

Turning Lane...from Page 1A

by Friday and striped by the end of next week.

The new turn lane is two months in the making, but in the meantime, serious accidents in this same stretch of road prompted a meeting between the county and GDOT to investigate other problem areas and to work toward a solution.

Commissioner Paris held a meeting with DOT on Tuesday, July 14, to discuss these problem areas. In the meeting were County Manager Larry Garrett, Sheriff Mack Mason and representatives from the Blairsville Police Department, as well as the fire department and EMS.

From this meeting,

three suggestions were made and are currently being considered by DOT.

The first would bring the speed limit down from 65 mph to 55 mph in the stretch from Meeks Park to just past the traffic light at Kiutuestia Creek Road, heading toward Blue Ridge.

A second consideration is to install left turn arrows at all four traffic positions at the Kiutuestia Creek Road traffic light, another area that has seen its fair share of accidents with its low visibility over the horizon from the west for traffic turning left at the light.

Another consideration by the DOT is to possibly put a concrete median at the

interstate intersection in front of the lower exit at Walmart, which would inhibit people from turning left out of Walmart onto Georgia 515.

This last consideration comes after the fatal accident that claimed the life of Melissa Dawn Rice on Saturday, June 13, as Rice, traveling west on Georgia 515, struck a vehicle that turned into her path to enter Walmart.

A concrete barrier would prevent drivers from turning left out of Walmart and sitting in the median, waiting for traffic to clear heading east toward Blairsville on Georgia 515, and therefore potentially blocking the view of motorists making

left turns into Walmart from Georgia 515.

Part of this consideration would be to preserve the turn lanes currently at this intersection, to allow entry to Walmart from Georgia 515 West, but to block traffic from sitting in the intersection having turned left across the highway from Walmart.

"We're hoping within the next two to three weeks we'll hear back from them on the speed limit," said Commissioner Paris. "That's what we hope will get done quick and first, is the speed limit. And then, our second thing we would hope for is turn arrows at the (Kiutuestia Creek Road) red light to help there,

then we've just got to look and see what all the options are for the center."

Safer driving conditions can only do so much, however, as the burden of safe driving falls largely on drivers themselves.

"When you're going by an intersection, especially a big one like here at Meeks Park and out there at Wal-

mart, people should slow down just a little bit when they go through there, and they should be looking," said Commissioner Paris. "You've got to be paying attention, because we're growing. We're getting more people and more traffic. We're going to have issues, and people have to slow down and be vigilant and concentrate on driving."

Savings...from Page 1A

at best it was a severe recession. And of course, that could happen again, and it could even be worse the next time.

"Were that to happen, then these numbers may not mean a whole lot. But assuming that things are not worse and they're at least this good, we are conservatively estimating we will only collect the same amount over the next six years."

Commissioner Paris,

though fiscally conservative out of caution, remains optimistic about future sales tax collections.

"However, if that were to increase, which our collections now are running anywhere from 3 to 5 percent over what they were this same period before - if they were to increase, say, up to 5 percent, then we'd be collecting \$25.5 million as opposed to the \$22 million," said Commissioner Paris.

"We're excited that when this current SPLOST period of slightly less than six years is over, the SPLOST revenue will pay off our community center plus all of our SPLOST IV projects that we have set up. They will all be paid off as well, so we will not have any debt."

The bond issuance to JPMorgan Chase of \$8.185 million at a 1.69 percent rate of interest is set to be paid off

by June 1, 2021.

"Part of the reason the county gets such a good interest rate is because you do a great job of managing your budget year after year, conservative budget practices, and that's what buyers look at," Gabe Agan said to Commissioner Paris. Agan is with Raymond James out of Cartersville, and helped the county shop around for a good deal on the bond issuance.

Fair...from Page 1A

VIII, and Mrs. Brown, You've Got A Lovely Daughter.

A British pop heavyweight himself, Noone found success during the same era as The Beatles, and knew The Fab Four from his early days with Herman's Hermits, before the man who discovered The Beatles, manager Brian Epstein, died.

"I knew (Brian) pretty well, he was a really nice bloke," said Noone. "I thought he was a brilliant manager as well. He set the Beatles up beautifully as gents. It was a pretty rough bunch when he got them, so he polished them up nicely and kept them together for much longer than anybody expected."

Much has changed since he entered the business

in the 1960s, said Noone, as music has become less of a shared experience than in yesteryears.

"When I was a kid, my mother listened to the same songs I did - they were just on the radio," said Noone. "You'd be in the car and you would hear songs. Now, everybody listens to their own personal choices."

"You see a car go by, and there's some kid watching a movie in the backseat, and there's some kid with a headset on playing a game. The mom is listening to one thing, chatting on her phone, and the father is listening to whatever he wants to. It used to be people sat in the car and shared the music that was on."

And even after all these

years, Noone still gets a kick when he hears one of his own songs playing over the radio.

"When we made those records, it was never on the menu 50 years from now," said Noone. "It was not even five weeks from now that records disappeared forever, I remember. People my age were the first generation of people who were able to collect music. My parents couldn't collect their favorite records - that didn't exist. Now, they're all there for everybody."

"Once upon a time, I collected music. I'd go and buy a Buddy Holly record, and I would bring all my friends around to listen to it. There was no way to share it with them other than listening to it."

Music used to be easier to share among friends in that jukeboxes, record players and radios were primary sources of experiencing music, and people would gather around these beacons of tonal expression, as opposed to everyone owning their own inexpensive MP3 players today.

And this Friday, Noone with Herman's Hermits will be sharing his music via another tried-and-true method of communal experience - with concerts for all who attend the Fair.

"It's nice, I've been there before, I like it," said Noone. "I'm a bit of a tourist. I'll probably get there the night before and spend the day in Hiwassee."

Bail...from Page 1A

felony omission of a practitioner, which are related to prescription fraud, according to arrest warrants.

In sum, Gowder is alleged to have obtained a prescription from different doctors, and forging prescriptions using the name of other doctors, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Gowder's arrest follows an extensive investi-

gation and review of local pharmacy records, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

The sheriff added that the investigation is not over.

The arrest is the second for Gowder since April 1. Two agents with the Zell Miller Drug Task Force arrested him in Blue Ridge on charges of first-degree forgery, and obtaining danger-

ous drugs by fraud.

His Blue Ridge arrest launched an investigation by Union County authorities.

The Union County Sheriff's Office asks if anyone has any information related to this case, contact Union County Sheriff's Detective Capt. Chad Deyton at (706) 439-6066. Any information will be held in strict confidence, according to the Sheriff's Office.



Sheriff Mack Mason

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