**Gainesville** — The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is making available the Draft FY 2018-21 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in Northeast Georgia for public review and comment.

The STIP is a four-year program that is designed to achieve Georgia’s transportation goals as contained in the Governor and State Transportation Coordination Council’s goal of improving the mobility of people and goods across the state, expanding Georgia’s role in global commerce, reducing injury and death on the state’s roads, and prioritizing investments in Georgia’s transportation assets.

The STIP specifies federally funded projects for mon-urban communities in rural Georgia for fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021. These projects include, but are not limited to, new construction, im-

 צריכים לברוח לפני שהתרוממ

**Letters**

**Racket corruption** under Trump

To the editor:

President Donald Trump’subby Clark’s letter, Obama paid $944.85 last week and gave to the U.S. for military week-
sham County were paid $14.05 in

More qualify for county post

Four men have qualified so far in the upcoming election for a new county commissioner for District Post 1. Clarke, Habersham, Barrow, Lumpkin, \n
**Counties that are designated as part of “metroplastic areas” review all of their projects through their Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Counties will have their public review process completed independently the Counties in Northeast Georgia included in Met-

**From Page 4 A**

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August 30, 1973

Friday, September 1, 2017

The Northeast Georgian

Gainesville — The Georgia De-

Depart-
Committee deploys multiple tactics to contain plant

By Tommy Culkin

SKY VALLEY — Kudzu is one of the most invasive plant species in the world, capable of overtaking entire trees in a matter of days. In Sky Valley, a group of residents are taking a stand to counteract the harmful plant.

After seeing kudzu spread throughout Sky Valley, resident Rudy Masi asked the Sky Valley City Council to do something about the problem. In response, they placed Masi in charge of a committee dedicated to fighting the plant. He quickly realized that wasn’t the only concern about the kudzu, as the committee grew to more than 20 members.

“The thing with kudzu is, it grows so fast that it clips the trees and shrubbery it’s growing on,” Masi said. “We’re a group of people who are interested in protecting our homes and the natural beauty of Sky Valley.”

Erosion, sedimentation
recreational course coming

The Rabun County Chamber’s Office will be hosting a Level 1A erosion, sedimentation recreational course on Oct. 21 in the meeting room of the Rabun County Health Department. The class will start at 8 a.m. and the course fee is $100 for recreation and $150 for new class.

Citizens Committee to review SPLOST

By Tommy Culkin

CLAYTON — For nearly two years, the Rabun County Citizens Committee has worked to educate attendees on local government, by bringing in guest speakers like former County Sheriff Nick Smith, County Administrator Jeff Clay, Clayton City Councilwoman Delene Chisholm and more.

Now, with the next project, Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax on the horizon; the group is broadening its scope — to inform people about the intricacies of SPLOST ballotinng.

Cherie Faircloth, one of the committee’s organizers, said they would hold monthly meetings over the course of the next several months to discuss the contents of the Association County Commissions of Georgia SPLOST Cycle.

“There’s a lot to it, and people need to be informed so they can make the right decisions when they vote,” Faircloth said.

Faircloth said the committee will not have a political bias and will hopefully involve groups from both sides of the political spectrum, including DebraSuppresson, Democratic and Republican Party.

While the Citizens Committee is hosting the SPLOST sessions, it will continue to hold irregular monthly meetings. Faircloth said.

The first SPLOST meeting will be held Wednesday, Sept. 20, at 5 p.m. at the Clayton Municipal Complex.

Florida minister to visit Rabun

By Tommy Culkin

CLAYTON — Local Christian ministry Sound the Shofar continues its series of featuring prominent pastors and speakers this weekend, as Florida pastor David Jones visits Rabun County this weekend.

Jones will be speaking at the American Legion Building in Mountain City on Saturday at 1 p.m. Jones is a prominent author, conferencer speaker, teacher and radio host on Hebrew Nation Radio. His published books include “Famine Walking in Blessing in a Time of Famine” and “The King Invites You to His Table.”

He also heads up Ranch Ministries in Florida.

He received his Doctorate in 2014 from the palm Beach College of Seminary in Brandon, Florida.

He has been coordinating the event, said she usually saves Jones when she lived in Florida. “He’s very down to earth and he keeps the right decisions when he makes them,” she said.

Jones, who lives in Florida.

“Because, like the Bible says, if you just listen to word and don’t act on it, you’re just feeding your own self,” she said.

In addition to Jones’s lecture, the event will also feature Exodus Road Band, a religious folk band that has become a regular part of Sound the Shofar’s events.

“They’re a lot of fun, I just think they’re so entertaining,” Faircloth said about the band. “They become like family.”

The band, a religious folk band, said a collection will be taken for people who want to donate.

Committee member Myrna Dotson said that the committee is willing to try anything about the problem. In Sky Valley, kudzu has taken over a sizeable area.

“I know that this is a serious problem in lots of places, and I’d like to see some sort of committee maybe in other parts of the county too,” he said. “If we could inspire other cities to fight kudzu, and maybe coordinate between cities, that’d be great.”

Already, Masi said, the kudzu has taken over a substantial part of the city.

“Down at our waterfalls, it’s completely everywhere, it’s all over Big Horse Trail, Dorry Lane and it’s even on the 16th hole of Sky Valley Golf Club,” he said.

Our goal is to identify and eradicate all the kudzu in Sky Valley, and then to stay vigilant to stop it when it comes back. It grows fast, so we need to take action whenever we see it start to pop up.

In terms of approaches to battling the invasive species, Sky Valley’s kudzu committee is willing to try anything that might work. Masi said he initially wanted to use a method that involved funneling nitrogen into a PVC pipe in the base of the plants, but after consulting with Rabun County Extension Officer John Sca-dam, he learned that method wasn’t environmentally safe.

Last Friday, the committee held a pilot meeting where it tested three herbicides on approximately 80 yards of kudzu to determine which one will be the best to use moving forward.

The herbicides used were Crossbow Specialty Herbicide, Alligare Cyperus- Three and Zero Weed and Brush Killer. Masi added they haven’t yet determined the most promising.

Committee member Myrna Dotson said the committee likely won’t begin its full-scale efforts until next spring, when the herbicides will be most effective.

She added the project is a marathon, not a sprint, and is expected to take approximately two years.

Masi said he hopes other Rabun County cities will follow Sky Valley’s lead.

“[I know that this is a serious problem in lots of places, and I’d like to see some sort of committee maybe in other parts of the county too],” he said. “If we could inspire other cities to fight kudzu, and maybe coordinate between cities, that’d be great.”