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Clinton. "I think right now he's in on aggravated assault, I believe, but I would expect additional charges once the investigation is completed."

Bower is being held in the Towns County Detention Center without bail, jail records show.

Sheriff Clinton offered nothing but praise for Deputy Deyton in the wake of his life-threatening ordeal.

"Aaron Deyton's a perfect example of everything a deputy should be - I mean, he's a real hero in my book," said Sheriff Clinton. "He goes out every shift willing to risk his life to keep people safe, and that's basically what he was doing that night, and he did everything right - nothing he could have changed, in my book. It's just, we don't get to pick when these events happen."

And Sheriff Clinton knows how hard it is to expect the unexpected.

"You can't do that, and that's why we call it that," said Sheriff Clinton. "All you can do is adapt and overcome in that situation, and that's exactly what he did. He's just a fine deputy, and it's a very real risk that a lot of times people don't think about, but that's what the guys deal with day in and day out."

Deputy Deyton comes

from a law enforcement family, with an uncle and cousins also serving in the law enforcement profession.

"Aaron is tough," said Union County Sheriff's Lt. Chad Deyton, of his cousin. "He did what a law enforcement officer is supposed to do. He was there to backup a fellow officer. He's going to be okay, but it was a very close call for him."

This type of crime is not the norm in Towns County, and that is thanks in large part to the office of the Sheriff.

"There's that 1 percent out there that are not like the rest of us, and they do these kinds of things," said Sheriff Clinton. "Aaron Deyton's a part of the other 1 percent that basically stands in the gap. And I've told people before, I can't say enough about how much I appreciate our deputies. They keep me and my family safe, too. At some point, I have to go home and go to sleep. We've got good guys out there doing a great job for us."

Sheriff Clinton was immediately on the scene following the stabbing, but called in Region 8 special agents from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation in Cleveland to take the lead in the investigation.

"I feel like that's always the appropriate thing to

do when we're this involved, and one of our deputies was stabbed," said Sheriff Clinton. "They've come in and taken the primary. We're assisting them in everything. I mean, anything they need from the Sheriff's Office, we're involved with."

While the GBI will be leading the investigation, Sheriff Clinton retains full faith in his deputies.

"Our guys are doing a great job, but at the same time, they're dealing with; this is their friend and their coworker, and at the Sheriff's Office, we're family," said Sheriff Clinton. "It's just a good idea, a lot of times, to bring in an outside party and let them take the lead on it."

There's no specific timeframe for when Deputy Deyton may return to work, but that's not the primary concern at this time. His relatives say Aaron Deyton is expected to be hospitalized several more days.

"Really, what we're concentrated on is being there for him and his family, and just letting him know that the main thing right now is to get better," said Sheriff Clinton.

"His family has really articulated that, and actually asked me to relay for them as the spokesman that they're very, very appreciative of all

the outpouring of support," said Sheriff Clinton. "They're focused on getting him better, and just ask that people keep him in their prayers."

Sheriff Clinton once more expressed appreciation for a man the community has been safer with than without.

"We're very, very proud of Deputy Aaron Deyton and the service that he's rendered the community," said Sheriff Clinton. "Certainly our hearts are with him, and we're with him and his family in this time."

And though Deputy Deyton has been through a storm many people will never weather, his thoughts are for those around him and not of himself.

"Any concern that he was able to articulate to us, he was just looking out for other people immediately," said Sheriff Clinton. "Especially his wife - he immediately was wanting to make sure she was okay."

"He's a real hero and just a fine, fine individual, and we're very proud of him, and we would definitely ask the community to keep him and his family in their thoughts and prayers."

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and Marcie Culpepper's family doctor, and the couple shares a special memory that took place at the old hospital.

"He delivered our youngest daughter," said Larry Culpepper.

Marcie had been going through a difficult pregnancy, and there was concern that her body might abort their child.

"He warned us, he said this baby could have birth defects because of all the trouble we'd had," said Larry. "I'll never forget it, I was sitting in the waiting room, and I heard a man's voice hollering."

Larry got up to see what the hollering was all about, and when he stepped out in the hall he saw Dr. Gowder carrying his child.

"That baby still had afterbirth on it, and he was running down the hall to tell me, he said, 'She's okay, she's got all her fingers and toes.' He was more excited than I was. So, that's the kind of doctor he was," said Larry.

Marcie Culpepper decorated the chapel in advance of the dedication, which was hosted by the foundation that Dr. Gowder helped start.

"Mountain Community Healthcare Foundation is dedicating Union General Hospital Chapel to Dr. George Gowder, and the wonderful years of service that he has provided for this community," said Foundation Director Leslie Daniel. "I appreciate you all taking your time out of your busy day to come and

make this a special day for Dr. Gowder."

Daniel introduced Pastor Jerry Helton of Blairsville's House of Prayer Interdenominational Church, who spoke words of kindness and remembrance of Dr. Gowder's legacy and faith.

"It's a special honor for me to be here, as I'm sure it is, for everyone of y'all, to be here today," said Pastor Helton. "Over the years, George and Martha provided so much ministry and so much service to this area - one of the keenest minds I've ever ran across in my life is Dr. George."

Former Director of Nursing at Union General Hospital Patsy Efir had a unique relationship with Dr. Gowder during the years they worked together.

"He couldn't stand nurses to tell him what they thought he ought to do, like suggest a drug or something. And he would tell me, he'd say, 'Patsy, if you'd tell your nurses to stick to nursing and let me do the doctoring, we'd get along just fine,'" said Efir, laughing.

Nearly everyone in attendance could trace back a memory of either working with Dr. Gowder or having been a patient, and his bond with his friends and colleagues was the topic of most conversations.

"I had pericarditis, and he cured me of that," said lifelong Union County resident Bud Akins. "And my grand-

mother was 80 years old and she was dying. We took her to Dr. Gowder, and I told him, I said, Dr. Gowder, do something for my grandmother, she's not ready to go yet. He got her well, and she lived another 10 years."

Akins remembers loading up and heading to Braves baseball games in Dr. Gowder's RV, and the two would also ride motorcycles together.

"That man is just like a father to everybody in this county - not just a doctor, but a father," said Akins.

Terri Anderson, Missy Mashburn, Susan Comer and Bobbie Hoodenpyle attended the dedication, and all work out of Appalachian Home Health Care, which Dr. Gowder started with his wife and four daughters.

"When he first opened the agency in 1991, no matter what, we always had lunch together," said Mashburn. "He always told us stories about his practice during lunch, and he was just always telling funny stories."

"He's our family," added Comer, which perfectly summed up the event.

The dedication had the feel of a family reunion, and the fact that so many people turned out to demonstrate their admiration and respect for Dr. Gowder proved one thing for certain - the community will be indebted forever to this doctor, friend and father to many.

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Road where the course takes a 230-foot elevation climb before the turnaround in the Mt. Airy Community.

As the runners returned to the Community Center the excitement across the street was just beginning as crowds began to fill the field behind Woody Gap School for the Indian Summer Festival.

"This is our second year attending the Indian Summer Festival and our first at the *Run Above the Clouds*," said Diane Shorley of Cumming. "I was here two years ago and was really kicking myself for not making it last year. Since we missed last year, I told my brother (Daniel) that we were getting there early to watch the race. We were a little late and made it to the (General Store) to catch the fun run going by and the first returnees from the big race. Daniel doesn't like the cold but once we made it over to the festival grounds he forgot all about the weather."

The festival is known for its family reunion feel and the reputation is well deserved as hugs and handshakes are the popular greeting.

"The festival feels more like a family reunion," Althea Cantrell said prior to the festival and she couldn't be more accurate. "Old friends, family, and former Woody Gap classmates all try to return to Suches for the weekend. It's a big weekend for our schools and our community."

Cantrell's Local Studies Booth and its hot apple pies have become a staple of the festival and after one bite of a pie, one can see why its popularity is well deserved.



"I always hear people say that it's like a family reunion for the town of Suches and I think that is what makes this event so unique," Shorley said. "Even if you aren't a part of the town, the festival welcomes new members every year. This is supposed to be a small town but they've got a big time heart."

Along with the Gaddis-town Homemakers booth, the Woody Gap Sports Club bar-becue, and others there was enough variety to cure anyone's hunger.

Live music began just shy of 11 a.m. on Saturday, however the festival marked the breakout performance of Union County Schools' newest musical group. The Woody Gap "Band of Steel" made their debut at the festival and they stole the show. What makes the performance even more remarkable is the band is only two months old, having started when school opened in August.

"The 'Band of Steel' is under the direction of Doug Roberts. Mr. Roberts and his

students have worked hard to get to this point, but this is only the beginning," Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe said. "I am sure the 'Band of Steel' will be a point of pride for Woody Gap and the Suches community in the future. Music is a universal language appreciated by all. Congratulations to Mr. Roberts and his students on a job well done. An example of another group striving for excellence."

After Saturday morning's *Run Above the Clouds*, the opening day comes to a close with another opportunity for locals and non-locals alike to get back on their feet with a square dance, featuring a live band.

All proceeds from the festival are returned to the students at Woody Gap Schools. With that much fun raising money for a good cause, you can't go wrong.

With arts, crafts and all day entertainment for everyone and all proceeds going to Woody Gap School, you can't go wrong.