

# Sheriff...continued from Page 1A

office is inviting parents who would like to benefit from Give-A-Gift to fill out an application for assistance.

"Anyone who is needing assistance can come in to the sheriff's office Dec. 5 through Dec. 9 to make their Christmas wish list," said Ginger Carey with the sheriff's office, noting that arrangements for pickup will be made afterward.

One of the best things about the Give-A-Gift Program is that it's all about providing children with the best possible experiences on Christmas morning, regardless of the source of giving, meaning that parents can just give the gifts to

their children without having to say that they came from the sheriff's office.

People looking to donate gifts should bring in new and unwrapped gifts, excluding weapons, guns, knives, and their toy counterparts.

A particular area of need for the Give-A-Gift Program is the older children, such as donations of sports equipment, skateboards, craft kits, items for boys and girls.

Of course, the county has gotten bigger since the program began in 2001, which translates into greater need among the youngest and most hopeful residents of Union

County.

"Thankfully, we've had an influx of generosity (with that growth)," said Carey. "People are giving more, so that's helped. A lot of donations have come along with that - with a lot of growth comes a lot of need."

Local churches, civic groups and individuals pitch in each year to make Give-A-Gift a success, though that success is never guaranteed - each donation is a precious gift that the sheriff's office is thankful to receive on behalf of the children of the county.

Just last week, Joy Scaffa of Grayson, who has a home in Trackrock, dropped off a load of toys to the sheriff's office. She is a Give-A-Gift veteran, having become involved

several years back after seeing the sheriff's office shopping for kids in Walmart.

"I just don't like to see children go without Christmas," said Scaffa, on why she collects toys year-round for Union County children.

Those who want to give but are unsure of what to buy can drop off cash or a check instead at the Union County Sheriff's Office, located at 378 Beasley St. in Blairsville. Also,

feel free to call the office to see what they're in need of at (706) 439-6066.

Another way to give is at the Vogel State Park Tree Lighting and Christmas Program, sponsored each year by local churches.

The annual tree lighting will take place on Saturday, Dec. 10, with festivities - including Santa, hayrides, caroling, bonfires, etc. - beginning at 4 p.m., while the

tree lighting will occur closer to 7 p.m.

Vogel asks that each carload pay \$5 for parking.

Those attending can pitch in to the Give-A-Gift Program by bringing an unwrapped, new gift for a child aged 1 through 12, where a representative of the Union County Sheriff's Office will be available at the front of the park to collect.

# Gowder...continued from Page 1A

trafficking in opium or heroin, and five counts of obtaining a controlled substance by forgery, according to Cherokee County, NC, Sheriff Derrick Palmer at that time.

Previously, Gowder and Dr. Heaton received continuances in their cases from March 28 to April 4 earlier this year, then from April 4 to July 11, and from July 11 to the recent Monday, Nov. 7, administrative session.

Gowder was charged on Feb. 4 in Union County with three counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance,

one count of conspiracy; Heaton was charged with 40 counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances, one count of conspiracy.

Also charged in Union County, Mike Gowder's brother, David Gowder, on 36 counts of fraudulently obtaining a controlled substance, seven counts of unauthorized distribution and dispensation of controlled substances. Three other Gowder family members were charged in connection with the incidents in question.

When asked about these cases in Union County, which did not appear on either of the two sessions of the July Term 2016 Indictments of the Union County Grand Jury, Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley said that his office was currently going through evidence recently provided by the Union County Sheriff's Office.

"We just received a substantial portion of the sheriff's department's investigative file that they've completed," said Langley.

He did add that there will be movement on the Gowders/Heaton case in the "near future," though he said he couldn't comment on when that might be.

The scope of the investigation conducted by the sheriff's office dates back to when David Gowder was arrested in Fannin County in April of 2015, up to and beyond the February 2016 arrests of Gowder, four of his relatives and Dr. Heaton.

According to the authorities, a multiagency investigation is still ongoing in the case.

Agencies involved in the investigation at the time of the arrests were the DEA Tactical Diversion Squad, the DEA Digital Forensics Lab, the Georgia Drugs and Narcotics Agency, the Union County Sheriff's Office, and the Cherokee County NC Sheriff's Office.

# Bob Anderson achieves membership in Raymond James Financial Services 2017 Leaders Council

HIWASSEE, GA - Robert L. "Bob" Anderson III, Financial Advisor with Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., located at 10 West Bell Street, "on the Square", was recently named a member of the 2017 Leaders Council. This marks the sixth consecutive year that Anderson has qualified for this important recognition. Securities are offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRNSIPC.



Robert L. "Bob" Anderson, III annuities and life insurance.

Anderson, who joined Raymond James in 1995, has more than 23 years of experience in the financial services industry. Through his independent firm, Anderson Financial Services, Anderson works with Raymond James to help his clients plan for and work toward meeting their financial goals through the use of a variety of products including stocks, bonds, mutual funds,

Anderson specializes in retirement planning and holds an M.B.A. from Emory University and a B.S. from Auburn University. He lives in Hiwassee with his wife, Tonia, and their two children.

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