

LOCAL

Local organization surprises Coweta man with new bike



COURTESY OF SHARON WALLS

David Johnston, left, shows Coweta County resident Ben Dunon all the gadgets and equipment on his new bike. Johnston is a volunteer with the Palmetto Community Food Pantry. The organization bought Dunon a new bike after his old one was allegedly stolen.



COURTESY OF SHELBY MCNEIL

Children stand outside the Grace Children's Home orphanage in Cabaret, Haiti. According to Shelby McNeil, 17 children live in the home. Some of the kids are orphans while others were given up for adoption because of birth defects.

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the children – food, clothing and education. Haitian children have to pay for their education or else they're not allowed to go to school at all. Most of our kids don't have parents or guardians who can take care of them," McNeil explained. "We have children with birth defects who were given up for adoption. We've had babies left on the orphanage doorstep. We had a 1-year-old infant brought to us who only weighed 12 pounds.

"You can't say no to these children," McNeil continued. "If you say no, you know what's going to happen. They're not going to make it."

The Pierres stay with the children full time at the orphanage, along with three staff members.

Currently, the Grace Children's Home has 17 orphans and desperately needs to expand, McNeil said.

The need to grow and develop the orphanage is one reason McNeil wrote "Go With Grace." Proceeds from the book will go to the Grace Children's Home.

While some of the organization's prayers and needs have been met, others have not, she said.

"The Haitian government has given us six acres to build on in a nearby town called Archaie," McNeil said. "It's been surveyed, but we're waiting to build. It's expensive to build in Haiti and there's procedures you have to follow. First, we have to build concrete walls around the

compound and that's a \$40,000 project.

"We want to be self-sufficient. We want to be able to build a new orphanage and other facilities and farm on our own land," McNeil continued. "We want more of the donations to go towards the children and not just keep the orphanage afloat."

McNeil said she hopes the book opens people's hearts to Haiti and the orphans who have been given a second chance at life to hopefully exact positive change in the island nation in the future.

"I would love to get more people involved who live in the surrounding community," she said.

"I want people to build relationships with these

children and love them as much as I do. I'm in it for the long haul," McNeil continued. "There's not a lot of opportunities where you can donate and see firsthand the direct impact you made on a person and watch them grow. The kids love their sponsors and they value what they're given because they know they wouldn't have those things without the help of total strangers."

McNeil said Grace Children's Home plans to begin construction on their new site in early 2019.

For more information on McNeil's book, "Go With Grace," and the Grace Children's Home orphanage and organization, visit its website at www.gracechildrenshomehaiti.org.



PHOTO BY MELANIE RUBERTI

Shelby McNeil, 21, is a customer service representative with The Newnan Times-Herald. McNeil also recently wrote a book called, "Go With Grace," which tells about her family's orphanage in Cabaret, Haiti.

Business Briefs

Tenaska Georgia Generating Station extends safety record

Employees at the Tenaska Georgia Generating Station have been honored with four National Safety Council (NSC) awards for their 2017 safety performance. The plant, located near Franklin, has had zero U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) work-related injuries or illnesses resulting in time away from work (lost time) since the start of commercial operation in 2001.

"Our employees take safety seriously," said Plant Manager Donnie Scott. "They demonstrate teamwork and innovation as they focus on maintaining and enhancing a safe workplace."

Employees at Tenaska Georgia were honored with the Superior Safety Performance Award, presented to facilities that have achieved at least 10 consecutive years without a lost time incident. The team also earned a Safety Leadership Award, for at least five consecutive years, and a Perfect Record Award, for at least 12 consecutive months without a lost-time injury or illness.

Employees also accepted the Occupational Excellence Achievement Award, which honors a safety record equal to or better than 50 percent of U.S.

Bureau of Labor Statistics rates for lost-time illnesses and injuries in the energy industry.

Tenaska Georgia provides electric energy to approximately 945,000 homes, according to a press release.

Tractor Supply to help with hurricane reforestation

The Tractor Supply Company in Newnan is participating in a company-wide hurricane recovery initiative that will benefit the Arbor Day Foundation's hurricane reforestation efforts.

For every Husqvarna chainsaw purchase made in Tractor Supply stores or on its website, five trees will be planted within a forest of need in areas that were severely affected by last year's hurricanes, including Florida, Texas and Puerto Rico. Tractor Supply has committed to donating up to 50,000 trees.

The hurricane recovery initiative will run through Oct. 28. It comes approximately one year after Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria left lasting damage in parts of southeastern U.S., Texas and Puerto Rico.

The Arbor Day Foundation has committed to supplying five million trees to the reforestation efforts in Florida, Texas and Puerto Rico. The foundation will work with local forestry experts who can assess the best time to replant

trees and help distribute them to affected homeowners. Long-term reforestation benefits for the impacted communities include improved air quality, support of local wildlife habitats, better flood control, and cleaner water, among others.

The trees funded by Tractor Supply's Husqvarna hurricane recovery initiative will be planted in early 2019.

Local business connections and opportunities

Sept. 24

Candidate Forum, 6-8 p.m. Central Educational Center, 160 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Newnan.

Sept. 25

Candidate Forum, 6-8 p.m. Central Educational Center, 160 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Newnan.

Sept. 28

Ribbon Cutting – Reaching Milestones, 3-4 p.m. 225 Millard Farmer Industrial Blvd., Building B, Suite 100, Newnan.

For more information on these activities, visit www.newnancoweta-chamber.org

Items for consideration as business briefs should be emailed to business@newnan.com, faxed to 770-253-2538, or mailed to Business Briefs, The Newnan Times-Herald, P.O. Box 1052, Newnan, GA 30264. Email submissions are preferred.

4TH ANNUAL



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Fundraising Luncheon

THURSDAY OCTOBER 25, 2018

11:00 am until 2:00 pm

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Mayor, Columbus, GA

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