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prompted the first situational crisis at Union County's new Emergency Operations Command Center.

A 911 call came in around 11 a.m. reporting the McCarters' plight, Chief Worden said.

"The plane crashed into the mountain (Horsetrough) between Low Gap and Testanee Gap," Chief Worden said. "We organized a rescue team, seven members, including folks from the Union County Sheriff's Office, Union County Fire & Rescue, the Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Forest Service.

"We had 10 folks working on the situation at the EOC, including the Federal Aviation Administration," Chief Worden said. "Our ground team went in on the White County side of Horsetrough. It was some of the most rugged mountain terrain in Union County."

The crash was attributed

to pilot error," Union County sheriff's Lt. Tim Derflinger said.

"Mr. McCarter lost track of where he was flying," Lt. Derflinger said. "Officially, he experienced a loss of situational awareness."

The Diamond Industries DA40 four-seater crashed between two trees shortly after 11 a.m. on Friday, leaving the cab of the aircraft intact. The aircraft never touched the ground, coming to rest about 10 feet up in the trees, Chief Worden said.

The plane was a total loss, Lt. Derflinger said.

The plane crashed on the Appalachian Trail, making the rescue that much more difficult. Because the area is federal Mountain Wilderness, the rescuers had to hike to the McCarters, no ATVs are allowed.

"It was a two-hour or so hike to find them," Chief Worden said.

Other than some bumps and bruises, the McCarters were in excellent health, Lt. Derflinger said.

"Unfortunately, they're feeling the pain of some bumps and bruises," Lt. Derflinger said. "But, fortunately, they're feeling the pain of some bumps and bruises. They are extremely lucky to be alive."

Following their rescue, the McCarters were brought to the EOC, where they were interviewed by FAA officials, Chief Worden said.

"Mr. McCarter asked the FAA folks where he could send his pilot's license," Chief Worden said. "He was told he could keep his license. He told them that, if it was all the same to them, he had flown his last flight. He said it was a seven-hour drive to Charleston or a two-hour flight. He said from now on, he would rather do the seven-hour drive."

The McCarters declined to speak with the *North*

Georgia News following their nerve-shattering ordeal.

"I'm sure they're a little shaken; I'm sure they're just glad to have their feet back on the ground," Lt. Derflinger said.

Lt. Derflinger said that the Atlanta Flight Center was in contact with the plane, owned by George McCarter, before and after the crash.

"Mr. McCarter said he had no idea he was going to impact the mountain until he did," Lt. Derflinger said. "He said he lost situational awareness. The McCarters are grateful to be alive."

Both Chief Worden and Lt. Derflinger said the crisis was a perfect situational crisis to christen the EOC.

"It was a solid team effort," Chief Worden said.

"It was a solid experience for the county's EOC, we need practice," Lt. Derflinger said. "I like to practice when people aren't injured."

EMC...from Page 1A

According to the EMC, total kilowatt-hour sales have been on the decline in recent years, yet the fixed operating costs for items that include transformers, conductor equipment, and electronics necessary for the safe operation of the company continue to steadily rise.

The same reduction in sales has impacted EMC's generation and transmission provider, the Tennessee Val-

ley Authority, according to the EMC.

EMC's total kilowatt-hour sales declined by more than 55.4 million in 2011 and 2012, according to the EMC.

The EMC has experienced limited sales growth over the past year, selling 30 million fewer kilowatt-hours than in 2011, according to the EMC.

The decline in sales is attributed to mild winters and

summers over the past two years, according to EMC, as well as customer conservation, and business and industry slowdowns.

Customers with a usage of 1,000 kilowatt hours will see a monthly increase of \$4.92, or a 4.06 percent increase; customers with a usage of 1,500 kilowatt hours will see a monthly increase of \$5.52, or a 3.17 percent increase, and customers with a

usage of 2,000 kilowatt hours will see a monthly increase of \$6.14, or a 2.71 percent increase, according to a scale provided by the EMC.

The EMC's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sept. 21st, at 10 a.m. at Anderson Music Hall at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiawassee.

Registration of door prizes begins at 8 a.m.

City...from Page 1A

and sewer bills, eliminating the Downtown Development Authority, asking city residents if they want an extension of the Blairsville Municipal Airport, which is currently underway, and extending the city's Streetscape to include all city streets, from striping, to repairs, to installing sidewalks, to lighted walkways.

Payton, 48, is a full-time student at Young Harris College, and has a 14-year-old son. Payton's wife is deceased.

He has served as a youth league coach.

Mayor Conley, the president of the Georgia Municipal Association's Second District, and the City Council during his tenure as mayor, has completed an unprecedented package of

projects related to water and sewer.

Since 2008, more than \$9 million in upgrades have been completed using low interest loans, grant dollars and less than \$750,000 in city funds.

The city's sewer capacity, has been increased from 400,000 gallons of treatment capacity per day to 1 million gallons of sewer capacity per day.

Also, the city has used Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax shared with the county, to complete a total renovation project at City Hall.

Mayor Conley said there is still SPLOST money available that can be used to improve City Hall.

Also, the city has just completed the grading and pav-

ing of the land to be used for the construction of a new North Terminal at the Blairsville Municipal Airport, thus, further enhancing the city's economic development attraction.

Mayor Conley said that some of the biggest accomplishments during his tenure included water and sewer improvements,

manhole rehabilitation projects, replacement of antiquated water lines from the 1940s with new industrial lines, and rehabilitation of two city water tanks.

Mayor Conley and Payton will be on the ballot when city voters cast ballots for mayor on Nov. 5th.

Al-Anon meetings/times

Blairsville: Mountain Presbyterian Church, 2945 Young Harris Hwy. 76, Wednesday 8 p.m. Al-Anon Family Group Discussion, open meeting. Saint Clare's Episcopal Church, Friday 12 noon Al-anon Group Discussion, open meeting.

Young Harris: Sharp Memorial Methodist Church, Tuesday 12 noon Al-Anon Family Group discussion, open meeting.

Hiawassee: Chatuge Regional Hospital, 110 South Main Street, Sunday 7 p.m. Al-Anon Family Group Discussion, open meeting. Christ the King Church, Monday 7 p.m. Al-Anon Family Group Discussion, open meeting.

Al-Anon is open to anyone who has been affected by

another person's drinking. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or a friend.

Call 706-835-5827, 706-897-0628 or 828-389-8981. for more information.

Union High Class of '63 Reunion

The Union County High School Class of 1963 will celebrate their 50th reunion on October 5 at the Union County Community Center beginning at 3 p.m.

For more info call Pat Davis Everett at 706-781-4985 or Carolyn Rich Jarrard at 706-745-5411