Helping to be the Smiths' sports legend friend Otis Nixon, and both Evander Holyfield and Andrew Jones have been invited to attend so may be there as well.

John Wilkinson, Doug Collins and David Ralston will also be in attendance, as will other VIPs invited by Jacky Jones, the Smiths and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

The show is sure to be a terrific attraction for the Fairgrounds, which is hosting the second day of the event,

and is likely to herald a successful year after many event postponements in 2020 due to COVID-19.

For perspective, the Fairgrounds hosted 22 concerts in 2019 but only two in 2020, and General Manager Hilda Thomason said she is more than ready to make up for the COVID deficit.

"I think this will be the biggest car show we have ever had," Thomason said. "Jerry Smith has done a lot to help us out. We are excited for the event and hope everyone comes out to see us."

The Smiths use their impressive classic car collection and museum in Young Harris to raise money for local charitable giving. In fact, the purpose of this car show is to serve as a fundraiser for new seating in the iconic Anderson Music Hall.

Already, the effort has resulted in over \$25,000 in pre-show fundraising, including exclusive dinner reservations, swap meet registrations, vendor signups, ticket raffles, donations and more, and Thomason is hopeful they'll be able to raise \$100,000 when all is said and done.

At 10 a.m. on Friday, April 30, the show will kick off at the Memory Lane Classic Car Museum at 1195 Jack Deyton Circle, with a parking lot full of enthusiasts from all over the country showing off their classic cars.

And on Saturday, May 1, the event will move to the Fairgrounds, where starting at 9 a.m. people can take advantage of craft vendors, music, arts & crafts, food, prizes, and yes, more classic cars.

The spectator fee for each day will be \$10 per per-

son, and children 12 and under get in free.

A live auction will be held May 1 at 3 p.m. at Eller Holler Stage, to feature Chase Elliott sports memorabilia, lodging packages, a Cadillac and more. Ford and Chevy engine raffle tickets are still available, and winning tickets can also be redeemed for \$5,000 in cash.

The Smiths will be donating \$5,000 toward the Towns County High School Baseball Team, which has been helping with fundraising efforts.

Smith said he anticipates around 900 cars in attendance since it is the first large car show of the season and people are eager to get out, especially after so many COVID cancellations in the past year.

"I think you are going to have as many cars as you can See Car Show, Page 6A



This shiny classic Cadillac is being donated by Jerry Smith for auction during the Memory Lane Classic Car Show. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

## Livingston, Houser named STAR Student and Teacher

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Congratulations to Towns County High School Senior Kenzie Livingston, who was officially named 2021 STAR Student on Monday, April 12. Livingston has chosen English Teacher Christa Houser to serve as her STAR Teacher.

Livingston will be honored alongside other stellar students in a special "Evening with the Stars" event on Wednesday, April 28, at the Civic Center in Hiawasse.

To become STAR Student, Livingston had to meet the requirements of the highest scorer on the SAT for her class as well as being within the Top 10% in class ranking.

The accomplishment is something Livingston has worked to obtain since she started her high school journey. See STAR Student, Page 6A



TCHS English Teacher Christa Houser was thrilled to learn that senior Kenzie Livingston, the school's 2021 STAR Student, had selected her to serve as her STAR Teacher. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

## TCHS Seniors ready to dress to the nines for Prom 2021

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Alongside continually improving local COVID-19 metrics comes even more welcome news, especially for members of the Towns County High School Class of 2021: seniors are getting a prom.

It's a welcome change from just one year ago, when Class of 2020 seniors had to miss out on their prom experience in the leadup to graduation last spring, as the pandemic was just getting off the ground and schools were closed everywhere to slow the spread of the disease.

When the Class of 2021 returned for instruction as new

seniors in the fall, the learning environment was certainly different due to COVID mitigations, but at least the students were back in school and regaining some semblance of normal life after the onset.

And that returning sense of normalcy will continue with the 2021 Junior-Senior Prom this Saturday, April 17, at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center, though there will be a few minor changes.

"This year, seniors can bring dates, but seniors cannot bring guests," High School Principal Roy Perren said. "That will limit the numbers there a little bit. We didn't go as extravagant perhaps as we did



Roy Perren TCHS Principal in years past because if we had a sudden outbreak, we would See Prom, Page 6A

## Counties hosting Saturday mass COVID-19 vaccine clinics

Union, Towns top state in vaccination rates

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

The Health Departments of Union and Towns Counties will each be hosting a single Saturday mass vaccine clinic coming up, one in Union on April 17, and one in Towns on April 24. Appointments are still available for each.

In Union County, people may visit <http://www.unioncountyga.gov> and click on the registration link at the bottom of the page. This clinic will be held on Saturday, April 17, from 8-11:45 a.m. at the Sports Center.

Generally speaking, people may sign up for vaccinations outside of mass clinic hours at the Union County Health Department by visiting <http://phd2.org> or calling 1-888-426-5073. For Towns County,



COVID-19 Vaccine Team Member Dan Smith, who has volunteered with Synergy Health since January, got his second Moderna dose last week at Foster Park from medical student Lauren Slarks of the AU/UGA Medical Partnership. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

people will want to call the Health Department at 706-896-2265 to make an appointment for the Saturday, April 24, clinic running from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. People may also call the Health See Vaccine Clinics, Page 6A

## Mile Long Yard Sale returns to Hiawasse April 23-24



2020 marked the inaugural outing for the Mile Long Yard Sale at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Mile Long Yard Sale will return to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds this

month after a successful first in 2020, which had to be rescheduled from spring to September last year due to COVID-19.

The sale will open at 10

a.m. on Friday, April 23, and run through 4 p.m. the first day. And on Saturday, April 24, the event will run from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Parking and attendance are See Yard Sale, Page 6A

## Missing man recovered safely near Brasstown Bald April 11

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

BRASSTOWN BALD - A Walton County man who had been reported missing last week turned up safe Sunday wandering the top of Georgia's highest peak "in a daze," according to the Towns County Sheriff's Office, which posted search updates for the community via Facebook.

The man reportedly has a history of mental illness and is known for making similar excursions, including several years ago when he disappeared from a work site in Union County only to be found days See Missing Man Found, Page 6A



Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland speaks with fellow searchers looking for a Walton County man who went missing locally last week, pictured here at Stephens Lodge in Young Harris. Photo/Facebook

## Gowder requests vacated judgment before sentence starts

By Linda Erbele  
Towns County Herald

Former Union General Hospital CEO Mike Gowder has filed a motion requesting that his conviction and sentence be vacated - that is to say, voided.

Gowder filed his motion pro se, meaning without the assistance of an attorney. The request was received Thursday, April 8, in the clerk's office of federal Northern District of Georgia and will be considered by U.S. District Judge Richard W. Story.

Story presided over Gowder's trial and sentenced him to a year and a day in

federal prison in June 2020 following his October 2019 conviction for multiple counts of prescription fraud.

The sentencing hearing was delayed several times due to concerns over COVID-19, and ultimately, Gowder was allowed to delay reporting for his sentence to no sooner than May 1, 2021, to give him time to receive COVID-19 vaccination.

In the April 8 motion, Gowder is claiming both that Story made a mistake in not allowing separate trials for himself and co-defendant James Heaton, and that his lawyer was ineffective prior to and during



Mike Gowder the trial, and concerning the notice of appeal process. As background for his See Mike Gowder, Page 6A

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**Plant Affair on the Square April 17**  
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