

Heroes...from Page 1A

someone out there that cares enough about human life to save them.

The two acted in tandem to save Yebba's life after all three were put on the spot on the morning of Wednesday, May 29, 2013 on Georgia 515.

Schmidt was headed west on his motorcycle; Passmore was driving east in his work truck. That's when Yebba entered their lives and put them to a test.

Yebba was driving east toward Blairsville, he was in the slow lane, but his black PT Cruiser was dead even with Passmore's vehicle, which was right beside Yebba. Suddenly, Yebba's Cruiser bolted; it cut in front of Passmore's work truck, and traveled across in front of the truck into the turning lane.

The Cruiser then traveled across the median, off the north shoulder of the roadway, struck a DOT sign, ran out of roadway, went airborne, traveled through the air, over the embankment overlooking the Nottely River, struck several trees, and came to a final rest in the swift, murky waters.

Yebba's Cruiser missed Schmidt's motorcycle by 100

feet.

"I thought I was going to have to put the motorcycle down," Schmidt said. "I was heading west out of Blairsville and here comes this black PT Cruiser, changing lanes. He cuts through the turning lane, then he slides into the median, goes through the grass. Then before I know it, he's headed toward me.

"I started locking the bike down, and he missed me by about 100 feet," Schmidt said.

As Schmidt watched the accident unfold before his eyes and then in his rearview mirror, he had a decision to make. He turned his motorcycle around, and went back to check on the man in the vehicle that almost took him out.

Passmore had a scarier encounter with the Cruiser. Yebba's car was in the slow lane, both were doing about 70 mph and then the Cruiser cut him off, bolting right in front of him, he said.

"He timed the turning lane just right," Passmore said, referring to Yebba's route that cut his work truck off. "I was more than a little upset at being cutoff. I was watching him in my rearview window, and wow, he just kept going across 515. He ran out of road and went airborne."

Passmore turned his vehicle around, knowing the Cruiser was going into Nottely River.

After Schmidt turned around and arrived at the accident scene, Passmore was running down the embankment, stripping out of his clothes along the way. Yebba's Cruiser was in the middle

of the swelled waters of Nottely River. It was floating and sinking at the same time.

Schmidt followed, going through the exact same routine as Passmore. They stood on the embankment, waiting for Yebba to crawl out of the vehicle – he didn't. The car began to make popping sounds and sank 12 feet to the bottom of the creek.

Schmidt and Passmore looked at each other, they went in the cold, murky waters, without fear.

"It was like we had been working together forever," Passmore said. "We didn't have to communicate out loud to understand what we were doing."

Working in tandem, the two men found the Cruiser, and together, they forced the rear hatch of the vehicle open.

"We jerked on that hatch and it didn't want to open," Schmidt said. "The last of the air in that vehicle was holding it back. We finally broke it free and all kinds of stuff came out of that car."

Once open, everything you could think of came rushing out of the Cruiser. The two men dodged multiple items floating out of the vehicle.

"It scared the woo out of us," Schmidt said.

Schmidt went into the Cruiser and began feeling his way to Yebba. At first, he thought he had found the man. No such luck, it was a motorcycle helmet. In between returns to the surface for air, Schmidt's luck changed.

He went back down, felt the top of Yebba's head and knew what he had to do. Yebba wasn't wearing a seat belt; Schmidt tugged on Yeb-

ba's T-shirt. About the fourth tug, Yebba's body broke free and began to rise to the surface.

Schmidt guided Yebba to the top of the water, Passmore, still in the water, helped bring him ashore. The paramedics were making their way down the embankment. By the time they reached the shoreline, Yebba was on his back and Schmidt and Passmore were working to revive him.

What seemed like an hour in Yebba's rescue, only took three minutes. Yebba was soon in the safe hands of Union County Fire & Rescue.

"It was totally surreal," Passmore said. "It felt like an eternity getting him out of the water, but it turned out to be just a few minutes."

Certified divers of Union County Fire & Rescue, Andrew Burnette, Patrick Schmidt, and Dustin Lee, went in the water to make sure no one was with Yebba. It turns out, he was alone. Lt. Fortenberry said.

Passmore said the biggest thanks he could get came from Yebba's father.

"I'm sure he called Tony Schmidt too, but he called to tell me how grateful he was that I helped save his son's life," Passmore said. "I told him thank you. I would have done it for anyone in trouble."

For Schmidt, who is a U.S. Navy veteran, this is the second life he's helped save.

"A pilot crashed and I ran out and helped pull him from the burning jet," Schmidt said. "I'm just glad I've been in the right place, at the right time, two times in my life."

Council...from Page 1A

Mayor Conley.

A public hearing was necessary because Tan Yard Branch Apartments is within Blairsville City limits, so the Housing Authority of Cordele needed the blessing of the city to extend the issuance of the bonds so it could get to work with the renovations.

The purpose of the hearing was to give the public a chance to express any opinions, opposition or comments regarding the bonds.

While no one from the public attended the hearing specifically to address the bond issuance extension, Sharpton acknowledged a written comment that had come in prior to the hearing.

"I think the commenter thought that ad valorem tax dollars were going to go into the pot, and they are not," said Sharpton.

Councilmembers Martha Cone and Tony Dyer also addressed these concerns in the hearing.

"Will there be any cost to the city?" said Cone, to which Sharpton replied, "No."

"As I understand it and understood it earlier, there's no obligation whatsoever on the city's part, other than what we're doing now," said Councilman Tony Dyer, speaking on the public hearing.

"No ad valorem tax money, no sales tax – nothing," said Sharpton.

There were no comments, the hearing was closed, and city council authorized the Housing Authority of Cordele to issue the bonds.

The Council also discussed the latest on water with the Mountain View RV Resort.

Last month, City Council gave the RV park's developer the go ahead to start designing sewer and water lines with the expectation of receiving water from Blairsville City.

This month, Chip McGaughey with Engineering Management Inc. and Reid Dyer with Hayes James ap-

proached the City Council to seek guidance in determining what they can do about their designs.

"We are going to have to revise our water and sewer ordinance in order to accommodate the RV park for us to furnish water and sewer out there," said Mayor Conley. "And of course, they will have to meet all the city's water and sewer specs as far as what they can put in and how to put it in."

By revising the ordinance to allow for the metering of zones – for example, one meter for 20 lots – the developer saves money by not having to meter each lot.

The city is set to inherit the lines built by the developer in a year, which is essentially a \$500,000 gift to the city. Changing the ordinance to allow for this kind of metering will also limit the city's liability to the water lines that run

to that larger meter instead of the lines running to each lot.

"That's why we have to make sure that everything that goes in the ground is approved by us and meets our specs, because at the end of a year, it's in our ordinance that we'll take the responsibility for the main lines," said Mayor Conley.

In other news, Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll delivered the latest statistics for the police department in his Department Head Report.

There have been 839 total calls this year, with 107 of those coming in September, and officers patrolled 6,598 miles in September.

Officers responded to 11 business alarms, served 12 warrants, provided escorts to 14 funerals and also responded to 18 accidents. These were the only four areas to make double digits in September.

YHC Chamber Choir presents a Cappella Concert

Young Harris College's Division of Fine Arts will present a special performance featuring the YHC Chamber Choir on Thursday, Oct. 23, at 7 p.m. in Glenn Auditorium of the Clegg Fine Arts Building on the YHC campus. Admission is \$5 for adults and free for students and children 12 and under.

Southern Harmony, a 22-voice female cappella group, and the Compulsive Lyres, a 14-voice male ensemble, will join forces as the Chamber Choir to present a memorable performance featuring a variety of choral melodies from the Renaissance to present day. All ensembles are directed by Professor of Music, Director of Choral and Vocal Activities, and Musical Theatre Program Co-coordinator Jeff Bauman.

Southern Harmony local students include junior Courtney Farmer of Hiawassee, GA, sophomore Kenna Bauman of Young Harris, GA, and junior Summer Mitchell of Blairsville, GA.

For more information, call YHC's Division of Fine Arts at (706) 379-5182.