

The Badge

February 2023
Issue Six



Towns County Sheriff's Office News



From the desk of Sheriff Ken Henderson:

We have completed our second year as your Towns County Sheriff and have gotten a lot accomplished since we took over in January of 2021. Most of that credit must go to the more than 40 employees working within our Office. Everyone has stepped up and done a great job, and the citizens of our county can be very proud to have a sheriff's office that truly cares about them and their safety.

We recently received a \$26,000 grant from the Governor's Office of Highway Safety to equip our patrol vehicles with in-car computers. This will allow our deputies to perform their duties more efficiently and effectively.

In 2022, we arrested 104 individuals on drug and drug related charges. This is the largest number we have seen since taking office.

Thank you, citizens of Towns County, for all the support you have given the sheriff's office and the many tips we have received. We must continue to work together to make this county a safer place to live.

If you would like someone to come to your community and speak to your group, or help you set up a neighborhood watch program, please call our office at (706) 896-4444.

If you have information that will help us solve a crime, or information about a drug dealer, you can send us an anonymous tip on our website:

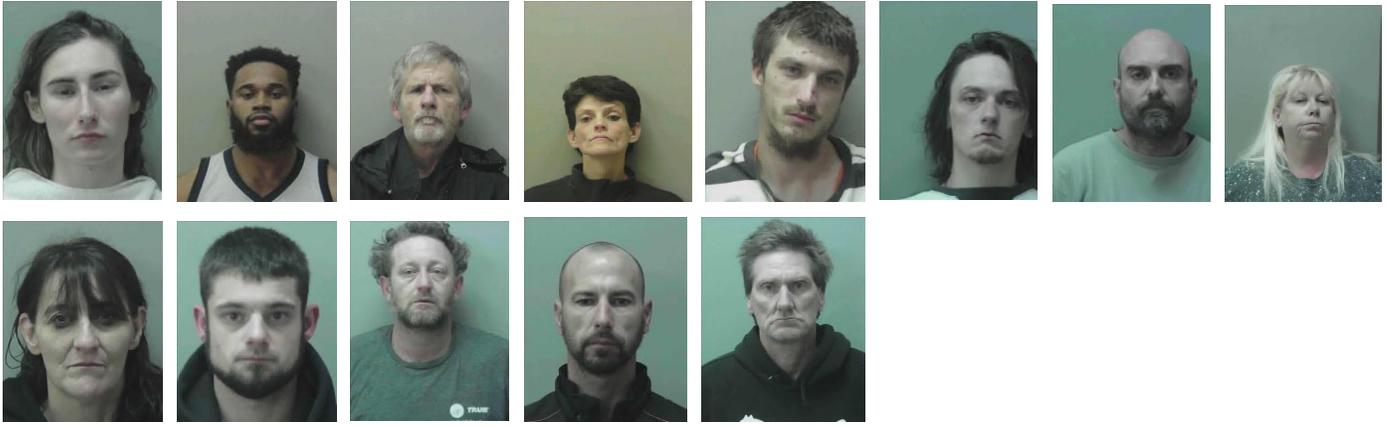
www.townscountysheriff.org.

We look forward to continuing to work together with you and serve you with the highest level of professionalism.

Sheriff's Law Enforcement Academy

We are now accepting applications for our next Sheriff's Law Enforcement Academy which will be held Spring 2023. Dates will be announced soon. This is a 10-week course offered to all Towns County residents, employees, and business owners that are age 21 and over. During the course presenters from the Towns County Sheriff's Office and guest speakers from other partnership agencies will provide a better understanding of operations through hands-on training and law enforcement knowledge. You can pick up an application at the Towns County Detention Center or you can print one by going to <https://www.townscountysheriff.org/tcsa>. Completed applications may be dropped off at the Towns County Detention Center. For more information you can contact us at (706) 896-4444

JANUARY DRUG ARRESTS:



All persons are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Separate Traffic Stops Net Illegal Drug Activity

On January 2, 2023, during the Towns County Sheriff's Office concentrated patrol initiatives, a deputy conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Hwy. 76 and Hwy. 288.

K-9 Dakota alerted on the vehicle. A search of the vehicle resulted in drugs being located. The drugs field tested positive for Cocaine.

Dana Michelle Henson, age 43, Hiawassee, was arrested and charged with Felony Possession of a Schedule II Controlled Substance and Possession of Drug Related Objects.

Robert Edwin Jones, age 53, Hiawassee was charged with Possession of Drug Related Objects. Sheriff Ken Henderson stated that concentrated patrols are very effective in combating drug and criminal activity.



In a separate traffic stop on January 12th, Towns County Sheriff's Drug Investigators, Uniform Patrol and K-9 units initiated a traffic stop on Hwy 17 and Hwy 69.

The vehicle was searched and Schedule I Mushrooms, Drug Related Objects and three handguns were confiscated.

Ronny Lynn Sanders, age 32, Murphy NC was arrested and charged with Possession of a controlled substance, Possession of Firearm by Convicted Felon, Possession of Firearm/Knife During Commission of a Crime, Possession and Use of Drug Related Objects, and Too Fast for Conditions.



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Sheriff's Technology Fund

Thursday, January 12th, Sheriff Ken Henderson was presented with a check from the Summer Heat Music Festival Committee. The Committee, formed by Towns County resident Wayne Fiorito, worked tirelessly to organize the music festival to raise money for the Sheriff's Technology Fund.

As a result, despite a very rainy day, the all-day festival raised \$15,000 to equip the Sheriff's Office vehicles with in-car computers. This new equipment will allow our deputies to answer calls for service more efficiently.

Towns County Sheriff's Office was awarded a \$26,000 grant to purchase the computers, mounts, and printers for the vehicles. The money raised during the music festival will be used to purchase the necessary mobile software. Thanks to the grant and fundraiser, all the necessary equipment was purchased at no expense to taxpayers.

Sheriff Henderson appreciates the hard work of the committee members, everyone who helped organize the event, and everyone who donated and came out to support the Towns County Sheriff's Office.



Sheriff's Office Drone

Sheriff Ken Henderson would like to thank Jim and Sandy Hazen for their generous donation that enabled the Towns County Sheriff's Office to purchase a drone valued at \$50,000. The drone is state of the art with all the bells and whistles.

Drones in Law Enforcement have become a critical element and continue to evolve.

Drones can be used in searches for lost persons, search and rescue, patrol deployment operations, hostage situations, and drug surveillance.

Sgt. Robbie Rich is the Sheriff's Office's designated trained pilot for the drone.

Sending drones into high risk situations to assess situations without having to expose deputies to unnecessary risks.

The use of drones can save lives and assist in officer safety operations.



Constitutional Officer Association of Georgia Scholarship (COAG) at Towns County High School

Towns County Sheriff Ken Henderson addressed a class of Seniors participating in the Constitutional Officers Association of Georgia (COAG) Scholarship at Towns County High School.

Topics of discussion included civic issues, along with the Sheriff's duties and responsibilities.

Teacher Brooke Whitt narrated the discussion which was very informative with all students in attendance participating.



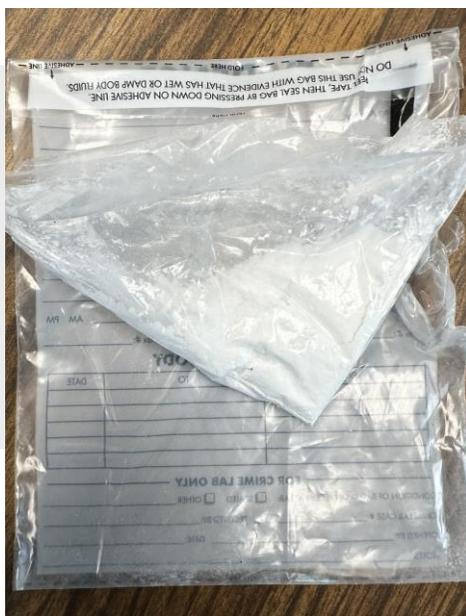
Pure Raw Fentanyl Found in Towns County

Tuesday, January 17th, The Towns County Sheriff's Office Investigators, and uniform patrol intercepted 10.5g of pure raw Fentanyl, which field-tested positive.

The Fentanyl was targeted for the Towns County community.

Sheriff Ken Henderson stated Fentanyl is a highly dangerous and deadly drug and glad we are getting these dangerous drugs out of our community.

This investigation is continuing.



State Senator Bo Hatchett Visits Towns County

Wednesday, January 18 State Senator Bo Hatchett visited Towns County citizens at Main Street Grill. He updated everyone on some of the Bills currently on the Senate floor as well informing every one of the new budget that was adopted.

After that, he opened the floor for questions, of which there were quite a few.

Sheriff Ken Henderson and Chief Deputy Gene Moss were on hand to meet and welcome Senator Hatchett.



WAR ON DRUGS CONTINUES:



Across Northeast Georgia, Fentanyl and Methamphetamines have been devastating to our area. Violent criminal drug cartels are responsible for drug smuggling into the United States.

Sheriff Ken Henderson and staff are committed to eliminating and controlling these extremely dangerous synthetic opioids and Fentanyl in our County, with officers working diligently to confront these issues and disrupt the supply and sales within our community.

The Sheriff's Office is targeting known high-level drug traffickers and local drug dealers who sell this poison and create further addiction as we continue to serve and protect to the best of our ability for Towns County.

Towns County Sheriff's Office arrested 84 individuals for felony drug charges in 2021. The number of arrested increased to 104 individuals in 2022. This is a 23.8% increase in one year.

Sheriff Henderson stated, "This increase reflects the impact on drug suppliers and dealers in Towns County. These drug arrests are due to hard work and are a reflection on the Sheriff's Office staff and deputies."

“Buy Bust” Nets Methamphetamine

Tuesday evening, January 17th, Towns County Sheriff's Investigators set up a control 'buy bust' for narcotics. As a result, Tracy Joy Shook age 52, Hayesville NC was arrested. Sheriff's Investigators confiscated Adderall which is a Schedule II Control Substance.

During the arrest, Nathan Allen Lemay, age 50, Hayesville NC was also arrested. A search of his person revealed a large amount of a substance appearing to be Methamphetamine. The substance field-tested positive for Methamphetamine laced with Fentanyl.

Tracy Joy Shook was charged with Felony Possession of a Schedule II Controlled Substance with intent to sell/distribute and Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance.

Nathan Allen Lemay was charged with Felony Possession of Methamphetamine, and Felony Crossing Guard Lines with Weapon/Drugs/Intoxicants.

Sheriff Ken Henderson is pleased with our drug investigators and their commitment to our war on drugs.



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Evening Traffic Stop finds Methamphetamine and Cocaine

A traffic stop conducted on the evening of Tuesday, January 23rd on Highway 76 at Friendship Road. Probable cause was determined, and the driver consented to a search of the vehicle, which resulted in the confiscation of Methamphetamine laced with Fentanyl and Cocaine; both field-tested positive.

Karen Cheryl Bryant, age 56, of Morganton GA was arrested and charged with:

- Felony Possession of Methamphetamine
- Felony Possession of a Controlled Substance (Cocaine)
- Felony Possession of a Firearm during the Commission of a Crime
- DUI – Drugs
- Possession and Use of Drug Related Objects
- Failure to Maintain Lane

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North Georgia Elder Abuse Multi-Agency Training

North Georgia Elder Abuse Task Force, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and Towns County Sheriff's Office provided training for several Law Enforcement agencies throughout Georgia.

The training was for responding officers and investigators to be better equipped to handle elder and disabled adults who are possibly being scammed or abused.

The training was a five-hour block for P.O.S.T. certification credit.

The event was held at the Towns County Recreation Center and was attended by about 70 law enforcement personnel from several agencies including Towns County Sheriff's deputies, Sheriff, and Command staff.

Sheriff Ken Henderson is concerned about the safety and welfare of our elderly population and through training, we gain knowledge of the newest and most recent scams, along with new ways to detect abuse and neglect that target our elderly citizens.



Towns County Sheriff's Office Auxiliary

Have you ever wanted to volunteer and help in your community but didn't know where to start? Consider joining our Sheriff's Auxiliary. Auxiliary can be utilized to assist with security, crowd control, traffic youth education, and crime prevention programs. Auxiliaries *are not* used in place of law enforcement personnel; however, they may be used in a low-profile way to supplement their efforts. Utilizing Auxiliaries to their full potential provides a labor cost saving for the Agency. TCSO Auxiliary members may participate in assisting with security at the Anderson Music Hall, assist during the Sheriff's Christmas Parade and Shop with the Sheriff; among other events.

If you are interested in joining the Towns County Sheriff's Office Auxiliary you can find the application on our website at www.townscountysheriff.org; or you may pick one up at the Sheriff's Office, located at 4070 State Highway 339, Young Harris.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Community Relations Coordinator Jill Gittens at (706) 896-4444 or jgittenstcso@townscountyga.com

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

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