

Train...from Page 1A

classes include every step, from the initial moment of conflict to the trauma and emotional effects afterward. It's about knowing how to react when the threat arises, stop the threat, and trying to

find some normalcy in the aftermath.

The training taught officers how to plan and execute high-risk warrants. The officers had to conduct hands on training, as well as

regular class time. The training was conducted both in the daytime and at night.

The classes are part of a multi-class training program to instruct officers on serving high-risk warrants and with proper training, reduce the liabilities of officers and their departments.

This class is a win-win both for the officers and their departments, SSgt. Dyer said.

"The training is the most up-to-date training an officer can get," SSgt Dyer said. "It's also a great deal for the county, because the

training is free. The training academy furnishes the officers' motel rooms and also provides meals for the participants."

Also all items used in training are furnished by the academy, SSgt Dyer said.

The Union County Sheriff's Office is now using

these federal training academies due to the low cost and up to date training programs offered by the academies, SSgt. Dyer said.

Deputies Dyer, Miller, Berry and Daniel are better prepared to face danger.

Fireworks...from Page 1A

of like construction," including Roman Candles.

Also in the meeting, Commissioner Paris accepted matching Accountability Court Grants for Mental Health Court and both North and South Enotah Drug Accountability Courts.

The grants are funded by the state and appropriated by the Georgia General Assembly, with an aim toward keeping the mentally ill and those with drug dependency

issues out of jail.

"The hope is that, over time, the recidivism rate will be reduced, the cost of society and the legal system and the prison system, and the jails and all those costs will be reduced by trying to rehab these folks in a counseling setting," said Commissioner Paris.

Commissioner Paris also appointed three positions within the county: Charles Higgs will be the Union County Representative on the

Avita Community Partners Board of Directors for a three-year term to end on June 30, 2018, and Doris Durbin and Deborah Kendrick were both appointed to the library board for three-year terms to end June 30, 2018.

"I want to thank all three of these for their past service, and appreciate their willingness to continue to serve in these organizations," said Commissioner Paris.

Charter...from Page 1A

sel for their review, to see if they have any changes that they want to make in it," said Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley. "And of course, if there are some changes that they want to make, it will come back to us, and we'll have to go through the process in November and December.

"That's why you get it in so early, so if you have some changes to be made that they want in there, you have time to still have two public hearings and two readings to pass your ordinance again."

Mayor Conley does not anticipate any recommended changes to the proposed charter by the OLC.

Once the OLC deems the charter acceptable, the final step will be for Blairsville City Council to vote to send the charter before the Georgia General Assembly for approval during the 2016 Legislative Session.

"The old charter was just so out of date that in it, it had our elections being held in September, information like that in it," Mayor Conley said after the first reading in June. "One of the things it helped us to get up to date for the police department, on everything that they have to do



pertaining to what current law is from the state.

"It gives the city more ability to have more power to be able to have more services for the city if the city chooses to do so and is financially in shape to do so, a whole lot more services than what we do now."

The new charter will pave the way for the city to establish a garbage service in the future, for example, or its own animal control, as far as the potential for providing new services to the city.

Also in the meeting, the Blairsville Police Department discussed with the mayor and city council the use of "a tag reading system that is mounted to a vehicle to pull the history of a tag," according to city hall. "The police department will be able to try this device for 30 days without charge."

Further developments were made in the Blairsville Downtown Development Authority's Haralson Project, which will replace the old ramp leading from Highway 515 to Pat Haralson Drive with an extended ramp.

City council discussed whether to levy mills to cover expenses incurred during the DDA's project, or to instead continue using city surplus money.

The council voted unanimously not to levy a tax for the DDA's Fiscal Year 2015, but instead to adjust the General Budget to accommodate interest payments.

When the project is completed, the new off ramp will allow spaces for businesses to build closer to the square, and the area will also provide more greenspace around the downtown area.

Warrants...from Page 1A

April 1 in Blue Ridge by two agents with the Zell Miller Drug Task Force who were at Walmart in Blue Ridge, conducting a separate investigation, Commander Brandon Owens said.

During the separate investigation, task force agents learned that Gowder had come in earlier that day and attempted to pass two prescriptions (at Walmart), Owens said.

"Those prescriptions were denied and the agents started looking into it."

The agents discovered that Gowder, a doctor at Union General Hospital in Blairsville, had allegedly passed another prescription at Ingles in Blue Ridge, Owens said.

"The agents went to Ingles (in Blue Ridge) and learned that he would be back around noon to pick (the pre-

scription) up," Owens said. "When he came back to Ingles, they spoke to him and placed him under arrest."

His Blue Ridge arrest launched an investigation by Union County authorities.

Union County Sheriff's Detective Lt. Chad Deyton secured search warrants for

records from local pharmacies.

The yield from those search warrants prompted the six felony arrest warrants on Monday, authorities said.

Gowder is being held at Union County Jail pending arraignment and a posting bail is set, authorities said.

Indict...

from Page 1A

property; public indecency, public drunkenness.

Edwin Walter King Jr., first-degree burglary.

Alexander Valdimir Kowaliuk, second-degree burglary; criminal attempt to commit a felony.

Kyle Thomas Lance, first-degree burglary.

Larry Ward Law III, second-degree burglary; theft by taking; first-degree burglary; criminal trespass.

Joshua Gerald Mashburn, possession of a controlled substance.

Julie Diana McPherson, first-degree burglary; criminal attempt to commit a felony; criminal trespass.

Robin Lee Nash, filing false documents; making a false statement; endangering a security interest.

Laura Lynn Opfer, entering an automobile; theft by taking; criminal attempt to commit a felony.

Jessica Shanae Phillips, possession of methamphetamine.

Jessica Phillips, tampering with evidence; obstruction; possession of a controlled substance.

Christopher Dixon Redfern, theft by taking; theft by receiving stolen property; second-degree criminal damage to property.