

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Cloudy 47 19
Fri: Sunny 37 18
Sat: Sunny 45 21
Sun: Sunny 45 23
Mon: Cloudy 50 30
Tue: Showers 53 31
Wed: Cloudy 52 38



Upstream Elevation Predicted 01/11/12
Lake Chatuge 1917.54
Lake Nottely 1761.36
Blue Ridge 1668.71

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Cold

The National Weather Service is calling for morning low temperatures in the upper teens through Sunday. The good news: no precipitation is expected during the cold snap. An expected snow shower closed schools last Tuesday and put classes on a 2-hour delay for Wednesday.

Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Distribution is scheduled for Tuesday Jan. 17 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. All that are in need of food assistance are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to pick up your food, please contact The Pantry at (706) 896-4783 prior to distribution day. All clients and inquiries are kept confidential.

Area Duals

The Towns County Indians grapplers finished fourth in Area 3-A Duals on Friday and Saturday at Holy Innocents in Atlanta. The two-day tournament almost equaled the Indians best performance of the year. Turn to **Page 9A** to read about the improving Indians' wrestling program. The team will now prepare for the Area 3-A Tournament to determine which individual wrestlers will compete for state championships at Gwinnett Arena.

Free Tutoring

Young Harris Family Development Center at Stephens Lodge Community Center is offering tutoring, games, snacks, meals, counseling, parenting workshops and activities on Tuesdays from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Contact Towns County Family Connection at (706) 896-4131 for more details on how to enroll your student.

Towns County won't defect from GHSA

Joining fledgling Georgia Public Schools Association not a viable option for school sports programs

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Though small public prep schools will never have a level playing field with private schools, Towns County High School Football Coach Kyle Langford is certain of one thing: the Indians will remain members of the Georgia High School Association.

For the Indians, it's a matter of logistics. Figure in the cost of fuel and time in the travel equation and GHSA still looks pretty darn good, regardless of who is playing who.

"A lot of schools in Class A are not very pleased with the imbalance created by the private schools having the option of recruiting talent to their schools in various sports," Coach Langford said. "It appears that the schools that are disap-

pointed with the GHSA are going to form a new league and that's fine."

More than 30 disgruntled public schools appear poised to defect from GHSA to form the Georgia Public Schools Association. Most of the schools are from South Georgia. Washington-Wilkes and Gordon Lee high schools are among the schools ready to defect.

"I think their (GPSA) issues are very valid because the GHSA has not made a decision on rural public schools playing against private schools," Coach Langford said.

A vote on Tuesday by the GHSA Executive Committee could put Class A sports on a more level playing field as that committee could decide to eliminate playoff competition among private and public schools in

See *Staying Put*, page 11A



Towns County Indians' Head Football Coach and Athletic Director Kyle Langford (center) said that the Indians are staying put in the Georgia High School Association. An opportunity to join the fledgling Georgia Public Schools Association isn't feasible, Langford said. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Two more Firewise communities

Towns County is one of state's top communities in Firewise certifications

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Saving local neighborhoods from the threat of wildfires has become one of Fire Chief Mitch Floyd's primary goals for Towns County.

On Thursday, Chief Floyd and the Towns County Fire Corps board of directors will welcome two more Towns County neighborhoods to the Firewise certification program.

Wood Lake Subdivision and Leisure Woods Mobile Home Park on Owl Creek join Lake Forest Estates as national and Georgia Firewise communities.

"Firewise is a cooperative approach to reducing the loss of lives, property, and resources to wildfires," Chief Floyd said.

Firewise is a national effort to make neighborhoods throughout the country less susceptible to the destruction caused by wildfires. The program is alive



Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall and Towns County Fire Corps board members will dedicate two more Firewise communities on Thursday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

and well in communities in the Midwest and along the West Coast.

With three Firewise communities in Towns County and three more in the

works, Towns County is among the leaders of Firewise communities in Georgia.

See *Firewise*, page 11A

Hiawassee man's son is missing in Fort Pierce, Fla.

U.S.N. Retired Chief Johnson's son missing since Nov. 12

By Charles Duncan
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U.S.N. Retired Chief Petty Officer Bud Johnson of Hiawassee is holding out hope that his son Scott William Johnson is still alive in Fort Pierce, Fla.

Scott Johnson, 56, has been missing since Saturday, Nov. 12, 2011. Fort Pierce, Fla. police say he was last seen at Harbortown Marina where his boat is docked.

He was last seen between 4:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. that day.

Chief Johnson, 89, of Hiawassee, an Iwo Jima vet, who was on the U.S.S. Missouri when the Japanese surrendered to end World War II, says Fort Pierce authorities were notified when Scott didn't show up for work the following Monday.

"Scott is a good man, he's never missed a day of work in his life," Chief

See *Missing*, page 11A



Scott William Johnson



Chief Johnson holds out hope that his son is alive and well. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Denton remembers Pearl

Towns County native and Pearl vet now lives in Charleston, SC

By Charles Duncan
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Towns County native George Denton spent four years and nine months in the United States Army.

He was stationed at Fort DeRussy near Honolulu, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941. He witnessed a day that lives in infamy – the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese.

He wasn't alone. His friends from Towns County, Henry Hedden and Forrest "Cotton" Hedden were two miles away at Fort Ruger. "Henry's outfit saw



George Denton, third from left, remembers the day he and his friends Henry Hedden and Cotton Hedden entered World War II.

more action on Dec. 7, 1941 because their guns were mobile, whereas our guns at Fort DeRussy were stationary," Denton said.

Denton and Henry Hedden and Cotton Hedden were sworn into the U.S.

See *Denton*, page 11A

Fire damages Swallows Creek home

Quick response by volunteer firefighters saves 75 percent of home

Capt. David Sellers
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A local family living in the Swallows Creek community got a New Year's present two days early.

A Dec. 30th blaze at the Swallows Creek home had the potential to be a total loss.

However, Firefighters from stations 1, 2, 4 and 6 put a quick knockdown on the fire.

The events that led to the fire call unfolded as a

Swallows Creek retiree and his family were gathering fire wood in the yard to add to their winter stock. The home owner noticed an excess of smoke coming from his chimney. Earlier in the day he had stoked the wood stove, their main heat source. A chimney fire was suspected and a call to 911 brought out fire department personnel to investigate.

Upon entering the basement of his 3,000 square-foot home, smoke had filled that room and the

realization that a fire was burning outside the stove was evident.

The 3 p.m. call brought out Stations 1, 2, 4 and 6 fire apparatus. Firefighters arrived to find not only the basement, but the living room burning as well.

After 20 minutes of hard firefighting, the home was saved. Approximately 25 percent of the structure had been damaged.

See *Blaze*, page 11A

Rep. Broun hosts Town Hall Meeting at YHC

Scheduled for noon on Jan. 11 (Wednesday)

By Charles Duncan
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Tenth Congressional District U.S. Rep. Paul Broun is coming to Towns County.

The Congressman will host a Town Hall Meeting at Young Harris College on Wednesday, Jan. 11 (today) at noon at Wilson Lecture Hall in the Goolsby Center of the YHC campus.

The constituent get together is designed to allow those represented by Broun in the 10th Congressional District to ask questions that concern them the most, especially those experiencing difficulties with federal agencies, such as the IRS, the Social Security Administration, or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Rep. Broun, who currently represents Towns County in the 10th Congressional District, has been one of the most outspoken critics of President Obama's Healthcare Reform Law.

Last week, Rep. Broun filed an amicus brief in conjunction with the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) which argued that the Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit was correct in strik-



U.S. Rep. Paul Broun

ing down the individual mandate portion of the Healthcare Law, but that it also should have declared the entire Affordable Care Act unconstitutional.

"The brief we filed lays out a clear argument that if the Supreme Court finds the individual mandate in Obamacare unconstitutional, it therefore must strike down the entire bill," Rep. Broun said. "One simply

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

