

Jail Certification...from Page 1A

"During this process, the JTO will train, observe and evaluate the progress of each trainee.

"The mission of each JTO is to give each trainee the

utmost opportunity to succeed in his training, correct the trainee when mistakes are made, and maximize the safety of the trainee.

"In addition, this is the JTO's introduction to leadership and advisory skills. This 40-hour training course will provide the JTO the knowledge and skills required as they prepare for future supervisory positions."

By completing the training and earning their certifications, the Georgia Sheriffs' Association said that Wheeler and Franklin had demonstrated "excellent knowledge of jail operations," exhibited "a desirable work ethic and commitment to excellence," and possessed "very good interpersonal skills and a willingness to train newly-appointed jail officers."

Wheeler and Franklin are the first jail supervisors in Union County to become Jail Training Officers, and as such, they are now better equipped to evaluate and assist new jailers who are adjusting to the dynamics of maintaining equilibrium inside a jail environment.

"This program is designed to provide knowledge and skills to new employees, which in turn will provide for a much more effective and efficient workplace within the jail," UCSO Capt. Doug Loyd said. "They took this 40-hour course Aug. 5-9, and we want to recognize them for passing this course, which will go into their training file and records."

Loyd has many responsibilities at the Sheriff's Office, including overseeing Uniformed Patrol, and much of his job has to do with ensuring that deputies receive regular evaluation and training.

Which is why he understands how vital it is that newly-certified Jail Training Officers Wheeler and Franklin

know how best to evaluate, train and screen folks wanting to work at the jail.

"Unfortunately, as we know in the world today, there's a lack of screening in training in some fields, and some people that are hired shouldn't be hired," Loyd said. "This training helps make sure that we're hiring good quality

people that are cut out for the job, because this line of work is not for everybody."

The Union County Jail is a 54-bed facility that can fit up to 70 inmates with portable bedding before needing to house inmates in neighboring county jails, which becomes necessary from time to time throughout each year.

City Council...from Page 1A

Local stakeholders have said they are hopeful that Arby's will make a decision before the fall weather moves in to minimize impacts to construction.

In other news, the council heard the first reading of the Small Wireless Facilities and Antennae Ordinance covering Verizon's upcoming installation of equipment in Downtown Blairsville.

The installation will include about 15 sets of minicells, or signal extenders, in the downtown area to meet the growing needs of 4G communications in Blairsville proper.

Verizon's plan is to use existing power poles and traffic light poles to attach their equipment for "densification" of the Blairsville network.

Agreements with the Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation and Georgia Department of Transportation are in place, though Verizon would have the option of installing their own poles if necessary.

The council will hold the second reading and a vote deciding the fate of the ordinance at the next regular City Council meeting on Oct. 1.

Also in the meeting, the council adopted the Roundabout Lighting Assistance Agreement Resolution to accept an agreement with GDOT for lighting at Blue Ridge Street and Murphy Highway.

GDOT will purchase and install the lighting equipment, and the city will maintain it and cover the energy costs.

City Clerk Kaye McCann informed the council that the city could save about \$37,000 on group insurance costs for the Fiscal Year 2020 if they approved raising employee deductibles from \$500 to \$1,500. The council approved the change unanimously.

The council unanimously ratified the hiring of Bill Blackford as a part-time airport employee, with Airport Manager Aaron Mannheim stating that Blackford was a quick study.

Civil Air Patrol 152nd Composite Squadron, Georgia Wing, Deputy Commander of Cadets Kenneth Stanger addressed the council.

"The Civil Air Patrol is a very large organization, but



Blairsville City Council Members Betty Easter and Tony Dyer at City Hall on Sept. 3. Photo by Mark Smith

we need help," Stanger said. "I'm rebuilding the 152nd and, like you know, we're open for business."

"Our Squadron has nine Cadets and three Senior Members and belongs to the Georgia Wing. We provide an avenue for young people to learn to lead, learn to follow, have self-confidence, get fit, fly in airplanes, learn about aerospace, emergency services and help out in the community."

Added Stanger, "We try to do an event one weekend a month that falls in line with our teachings."

The four core values that the Civil Air Patrol teaches to cadets are integrity, volunteer services, excellence and respect, Stanger said.

"We welcome visitors on Thursday nights from 6-8 p.m., but they should arrive about 15 minutes early so we have a chance to talk with them," Stanger said.

The Civil Air Patrol Headquarters are located at the old terminal inside the Blairsville Municipal Airport.

Union County Sheriff's Deputy Jonathan Hacker also addressed the council on Sept. 3, asking that council members consider installing a speed bump on Ed Mauney Drive.

Hacker also suggested something be done to re-route truck traffic away from Ed Mauney Drive.

Conley said he and the council were aware of the problems and would give it serious consideration and contact him regarding solutions.

Several members of the Lake Nottely Improvement

Association, along with Nottely Marina Manager Moriah Doucette, attended the Sept. 3 meeting, and lakeside property owner and Association Member Ross Malme acted as spokesman for the group.

Malme addressed the council regarding the group's concerns about the city processing landfill leachate at the Blairsville Wastewater Treatment Plant, with the treated water going into the lake.

Plant Superintendent Jody Cook responded that anything processed by the plant and put into the creek must be approved by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

"They set our permit limits as to what concentration that it can be," Cook said. "The leachate, the main thing in it is ammonia. We have the extra air capacity, because that's what it takes, is a lot of air to treat the ammonia. We've got the capacity to do it."

Cook said he had heavy metals testing done on the leachate and that there were no public health concerns detected.

Association Member Lynn Varian spoke up and said that the group was concerned about the rumors that were going around about the leachate process.

Varian said she and other lakeside property owners would like to have had some prior notice and explanation about what the city was doing before they started the process and asked that, in the future, the city be more informative.

Suicide Prevention...from Page 1A

Blanchard hopes that the presentations and community outreach will help the organization find fellow veterans who are at risk of suicide and get them the support they need.

"I'm also hoping that the people that come to the first few presentations will also know where else would be great to present to so that we can get the word out," Blanchard said. "Suicide is a very special mental health condition."

"We don't know anywhere near what we need to know about suicide. We have a presentation on Thursday, Sept. 12th, and to be quite frank, not a lot have people have signed up."

According to Blanchard, the best way for the community to assist with the program and potentially save a veteran's life is to attend the presentations to learn more about mental illness in veterans and to refer people to get the help they need.

"The presentations and this program will continue to go on after this month," Blanchard said. "These issues are year-round. The hope is to go up around Franklin and into Cherokee County (North Carolina) to become more involved there as well."

"It's just best to go to the presentations. We have information at the presentation that people can find if they are more interested in what else they can do, depending on how far they want to go with this."

"This is important, because we don't want people to commit suicide, and we want to help these veterans get what they need so that they don't go that route, because like I said, they are one and a half times more likely to do it."

The second presentation will be Thursday, Sept. 12, at 6:30 p.m. at the Veterans Building in Union County, and the third presentation will be on

Sunday, Sept. 22, at 2 p.m. in the same location.

"Classes are open to everyone, not just veterans," the local American Legion post said, adding that anyone

wishing to attend a class should register with Blanchard by calling 706-745-7201.

"After each class is full, other classes will be scheduled," the post said.

S.A.F.E. Inc. Volunteer Training Workshop



S.A.F.E. Inc. will be holding a volunteer training workshop September 23rd & 24th from 1 - 5 PM and the 25th & 26th from 9 AM - 1 PM.

S.A.F.E. stands for Support in Abusive Family Emergencies, and is the Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Child Advocacy program serving Towns and Union counties since 1989.

There are several areas of need for volunteers: at our emergency shelter, our child advocacy center, and at both our thrift stores. If you would like to register for this training, or would like more information about volunteering with S.A.F.E., please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Vicki Franklin at 706-379-1901, or email her at vfranklin@safeservices.org.