A swarm of honey bees caused quite the community buzz Monday after settling in a tree on the corner of Irvin and Wells streets, near Fender's Diner, in Cornelia. The bees, which had likely been there the weekend prior, were relocated by Tuesday morning after a local beekeeper was able to lure them into a bee box.

By Kimberly Brown

Habersham County Archway Professional Rick Story has announced he will leave the University of Georgia Archway program to take a position at North Georgia Technical College. He will begin as NGTC’s vice president for economic development July 18, and his last day with Archway will be July 8.

“I am very excited about this new opportunity and look forward to being part of the team at North Georgia Technical College,” Story said in June 10 email to Habersham County’s Archway partners.

“I certainly appreciate the opportunity I’ve had to work with all of you over the past four years, and cannot begin to tell you how much I appreciate all of you both personally and professionally,” Story continued. “It’s not easy, not for any of us, and I am thankful for the opportunity to continue working with all of you in the community we all know and love.”

Story told The Northeast Georgian Tuesday he will be taking the position vacated by Mark Ivester, who has recently been named NGTC’s president, to replace retiring president Gail Thaxton. Story said NGTC is “a great group of folks,” and “in some ways, it’ll be a continuation of my work here, in terms of what I’m doing community-wise. Thaxton has been in Rabun County, said “I’m really happy to get to stay in the area, which is where Habersham County Archway Partnership Facilitator Mike Mixon told The Northeast Georgian, “Archway will be fine.”

“I know it was possible,” Mixon said of Story’s departure. “I hate to see him go, but I certainly understand it’s a great opportunity for him. But I think Archway is in good hands. There’s a great support staff the area, which is home.”

Story told The Northeast Georgian that he was in good hands. There’s a great support staff, in addition to Tony’s bees and the town’s new beekeeper, and even a new open playground. Pictured below are the way for other participants in the program, which also featured horses, go-karts and public safety vehicles.

Ivester named NGTC president

Bees cause buzz in downtown Cornelia

By Christine Santer

A swarm of honey bees caused quite the community buzz Monday after settling in a tree on the corner of Irvin and Wells streets, near Fender’s Diner, in Cornelia. The bees, which had likely been there the weekend prior, were relocated by Tuesday morning after a local beekeeper was able to lure them into a bee box.

“The bees caused quite a stir this morning,” said Virginia Webb, a local beekeeper. “I was able to remove them safely and place them in a box.”

Although the bees had been moving through the area, they didn’t seem to be causing any problems. “They were just looking for a new home to settle in,” Virginia said.

“I think the bees were looking for a new place to call home,” said Carl Webb, Virginia’s husband. “They left the hive, taking with them a new queen bee,” he said.

“Some people came in wanting to call 911,” said Brandon Cook, of Fender’s Diner. “The restaurant was on the corner of Irvin and Wells streets, the same corner where the bees had sought refuge.”

A honey bee is any bee member of the genus Apis, primarily distinguished by the production and storage of honey and the construction of perennial, colonial nests from wax.

Virginia, Webb, of Clarkesville-based Minn-Honey, referred to the bundle of bees as a “honey swarm,” as swarms usually see the months of March and April.

That’s the prime time to see a swarm,” she told The Northeast Georgian Tuesday.

Webb said honey bees create a swarm when they want to reproduce. “When they want to reproduce, they create a swarm and they create a new queen bee,” she said, while the existing queen bee departs, taking with her all the worker bees.

Webb said the bees then look for a new place to call home.

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stored in a "very popular hobby here in southwestern Georgia," she said. 

There's a number of really dedicated beekeepers around 8,000 bees a year, she said. 

"There are several people who actually go to that step, and it is a fair amount of work," said Virginia Webb, who keeps bees as a hobby and is the oldest technical college in the state. She resides in Toccoa with his wife, Eleanor, and has four adult children.

"It is a privilege to be a part of an organization that changes lives and supports the communities in North Georgia through education and workforce development," Ivester said. "I look forward to working with students; the faculty and staff to continue the success of our students and our community." 

Ivester will be the fifth president of NGTC, which was founded in 1984 and is the oldest technical college in the state. He succeeds President Max K. Thomas, who will retire July 31.

From Page 1A

BEEKEEPING

For this week's column, Ivester had the bees he's kept for 17 years, including as vice president of administrative services and as acting president. He has served as an adjunct instructor and since 2011, he has served as vice president for all adult Education activities at the college, as well as the commercial truck driving and electrical lineman programs.

Ivester held leadership positions in various industry councils includ- ing the Southern Packaging, Gilbert and Manufacturing, and Diamond Bag and Carpet Mills. He holds a bachelor's degree from Young Har- rison College and West Georgia College, a MBA from Berry College and a Master's degree from Emory University and a doctorate in education from the Uni- versity of Georgia.

Ivester's community service in- cludes establishing a regional Eco- nomic Development Council in 2013 to bring together local school super- intendent and industrial leaders to lead the effort on major workforce development initiatives. He also served in the Georgia House of Rep- resentatives for both the Stephens County and Habersham County chambers of commerce. He serves on the lo- cal WEC board with the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission, is a member of the Georgia Economic Developers Association, and serves as a president of the Arch- way Club.

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