

# Car Show...from Page 1A

put in here," Smith said, a bold prediction that has prompted the Fairgrounds to prepare for overflow parking to house the variety of cars ranging from classic muscle to modern sports.

Vendors interested in the event still have time to sign up as some spots remain available, with current requests for both food and craft vendors. For information on becoming a vendor, call Shannon Nguyen at 678-365-6289.

There are other opportunities to get involved, as the Fairgrounds is searching for event volunteers, with each volunteer set to receive a shirt for participating. For more information on volunteering, call 706-896-4191.

"We will probably need 20 or 30 volunteers just to help out with registration and getting the cars in the Fairgrounds," Thomason said. "We really want people to come out and help us put this thing on. It is great for our area, and we are really excited."

Following the car show on Saturday night, the Fairgrounds will host famed country and gospel singer Josh Turner for a big concert event that has already sold 2,300 tickets, with Thomason believing it will sell out in no time.



**Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason spoke in an April 6 meeting on the possibility that as many as 900 classic cars might be coming to the Memory Lane Classic Car Show April 30-May 1.**  
Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Thomason has been busy booking new concerts for 2021, including the Atlanta Rhythm Section and Orleans, the tickets for which go on sale April 16 for a June 5 show. Of course, folks can still get tickets for this Saturday's concert featuring breakout country music artist Chris Janson.

"We're in the entertainment business, and that's what we want to do - put smiles on people's faces and make sure they have a good time."

Thomason said. "And please come out to enjoy nature and purchase some plants at the Hamilton Gardens."

For more information on upcoming events, visit GeorgiaMountainFairgrounds.com. People will be interested to know that the new Music Hall seating will feature individual seats available for purchase in honor of others, though purchase details are still being considered.

# Yard Sale...from Page 1A

free for shoppers both days.

Featured in the massive yard sale will be a mile worth of booths filled with vendors selling "treasures" from their homes - things they no longer need but that others would love to acquire - and Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason can't wait for the two-day sale to begin.

"This is the second year that we have done it," Thomason said. "It was Diane Williams' idea to do a yard sale here at the Fairgrounds. It was very successful, so we decided that we would do it again, and it kept growing and growing. Every booth is full, and we have tables and tents."

"We just get people from the community and other counties and even other states. They come in, and they rent a booth for \$30. We charge them \$60, and they get \$30 back if they don't leave us junk or anything to clean up."

Event Organizer Diane Williams approached Thomason about the sale as a way to have a more community-oriented offering at the Fairgrounds, which typically attracts large crowds from outside the area.

"I think it is great to have an event for the community itself," Williams said. "I can't believe how many people we have. All the booths are full, and we will have tents because there are so many people that want to participate."

"Even that, there are people at the gate trying to get in before it even opens on Friday and Saturday. I really think that it is a good thing, and it is nice to use the venue in the community for community things."

Williams and her friend Lynn Whelchel are with the Towns County Lions Club, and they will have booths in the yard sale to raise money for local charitable giving.

"A lot of our proceeds that we get will go back into Towns County for Give a Christmas," Williams said. "We had most of the people last year actually take the deposit they got back and donated that to Give a Christmas. That is what we are working for."

The Fairgrounds anticipates the event will be a massive success, as people are eager to get out of their homes and have something to do around the community.

"It is part of the start of our season," Thomason said. "We are very excited for it, and we want people to come out and support it. It will be a great day, and we will have a lot of neat stuff that people bring in. And if you want a booth next year, we will be taking applications."

For more information on upcoming events, visit GeorgiaMountainFairgrounds.com.

# STAR Student...from Page 1A

and she attributes her success to having a good support group and strong personal dedication.

"For me, it means that I am being recognized for all of my hard work," Livingston said, "and that I can be proud of all the work I have put in to be where I am at today, and it gives me hope for my future."

"I had a soccer game the night before the SAT, but after my game, I went home and went straight to bed. The month leading up to the test, I was actually working in my room a lot on practice SAT questions, especially some of the English ones."

Livingston has been a stellar student-athlete throughout her high school career, having participated in soccer, softball, the Literary Team, Academic Team, HOSA - Future Health Professionals, Future Business Leaders of America, the Junior Board and Beta Club.

Her passion for soccer in particular has rewarded Livingston with the opportunity following May graduation to play for Shorter University on an athletic scholarship while pursuing her career goals.

"I'm looking to study

marketing and graphic design and just kind of doing social media management and marketing," Livingston said. "I am just trying to see where it takes me and trying not to plan too far ahead because I know I overthink everything."

As for why Livingston selected Houser to be her STAR Teacher, she said it was because of the excellent support and motivation the English teacher had provided throughout high school.

"She has always been encouraging and has always helped me be where I needed to be and prepare for everything," Livingston said. "She has been my favorite teacher since I have been at this school."

Houser taught Livingston in Honors World Literature and Honors American Literature during her freshman and sophomore years, so for Houser, it was no surprise that Livingston became STAR Student, since she has witnessed her persevering nature for years now.

"It is just awesome," Houser said. "It is great to see hard work recognized. The truth is, I have watched her for four years doing her thing,

so this is not a surprise in the least. In a universe of students, she is a supernova. She is just outstanding."

"This is a girl that puts in the work when she doesn't have to put in the work, and it makes all the difference, but it is also who she is. She has always been true to herself and has never apologized for wanting to be everything she can be."

Houser said she loves her job as a teacher because of students like Livingston, as she gets to watch amazing pupils grow into their potential and pursue their dreams.

In return, Livingston appreciates the support and guidance from Houser and her other teachers, as well as her family, including her father and coach Clay Livingston, who has instructed his daughter in soccer, softball and life.

"I am thankful for all of my teachers for their encouragement and pushing me to work hard and helping me see my full potential," she said. "My family has always been encouraging to me and has always had my back and made sure that I was being the best that I can."

# New Spring courses for Institute of Continuing Learning

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

"More Of A Memoir Than A Cookbook:" Exploring Culinary Literature by Georgia Googer, 8 Sessions, Wednesday, April 7 - May 26, 3 - 4 p.m. This course is interested in the intersection of the culinary and the literary. Cooking, much like literature, is a deeply enriching human experience. It is at once functional and artistic. What we eat (and who we choose to eat with) speaks to aspects of life beyond nutritional need: the desire for fellowship, the excitement of creating something new, the comfort of routine, and more. Our readings will be interdisciplinary in nature, filled with personal anecdote, history, and, of course, cooking instruction.

Writing Your Memories Into True Life Stories by Glenda Beall, 6 Sessions, Tuesday, April 20 - May 25, 2 - 4 p.m. In today's busy world,

grandparents seldom have the opportunity to spend quality time with their grandchildren, to tell them stories about what life was like in the twentieth century. Younger generations will not learn in history books what we can tell them. Did you grow up on a farm or in a city? Did you serve in the military and when? In this class, you will be encouraged to remember the important events of your life and write those memories in an entertaining and informative manner.

The Power Of Goal Setting by Bobbi Umbach, 1 Session, Wednesday, April 21, 10 - 11:30 a.m. There has never been an individual who was successful at any endeavor who was not a goal-setter. Come find out how learning to set realistic goals for your personal or professional life can make an enormous difference in your life.

5 Characteristics Of Personal Power by Bobbi Umbach, 1 Session, Wednesday, April 28, 10 - 11:30 a.m. Confidence, decisiveness, control,

skills and awareness are all characteristics present in individuals we deem to be powerful. This class will investigate what each of these look like in a person and how we can use them for ourselves.

How To Exceed Ourselves And Stop Self-Sabotage by Bobbi Umbach, 1 Session, Wednesday, May 5, 10 - 11:30 a.m. A look at 3 beliefs that keep us from fulfilled lives and 6 behaviors we use to shoot ourselves in the foot.

Contemporary Appalachian Literature: Part Two by Mikala Jones, 6 Sessions, Tuesday & Thursday, May 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Covering the following: Complicating Part One's look at how contemporary fictional works represent the Appalachian region, Part Two will focus on the anthology Appalachian Reckoning, which was edited by Anthony Harkins and Meredith McCarroll.

For more information please visit www.iclyhc.org for registration and detailed course information.

# Mike Gowder...from Page 1A

motion, Gowder wrote that "the Federal Government zealously and selectively" prosecuted him for "following the orders of his licensed physician, Dr. James Heaton."

Gowder noted that Heaton had been treating him for back pain, and that the investigation into Heaton was what caused him to be "selectively scooped up and selectively prosecuted solely because of his (association) treatment from Dr. James Heaton."

Ultimately, Gowder is arguing that his conviction resulted from being put "in front of the jury" with Heaton, and that the "sole reason" the two were indicted together was because each count on its own "would have lacked sufficient evidence to convict him beyond a reasonable doubt."

"What reasonable jury would convict a person for doing nothing more than obeying the medical direction of his physician?" Gowder asked in his motion.

Evidence presented during the trial indicated Heaton routinely wrote Gowder two or three prescriptions for oxycodone monthly between 2013 and 2015, and that Gowder regularly filled the prescriptions at pharmacies in three states.

During the trial, Gowder was represented by Steven Sadow, an Atlanta attorney who has represented, among others, rap stars TI, Usher and Rick Ross, NFL player Ray Lewis, and attorney Howard K. Stern.

Sadow filed a motion to "sever" the defendants in May 2018 after Heaton and Gowder were federally indicted together

in April 2018. Had the motion been granted, it would have resulted in separate trials for the men instead of a single jury trial.

In March 2019, Sadow requested a bench trial asking the judge to be the one to determine his client's guilt or innocence, not the jury. At the time, Sadow told the judge they were no longer seeking severance.

Judge Story denied the request for a bench trial, and in September 2019, Sadow added to his motion to sever, stating that Heaton would "in all likelihood" testify on Gowder's behalf if Heaton's separate trial was first. The judge denied the request to sever.

In his latest motion, Gowder writes that the court erred in denying those requests, effectively denying him a fair trial.

"The only way that Defendant could have had the benefit of Dr. James Heaton's testimony was if the joint trial was severed," he wrote. "With adequate information, there is thus a 'reasonable probability' that if the trial court had granted severance, the jury would have found Defendant not guilty for lack of sufficient evidence."

In an additional argument to void his conviction and sentence, Gowder wrote that he had been denied his Sixth Amendment right to effective assistance of counsel, including regarding the appeals process.

The deadline to file an appeal for a federal criminal conviction is 14 days following the notice of judgment, which in this case was the sentencing hearing.

"After the jury guilty verdict, Defendant's then trial

attorney informed Defendant that it would require additional funding to pursue the case further," he wrote. "Defendant informed said attorney that he had limited funding."

"Thus, Defendant assumed that the attorney would go no further with the case, including the filing of the notice of appeal. Therefore, Defendant was left 'entirely' without the assistance of counsel for his notice of appeal, and on appeal."

Quoting several prior U.S. court cases as a basis, Gowder wrote that his attorney had rendered "deficient" performance by failing to inform Defendant that he was entitled to an appeal, and that Defendant could file a pro se Notice of appeal by a simple letter to the court."

As for co-defendant Heaton, he was sentenced to 72 months in prison and also has until May 1 at the earliest to report for the same reason of COVID-19 vaccination. Heaton has appealed his conviction to the 11th District Court of Appeals, a hearing date for which has yet to be set.

As previously reported, Gowder, Heaton and David Gowder - former Union General emergency room director and brother to Mike - were arrested in February 2016 in connection with crimes they would eventually be found federally guilty of committing.

Originally indicted as a co-defendant in the case, David Gowder pleaded guilty to a single count in March 2019. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison in June 2020 and is currently serving his time at a low-security federal facility in Jesup.

# Missing Man Found...from Page 1A

later sleeping in the tower at Brasstown Bald, according to authorities.

This time, the man was reported missing about the middle of last week, last seen April 6 heading north from Walton County, and it wasn't until the end of the week that his vehicle was located at Cupid Falls Park in Young Harris, Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland said.

The search lasted several days, covered ground and air, and even encompassed the Brasstown Bald area some 7 and a half miles away, as

searchers were aware of his history in the area, and rescue workers initiated a CodeRED emergency alert for people to be on the lookout for him.

Fortunately, someone at Brasstown Bald spotted the man April 11 near where he'd been discovered the last time, and he was safely transported by EMS for local medical treatment and is expected to be fine, according to authorities.

When he previously went missing out of Union County, the man had no supplies with him, but this time he brought snacks and a tarp to lie under

in the rain, according to authorities.

Aiding in the rescue effort were Towns County EMS, Emergency Management Agency, Fire Department, Search & Rescue Team, E-911 Center, Sheriff's Office, Young Harris College Police Department and Georgia State Patrol Aviation.

In a final update for the public Sunday, Sheriff Ken Henderson thanked these agencies and all other parties who aided in the search to locate the missing man safely and sound.

# Vaccine Clinics...from Page 1A



**Dr. Samuel "Le" Church of Synergy Health enjoys speaking with guests of his office's vaccine clinics, which Friday featured about 270 participants at Foster Park.** Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Department to make vaccine appointments generally.

Everyone ages 16 and up who wants a COVID-19 vaccine is now eligible to receive one, and supply availability for both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines has increased to the point where anyone who wants one should be able to find an appointment to receive it.

In addition to the Health Departments, many local pharmacies are administering the vaccine, and people need only call around to check

availability and make an appointment.

Synergy Health of Hiawassee is still accepting new signups at ngvax.com, but due to improved vaccine availability in the community, this Friday will be the office's last mass clinic at Foster Park. Moving forward, Synergy's vaccination efforts will take place on a smaller scale.

Per the Georgia Department of Public Health Vaccine Distribution Dashboard, Union and Towns enjoyed the two highest vaccination rates

in the state as of Sunday, April 11, with 25% of Union County residents and 28% of Towns County residents being fully vaccinated.

Also as of April 11, Union County had reported only 14 positive COVID tests in the last two weeks, to Towns County's 7 positive tests. And by press time, there had been no reported COVID deaths in Union since March 19, and none in Towns since March 17.

# Prom...from Page 1A

have to cancel it."

Prom might not have the exact same feel in 2021, but there's a good chance it will prove even sweeter than usual due to the very real possibility that it could have been canceled like so much else nationwide, and Perren said he's heard all kinds of positive feedback and support.

For Perren, it's imperative the students reach a satisfying conclusion to their high school journeys, including all the usual formative events and honors that usher children into adulthood, and present conditions thankfully deem this possible.

"It is important for us to allow these kids to have some sort of normalcy," Perren said. "Prom is something that we have done for these kids every year except for last year. They can't really have other proms

in the future. They will only be seniors once. It is important to give them that opportunity."

Ahead of the date, Perren remains confident prom will go off without a hitch, and he is happy to report on the tremendous success of the current year despite COVID-19, with school cases and quarantines on the decline and students having in-person classes every day of the week.

"What we have seen is that the virus is not something that is spread by kids as much," Perren said. "We feel pretty comfortable in what we are doing there. In fact, we haven't had a case or quarantine at the High School in over a month, and I don't think a student has had a case since December."

Compared to other schools across the state and country, Perren feels that Towns County has successfully

provided students with the best education possible while keeping them safe. Looking ahead, he's optimistic that next school year will be even more business as usual.

"We never got it all at one time," Perren said, "and one thing that I am really proud of is that we were able to keep our school open and offer the opportunity for more students to come to school."

"I think that was really important, as you look around and hear all the things in the news about the mental health issues of kids who have not been able to go to school. Also, that they are falling behind."

"For us to be able to do this here in a little school is something that is important for our students and our community."

Following prom, seniors will be in the home stretch of their High School careers in preparation for graduation in May.