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the foot of Brasstown Bald in among the scenic beauty of the Trackrock community of Union County, in the wide-open spaces of Trackrock Campground, it's not very difficult to determine where the Hammer-In is being held.

Just find a parking spot somewhere among the dozens of automobiles surrounding the main office, then follow the rhythmic beating of steel-on-steel hammering – the sound of metal being shaped and molded by the skilled craftsmen at the metal shop.

The two-day event kicked off on the morning of Friday, March 24, and lasted until the evening. On Saturday, the "pings" began around 8 a.m. and once again went all day.

However, at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, a BBQ lunch took place prior to the "Iron in the Hat" raffle that benefits Scottish Rite Children's Hospital.

Each of the craftsmen at the event donated an item into the "hat," and raffle tickets were sold for a shot at selecting the item of the winner's choice.

"Whoever has their ticket drawn gets first dibs at any donated item," said Frank Alexander, one of the event's founders. "Then another ticket



Hammer-Ins are always fun events for the whole family.

is drawn and we go on down the line until each of the items have been chosen."

The 31st Hammer-In will take place in the fall, and though no date has been chosen, Alexander indicated that sometime in late September or early October is usually the target date.

Vendors and craftsmen at the event said that they continue to return each and every spring and fall to an event that features an atmosphere often referred to as "family reunion-like."

"The fellowship is what brings me back," said vendor Kathryn Traylor Presley of Cumming, who has been showcasing and selling her scrimshaw paintings and drawings. "You have knifemakers and different guilds here, and the friendly atmosphere makes it just like one big happy family."

For more details, residents may follow Trackrock Campground on Facebook or visit their website at trackrock.com.

Accident...from Page 1A

unknown reason, traveled into the left westbound lane of SR 515. Mr. Drow overcorrected his steering in an attempt to travel back into the right westbound lane of SR 515.

"The vehicle began to overturn multiple times. Mr. Drow was ejected from the vehicle causing serious injuries. The vehicle Mr. Drow was driving came to a final rest on the shoulder of SR 515 down an embankment," Hedden said.

Drow, 28, was not wearing a seatbelt at the time of the crash, Hedden said.

His family was following behind him at the time of the crash, Hedden said.

Drow was airlifted to Northeast Georgia Medical Center for treatment. He died while receiving that treatment.



Photo/Frank Uhle

Funeral arrangements for Drow were incomplete at press time.

No other vehicles were

involved in the crash, and no other persons were involved in the crash.

City gives Hiwassee Dam youngsters tour of sewer plant

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Blairsville's Wastewater Treatment Plant received a visit from a group of students from Hiwassee Dam High School in Murphy, North Carolina, on Monday, March 20.

The students who toured the plant are studying Advanced Placement Environmental Science, and their teacher, Bethany Sharkey, wanted the students to have a hands-on experience to learn water cycles within a city water system.

"The students had so many questions about how the water is filtrated and how it gets from point A to point B," said Sharkey. "I thought it would be best to bring them to a plant so they could see it happening and learn from people who work with the water everyday."

Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Jody Cook led the tour, explaining about where the water comes from, the equipment used to filter the wastewater, and each stage of the filtrating process.

All of the water processed in the plant comes from residences and businesses within the City of Blairsville, as well as waste from three lift stations that are fed by Walmart, North Georgia Technical College and the Union County Industrial Park.

The plant consists of two Sequencing Batch Reactor tanks, three Aerobic Digestive tanks, a Chlorine Contact Chamber and a Huber Screw Press System – all of which the water passes through before being filtered back into the waterways.

While plant employees physically check the various parts of the plant throughout the day, a computerized system located in the main office of the plant is used to monitor the facility and ensure that it is fully operational at all times.

When the wastewater first reaches the plant, it goes through a screening process. The screening removes large objects like diapers, napkins, sanitary items, face wipes and even plastics and rags that could be in the wastewater that may damage or block equipment in a later stage.

During this process, organic solid matter is also separated from the wastewater



Jody Cook, Blairsville Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent

by putting the wastewater into large sedimentation tanks for the solids to sink to the bottom, creating what is called sludge.

The sludge is continuously collected from the tanks and pumped to a different part of the plant to await further treatment and disposal, away from the filtrated water.

"After the wastewater goes through the SBR tanks, we put them into the digester to break it down even further," said Cook. "Then we'll run the waste through a press to get all of the water out and send it to the landfill."

The water is then moved into another large tank to continue the process of breaking down any excess sludge that may have escaped during the first filtration process. During this stage, air is pumped into the water to encourage bacteria within the tank to break down any remaining sludge.

"A batch comes in and it fills up this tank," said Cook. "Then, it is switched over and fills up the other tank while the other tank is in treatment."



Children from the AP Environmental Science Class at Hiwassee Dam High School.

"You always have to monitor how much food you have coming in for the organisms in the tank, it's a balancing act. You can't say you have so many gallons per minute coming in all the time.

"That's one of the struggles that you're going to have with this type of plant."

After the second filtration process, the wastewater is moved through a sedimentation tank. Any of the remaining sludge that may be left in the water sifts to the bottom of the tank due to the settling of bacterial action. The water at this stage is almost free from harmful substances and chemicals.

Finally, the water undergoes one last filtration to remove any additional particles that might be left before being released back into the waterway.

"All of that is pretty much what we monitor all day, what's going on in the different tanks," said Cook. "We make changes if we need to and make sure that the plant is running smoothly and efficiently."