

The Badge

June 2024
Issue Twenty-Two



Towns County Sheriff's Office News



From the desk of Sheriff Ken Henderson:

Thank you to the wonderful citizens of this community for allowing me to continue to serve you for another four years. I appreciate every Towns County citizen.

I assure you we will continue our drug initiatives and continue to make Towns County a county where the drug dealers and cartels want to avoid. The safety and security of our residents and visitors is

top priority.

As we approach summer, the Towns County Sheriff's Office is preparing for one of the busiest times of the year. With more people outdoors and participating in activities, it is important to take precautions to ensure the safety of our community. We congratulate all of our Towns County graduates and wish them the best of luck in the future, whether away at college, starting a career, or somewhere in between.

Due to the increased outdoor activities, travel, and visitors during the summer, remind all in your family to follow traffic laws and never drive under the influence.

I want to remind everyone to prioritize safety during this season of relaxation and fun. Whether you are enjoying a barbeque with friends or family, hiking, swimming, or enjoying a day on Lake Chatuge, please be mindful of your surroundings and take steps to avoid accident or injury.

The Towns County Sheriff's Office would like to wish everyone a safe, healthy, and happy start to the summer season.

Congratulations again to all our 2024 graduates!

Sheriff Ken Henderson wins re-election by a landslide!!!!!!
Congratulations Sheriff, here is to another four years.
PROMISES MADE. PROMISES KEPT.



Towns County Sheriff's Office Mission Statement

Our Mission is to modernize the Towns County Sheriff's Office and to provide quality enforcement services using proactive enforcement, community partnership and problem solving, which will create a safe, secure, and desirable living and working environment for our citizens and visitors.

MAY DRUG ARRESTS:



ALL PERSONS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY IN A COURT OF LAW.

MAY DRUG ARRESTS

*****All individuals are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law*****

A month-long investigation by drug investigators and uniform patrol led to a traffic stop on Highway 66 over the weekend.

A suspected drug dealer, Timothy Gavin, was a passenger in a car that was stopped by Uniform Patrol Sgt. Justin Osborn Sunday morning May 5th.

Probable cause was established, and a search of the vehicle was conducted with an amount of a controlled substance being located.

Timothy John Gavin, age 26, Blairsville, was arrested and charged with:

Felony Distribution of a Controlled Substance

Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance

Failure to Wear Seatbelt

Towns County drug investigators contacted Union County Sheriff's Office Major Shawn Dyer Sunday afternoon. A search warrant was obtained by Union County Sheriff's Office Drug Unit and was executed along with Towns County Sheriff's Office at Gavin's residence in Union County.

An amount of Methamphetamine, guns, and cash were recovered.

Charges are forthcoming by Union County Sheriff's Office.



On Saturday, May 11th, Towns County Sheriff's Office deputies assisted the Georgia Highway Patrol on a traffic stop on Highway 66.

Probable cause was established, and a search of the vehicle resulted in the confiscation of Methamphetamine, which field-tested positive, and drug related objects.

Anthony Howard Holcombe, age 54, Homeless was arrested and charged with:

- Felony Possession of Methamphetamine
- Felony Possession of a Firearm/Knife During the Commission of a Crime
- Possession and Use of Drug Related Objects

Joshua Michael Runge-Koss, age 34, Clayton was also arrested and charged with:

- Felony Possession of Methamphetamine
- Felony Possession of a Firearm/Knife During the Commission of a Crime

• Possession and Use of Drug Related Objects

Sheriff Ken Henderson commends the Georgia Highway Patrol and Towns County Sheriff's Office working together to keep our community safe.



On Monday evening, May 13th, Towns County Sheriff's deputies responded to a call to assist EMS with an individual on the side of Highway 76E. During the call, probable cause was developed to search for drugs. A search was executed for the individual's person and an amount of Methamphetamine, which field-tested positive, was confiscated along with drug related objects.

Rebecca Lynn Griffis, age 37, Homeless, was arrested and charged with:

- Felony Possession of Methamphetamine
- Possession and Use of Drug Related Objects

Sheriff Ken Henderson is pleased with the Sheriff's Office deputies continuing the war on drugs.



ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT DETAINED – WANTED BY I.C.E.

Sunday, May 5th, Alfonso Esteban Botista was booked into the Towns County Detention Center, having been charged with Driving Under the Influence, Driving without a Valid License, and brake light/turn signal violations. Sheriff Ken Henderson notified detention officers to contact immigration officials (ICE) to verify Botista's immigration status. It was discovered Botista is an undocumented immigrant. Botista also has warrants out of Florida for Failure to Appear. I.C.E. placed an immigration hold on Botista and will be picking him up. Sheriff Henderson is committed to keeping our community safe.



BURGLARY SUSPECT APPREHENDED

On May 25th at 6:00 AM The Oaks Restaurant reported a burglary. The manager stated that someone had entered the restaurant during the night and forced open the safe and stole an undisclosed amount of cash. During the investigation, it was discovered that Deputy Vonya Baldwin had been patrolling the area at 3:00 AM and noticed an unattended motorcycle parked on Lakeview Drive near The Ridges complex which was registered to an employee at the restaurant.

Further investigation and canvass of the area revealed the employee and motorcycle were on video from an area surveillance camera.

The employee, identified as Richard Lee Hall, age 38, Young Harris, was arrested and charged with Felony Burglary in the Second Degree, and is being held without bond. The money was recovered and returned to the owner. Sheriff Ken Henderson commends Deputy Baldwin for his dedication and commitment to his patrol duties. His observation and detail to his duty, by running the tag on an unattended motorcycle which quickly identified the suspect enabling a swift arrest.



ARRESTS DURING JOINT OPERATION WITH CLAY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Towns County Sheriff's Office Drug Investigator received multiple complaints regarding drug activity at Windy Hill gas station on Hwy 66, near the NC/GA state line.

During the investigation, store videos revealed a drug transaction between the store clerk and another individual. The clerk, identified as Rodney Alan Powell, age 46, Marble NC was arrested, and a search of the individual resulted in Methamphetamine on his person. He is charged with:

- Felony Possession of Methamphetamine
- Possession of Drug Related Objects

The other individual was identified as Gary Lee Hamrick, age 52, Warne, NC.

Clay County Sheriff's Office was contacted, and a search warrant was issued and served at 983 Ford Road, Warne, NC by Clay County Sheriff's Office and Towns County Sheriff's Office.

During the search, Methamphetamine, which field-tested positive, was confiscated from another occupant at the residence identified as Charlene Whisenant, age 71, Warne NC. Whisenant was arrested by Clay County Sheriff's Office and charged with Possession of Methamphetamine. She received a \$10,000 secure bond for Possession of Methamphetamine and Maintaining a Dwelling for the Keeping of Controlled Substance.

Gary Lee Hamrick, age 42, Warne NC was arrested by Clay County Sheriff's Office for Felony Probation Violation and is being held without bond.

Towns County Sheriff's Office has pending narcotics charges for Gary Lee Hamrick.

Towns County Sheriff Ken Henderson and Clay County Sheriff Mark Buchanan are pleased with the joint effort and coordination by both offices' investigators and deputies. The working relationship between both agencies on closely related criminal activity will enhance the safety of our communities.



TOWNS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE CHAPLAIN PROGRAM

The Towns County Sheriff's Office is excited to announce that Senior Chaplain Anthony Dye, Pastor of Mt Zion Baptist Church, and Chaplain Nate Browning, Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, recently attended the Annual Georgia Sheriff's Association Chaplaincy Conference and Training. Chaplain Dyeana Portlock, of Christ the King Church, will attend additional training in the future.

The mission of Law Enforcement Chaplains is to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of the sheriff's employees, their families, and members of the community.

Chaplains serve the entire sheriff's office, from uniform patrol to detention officers. They specialize in caring for the unique needs of the law enforcement family, providing services such as: Spiritual Counseling, Death Notifications,

Post- Shooting Counseling, Disaster Response Teams, Family Relationship Enhancement, Weddings, Memorial Services, and Post-Traumatic Stress Counseling.



SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER CPT. DONNIE JARRARD RETIRES

Sheriff Ken Henderson and his staff along with the students and staff at Towns County High School gathered in the cafeteria this morning to say thank you and goodbye to Corporal Donnie Jarrard.

Corporal Jarrard has spent the last 30 years of his life dedicated to law enforcement with the last 12 years protecting this community’s most important citizens, the students at Towns County High School.

In his role as the School Resource Officer, Corporal Jarrard developed strong working relationships with the staff and most importantly the students.

Logging thousands of hours on the road with the Towns County Indians sports teams, he has established himself as one of the Indians biggest fans and has cheered for the student athletes on and off the field. His love for the students at Towns County High School has gone above and beyond and he has been a familiar face and involved in almost all of the school’s extracurricular events.

Corporal Jarrard has devoted his time mentoring students past and present and has always on a minute’s notice been there to lend a listening ear or offer help whenever called upon.

Sheriff Ken Henderson addressed the faculty and students and simply stated “he will be impossible to replace and will be terribly missed.”

Join us in commending Corporal Jarrard on a stellar career in law enforcement and congratulations on his retirement.

“May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of his hand.” –Irish Blessing



STOP THE BLEED

May was National Stop the Bleed Month and May 23 was National Stop the Bleed Day.

A bleeding injury can happen anywhere. We have all seen it happen too often—on the news or in everyday life. Life-threatening bleeding can happen to people injured in serious accidents or disasters. Knowing how to control bleeding caused by serious injury is important for everyone, especially first responders on the scene.

Stop the Bleed is a national campaign designed to train and empower law enforcement to help in bleeding emergencies before professional help arrives. Hiwassee native and Stop the Bleed certified instructor Derrick Moody is a professional Flight Paramedic as well as the Regional Business Manager for Air Methods with close to 25 years of experience and has worked closely with other agencies over the years in various different capacities. Last

night Derrick graciously gave a Stop the Bleed class free of charge to Towns County Sheriff's Office Deputies and Criminal Investigations Division.

"We are grateful to Derrick for volunteering his time to teach this important course," said Sheriff Ken Henderson, "It is an excellent course and will benefit our deputies and CID in the case of an emergency."



CONGRATUATIONS SENIORS

Sheriff Ken Henderson and the Towns County Sheriff's Office escorted the Towns County High School Senior Graduating Class Parade from the high school to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds for a cookout celebration. The parade and cookout are a fun event to recognize these great seniors for their hard work and honor their achievements.

The community's involvement with the 2024 graduating class is very special to Towns County.

Sheriff Ken Henderson would like to express how proud he is of each student and wish everyone the best of luck as you take the next step toward your career.

Congratulations Towns County Indians Class of 2024!!!





If you know someone who would like to receive the monthly newsletter, please have them contact Community Relations Coordinator Jill Gittens at (706) 896-4444 or jgittenstcso@townscountyga.com

Towns County Sheriff's Office
4070 State Highway 339
Young Harris, GA 30582



(706) 896-4444
www.townscountysheriff.org