

Renovation...from Page 1A

and the Downtown Development Authority have for this building.

"We knew exactly what needed to be done with the building, and we knew what it can do for the Downtown area," Wadle said. "The foundation and bones of the building are solid. I knew this was going to be a lot of work. There is such great potential here. You have three units upstairs and two downstairs. We can bring some really unique shops to Blairsville."

Wadle said his design for the building would tie into the city's plans for the remaining Haralson property.

"We'll have two facades, one on the back with

the Georgia 515 entrance, and one for the Downtown entrance," Wadle said. "We need businesses in here that are going to generate foot traffic in Downtown."

Wadle is accepting proposals from entrepreneurs that are interested in locating in the historic building. His general business idea is to generate an ecosystem in Downtown that thrives with foot traffic.

"We want to take a look at the prospective businesses from a business development standpoint," Wadle said. "We want all the businesses in this building to work together to support each other and work cohesively to generate foot traffic on the Square so all the

businesses in town can support each other and be successful.

"We haven't come to an agreement with anyone yet, but, we have a lot of interest," he said. "They're making their proposals and sharing their business ideas. We're going to try to put it all together."

Downtown Development Authority Director Darren Harper said that the historic Ben Carr Office, adjacent to the Kings 5&10 building, will be restored and stay in its current location.

The Union County Historical Society will oversee the Carr Office like it currently oversees the Mock Building in Downtown, Harper said.

Taxes...from Page 1A

said. "It is the responsibility and duty of the tax commissioner to collect all the taxes and distribute them back to the appropriate authorities. The county and school board have set their budgets expecting this money to meet requirements for maintenance and operations."

Commissioner Knight said the Tax Office also is working on an online web service to search, view, and pay property taxes.

"This is expected to be up and running in the next

couple of months," Knight said. "The taxpayers will be able to go online and pay their property tax bill and see how much they owe and if the taxes have been paid."

"This will help landowners with a mortgage escrow account for property taxes to see if their taxes have been paid," Knight said. "This will also provide transparency in public records of who has or has not paid their property taxes."

Commissioner Knight said his first year in office has

been a smooth one.

"This has been a good first year and I have really enjoyed the job," he said. "There are a lot of great people here in Union County and I appreciate the opportunity to serve as your tax commissioner."

"We want everyone coming into this office to receive professional, courteous and reliable service," he said.

"So far I believe the staff and I have been able to accomplish that goal," he said.

4-H...from Page 1A

fund raisers and pay \$5,000 a year for the next three years to supplement the payment of the property," Commissioner Paris said.

The shooting range was given its stamp of approval when the question was raised by one of the more than 100 residents in attendance, "is there anyone here who doesn't support this plan?"

A hush fell over the Union County Jury Assembly Room. Next, heads began to swivel, surveying the room for any raised hands. Not a single arm went up.

"I am very excited about this and thought the public hearing went very well," Commissioner Paris said. "There wasn't anyone there who was against the project and that's always good when you have a public hearing."

"Everyone realizes the impact that this will have on the 4-H program, the kids, their shotgun program, and not only that, the future," Paris said. "I think that positive impact will benefit our community. This will be one of the only skeet and trap shooting ranges, eventually a public one, north of Atlanta."

Following Commissioner Paris' pitch as to why the county should move on the property, supporters of the acquisition successfully sold the concept to the residents of Union County.

However, if there was anyone on the fence, or any doubters beforehand, their opinion wasn't likely swayed by the talking points laid out by the Commissioner's Office, it was by the testimo-



Union County Sole Commissioner discusses a PowerPoint presentation during the public hearing concerning the 4-H Shotgun Park. Photo/Todd Forrest

nies from the team's coaches, members, former members, and their parents.

The property, on the north side of Georgia 515, near Queens Gap would become the home for the Union County 4-H Shotgun, BB Gun, and Archery teams.

The home turf would bring a welcomed relief to the teams who have been forced to move locations, being spread out like buckshot across the county during its 17 prosperous years, as these upstanding young men and women have served as noble ambassadors for the local community.

They've also proved something else - they're deadly accurate with a shotgun, BB gun, or a bow.

"I anticipate that in the next 45 days we should be able to close on the property,"

Commissioner Paris added.

Paris approved the contract with the property owner in the January Commission meeting.

Waiting another six to eight weeks for the deal to be finalized shouldn't be an issue for the more than 60 student-athletes who participate in this 4-H program, who have patiently waited since the 1997-98 school year to have a place they can call home.

Due to the location and the layout of the land, this facility couldn't be more perfect.

This will most certainly offer the Union County 4-H kids an opportunity that most across the state could only dream of, perhaps spring boarding one of our local student-athletes into the Olympic Games somewhere in the near future.

Butler...from Page 1A

scope and can be independent of, or directly through, the Boy Scouts of America.

Since he joined the National Order of the Arrow Committee in 1991, Butler, who also is an Eagle Scout, has been at the heart of every major Order of the Arrow event.

Along the way, he's served as vice chairman of the National Order of the Arrow Committee for more than a decade; led Order of the Arrow crews to Philmont, Northern Tier,

and the Florida Sea Base; and taught five Order of the Arrow conferences at the Philmont Training Center.

In addition to his Eagle Scout Award, Butler has received the Silver Beaver, Silver Antelope, the Vigil Honor, and many more scouting honors.

According to his friends, volunteering is a passion for Butler.

He currently is chairman of the Coosa United Methodist Church Council.

At Union County

Schools, Butler is a mentor to many.

He's also a part of many beautification projects within the county, and the Downtown Development Authority has kept him busy as well.

In his "spare time," Butler aids local Boy Scout troops and volunteers at the Woodruff Boy Scout Camp in Union County.

He also stays active by hiking and traveling.

The *North Georgia News* salutes Jack Butler for his meritorious service to his community and the Boy Scouts of America.