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in more than her fair share of physical labor on many a Saturday since construction began, she said she's supremely thankful for the opportunity to get into a home built for – and by – her.

"Sometimes I was tired, but it was very rewarding in the fact that I actually learned how to do some things that I didn't know how to do prior to (the build)," said Seay. "I painted a lot, and I helped install the flooring, which was something I had never done before. It was challenging at times, but it was worth the effort in the end because it's mine, and I know it was done right."

Living with Seay will be her daughter and her daughter's two children, all of whom were excited to be able to show off their new home that Saturday. "I'm very thankful," said Seay, following the dedication and blessing. "I'm looking forward to having a place that's going to be enough space for me and my family."

Dozens of community members from different organizations acted as volunteers on the build, and Solomon Patrick with his crew from Patrick Construction of Blairsville oversaw the construction of the Seay home.

"I do it because it's good for the community, it's good for us, it's good for my subcontractors, it's good for my employees – it's good for all of us to volunteer and to care about other people, rather

than being selfish our whole lives," said Patrick, who has been a part of multiple Habitat for Humanity home builds over the years.

Dr. Meg Gring Whitley, representing CROP Hunger Walk, presented Seay with a full pantry shop at her earliest convenience during the dedication, and the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the home.

Now in its 19th year, the Habitat of Towns/Union counties has built 16 homes for 16 families, including the Seays, with the goal of helping families feel good about where they live.

"We take people who wouldn't necessarily qualify for a retail mortgage, and give them an opportunity to own a home," said Bryan Thomas, executive director for the Towns/Union counties Habitat, adding that Habitat homeowners don't just get a free home – they have to pay for it as would any homeowner.

And Habitat is hoping to expand its offerings to the community soon.

"We're getting ready to start a new program," said Thomas, who got the idea from the Habitat for Humanity in Blue Ridge. "It is called Helping Hands, and what we're looking to do is find people who maybe have a little extra cash flow but don't have lump sums of money that need work done on their house.



The Seays and Habitat got a helping hand from the folks at the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, with a ribbon cutting following the dedication and blessing of the home. Photo by Stacie DiNatale.

"We come in, and if you can afford \$50 to \$100 a month, then we will come in and replace your front porch or fix your back deck or paint your house, that sort of thing. It's the same thing with Habitat, it's an interest-free loan, but it lets us get out and really serve more people in the community."

Added Thomas: "It will be in addition to the full-sized home that we build. We're going to do smaller projects that might last one to three weekends."

Aside from spending time building her new home,

Seay also volunteered in the Habitat for Humanity ReStore Shop, located right around the Towns/Union line at 7693 Hwy 76 West in Young Harris, which is open Wednesday through Saturday each week, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Those interested in volunteering in any capacity, or donating either money or lightly used household items or building materials to the ReStore, can call (706) 379-2484 to ask how they can help, and all donations are tax deductible.

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well as the DDA's website are a big part of that.

"The DDA site is heavily geared towards locals looking for things to do, promoting local businesses and with the rebranding that has come around, it's time for us to update our website and offer a little bit more than we currently do.

"Our site is mobile but it isn't user friendly, which is something that we need to work on as well as with the city's website.

"This is especially important when trying to attract new businesses since business owners spend a large amount of time on a mobile device.

"So, it's important that they are able to pull up our codes, licenses and general information about the city."

Janice Boling and Capsaicin were the finalists. Both proposals are locally owned and operated businesses. Janice Boling will cost the city \$900 while Capsaicin will cost \$2,900 due to additional services that are available to make the website more user-friendly as well as easily manageable for

the city and DDA. The city will make a final decision at a later date.

Blairsville City Police has been in need of a new car for some time due to excess maintenance from another car within the department. Officer Shawn Dyer presented three bids from local dealers to the council for a new LPR car for the department. LPR cars contain an automatic license plate recognition that allows the police department to do their job more swiftly and efficiently.

King Ford, Akins Ford and Jacky Jones Ford were the final proposals, with the council voting for the King Ford bid at \$25,885.

Since Ken Smith retired as superintendent for the Wastewater and Treatment Plant, the facility has been in need of a new super. Lab Manager Jody Cook has been acting as super and was officially offered the position by Mayor Conley and the council at this month's meeting. Cook, recommended by Smith, has been working for the city for more than six years and knows the ins and outs of

the plant without the need for extra training.

Since the changes in the City Charter, the ordinances have not been rewritten to reflect the charter. Advised by the City Attorney, the council decided to move forward with having the ordinances modified so the language is identical in both the charter and the ordinances.

Updates on the alcohol ordinance were also in order, with a desire from the council to mirror the alcohol ordinances within the county as much as possible to avoid confusion within the community. Further discussions regarding the specifications of the alcohol ordinance will continue at next month's meeting.

Hope Crawford and Kim Ray from Crawdaddy's Crossfit approached the council on behalf of the gym about hosting a Crawdaddy's Crossfit 5K around downtown Blairsville on Saturday, September 10, at 7:30 a.m. Part of the profit from the run will go to the Glenda Gooch Foundation and the other proceeds will be put towards starting up a children's crossfit program. The council enthusiastically approved the run.

Much surprise to Mayor Conley and the council, City Attorney Janna Akins announced her resignation at the end of the meeting.

"These meetings are at night and I have three kids," said Akins. "They're growing up and I want to be there. But I'll help find someone else as much as I can."

Akins agreed to continue working until either the end of the year or a replacement is found.



Blairsville Downtown Development Authority Program Manager Darren Harper delivers his monthly report at the July 5 Blairsville City Council meeting.

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