

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Cloudy	76 51
Fri: Showers	76 51
Sat: Showers	70 45
Sun: Showers	70 46
Mon: Sunny	71 45
Tue: Sunny	72 46
Wed: Cloudy	73 45



Upstream Elevation Predicted 03/21/12	
Lake Chatuge	1919.22
Lake Nottely	1764.27
Blue Ridge	1668.26

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Log onto our Web site

Log onto Towns County Herald.net to keep up with breaking news that impacts Towns County. If you haven't noticed, we've got the Legal Advertisements online. Feel free to take a look.

Love the Lake

Turn to Page 12A to find out more about how you can play a pivotal role in the Love Our Lake campaign.

A community cleanup effort is in the works for March 31 to help make the county's 136 miles of shoreline along Lake Chatuge a bit more pristine.

Call Candace Lee at the Chamber of Commerce for more details. That number is (706) 896-4966.

Purses for Sale

Chatuge Regional Nursing Home is having their second annual purses sale.

This year, all the proceeds will be donated to an employee and their family due to an unexpected illness.

The sale will be held on Friday, March 23rd at 2 p.m. at the Nursing Home.

Don't forget, the sale will be held Friday, March 23rd at 2 p.m. at the nursing home at 386 BelAire Drive in Downtown Hiawassee. Remember, it's for a good cause.

Food Pantry

There will be a free food distribution on Tuesday, March 27th at the Towns County Food Pantry. The distribution will take place 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 food, please call the Pantry at (706) 896-4783 prior to the distribution day so arrangements can be made. All clients and inquiries are kept confidential as usual.

The Herald profiles local law enforcement

Sheriff: 'our deputies are the face of our agency in our community'

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

This is the second in a four-part series of helping Towns County get to know its law enforcement personnel. Love them or hate them, there is a chance you may need their help some day. Read the March 28th edition of the Towns County Herald and get to know more deputies.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton has a saying about his deputies – they deserve all the working credit.

On Thursday, Deputy Wayne Whidden, a veteran traffic enforcement officer, will be named the annual MADD/ATTEN DUI Hero Award for Outstanding Achievement by an Individual Officer in DUI Enforcement in the past year.

Last year, Shawn

Dyer won the award, also for his work in Towns County.

Awards are given each year to recognize law enforcement agencies, officers, and individuals in the community who make a difference. The Area consists of 23 agencies in Union, Cherokee, Gilmer, Pickens, Lumpkin, Fannin and Towns counties.

The network is part of the Governor's Office of Highway Safety. Whidden is the Towns County agency's liaison with the state Office of Highway Safety.

Whidden is one of seven Towns County Sheriff's officers profiled this week by the Herald during its four-part series on getting to know local law enforcement and the faces that represent the agency.

Sgt. Doug Lloyd said that Whidden is a one-of-a-kind officer.



Towns County Sheriff's deputies Wayne Whidden, Bobby Palarchio, Travis George and Sgt. Doug Lloyd ride the roads of Towns County keeping their eyes and ears open and waiting for the next time they hear the call to duty. Whidden will be named the MADD/ATTEN DUI Enforcement Officer of the Year this week. Bank on it. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"He's efficient and dedicated," Sgt. Lloyd said. "He was born and raised here, he's our lead

DUI guy," said Lt. Brian Wilson, the agency's commander of field operations. Lt. Wilson describes

Whidden as a deputy who has your back.

See Profiles, page 13A

Travis Tritt shines at Hall

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Travis Tritt was his usual electric self on Saturday night as he kept fans at Anderson Music Hall on their feet.

Prior to taking the stage, Tritt held a meet and greet backstage for lucky fans that wanted to meet their Country Music idol.

Well, those photos,

See Travis Tritt, page 12A



Travis Tritt was true to form at The Hall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Attempt to save 'the Goose' has begun

Funding for Action Plan in place to restore Lake Chatuge

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Thursday night was an honor for Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall.

It marked the beginning of the campaign to return Lake Chatuge to its historical ecological health rating of 'good.'

Commissioner Kendall signed off on the federal and non-federal grant dollars that will be used to bring the 7,000-acre impoundment back to the way it used to be when it filled up in 1942.

It's been a campaign promise from Commissioner Kendall since he was first elected, that he would do everything within his power to preserve our mountains and our beautiful lake.

He dedicated \$300,000 from last year's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax dollars to



Commissioner Bill Kendall

team up with the City of Hiawassee to try to eliminate nitrogen and phosphorus problems from the lake. Nitrogen and phosphorus are the two most significant nutrients related to algae growth.

A huge portion of those dollars will be used to upgrade the City of Hiawassee's wastewater treatment plant, also one of the listed sources that have degraded the lake's health over the years.

During the late 1990s, the lake's health was put on

See Goose, page 12A

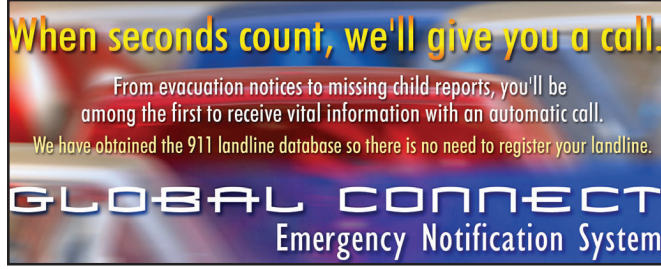
Emergency Alert Test on Friday

By Charles Duncan
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Friday at 10 a.m. is an important day in Towns County.

It is the first test of Towns County's Emergency Response System.

If you've got a land line in Towns County, you'll get a call testing the breadth of the system between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., Towns



County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said.

Also, the phone will ring between 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. for the exact same rea-

son, Commissioner Kendall said.

The Emergency Re-

See Alert, page 12A

'Possum' returns to Hiawassee

Tickets still available for Randy Travis' Saturday performance

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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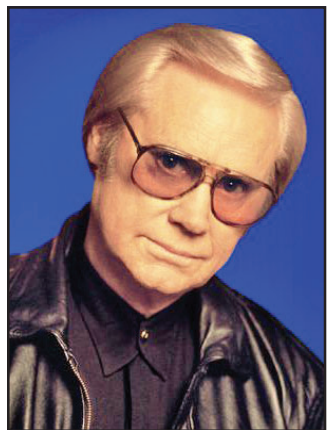
The 'Possum' is coming back to Anderson Music Hall on May 26th.

Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason made the announcement Saturday night before Travis Tritt took the stage at The Hall.

The special guest: Confederate Railroad, Thomason said.

Tickets go on sale March 30th. Cost: \$45 plus \$2 handling, Thomason said.

Also, on Saturday night, Country Music fans



George Jones

will have the chance to see another Nashville legend, Randy Travis, as he brings his golden voice to Anderson Music Hall.



Randy Travis

Thomason said that locals are lucky: there are still some seats available for

See Possum, page 12A

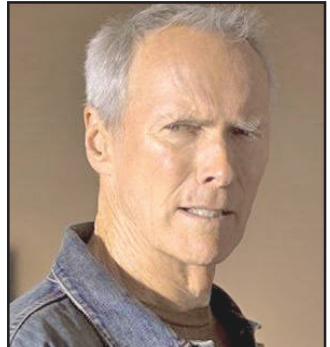
Movie looking for extras

Eastwood's Trouble with The Curve to film here April 16th-17th

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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It is official, *Trouble with the Curve* starring Clint Eastwood, John Goodman, Ed Lauter, Amy Adams and Justin Timberlake will film at a series of locations in Towns County next month.

Towns County Chamber President Candace Lee, the county's Camera Ready liaison with the state of Georgia, said that various scenes contained in the movie will be filmed in Young Harris



Clint Eastwood

and Hiawassee.

"We received a call several months ago regarding the probability of portions of this movie, which fea-

tures Clint Eastwood as an aging baseball scout, being filmed in North Georgia and then received confirmation that several areas in Towns County would be featured," Lee said. "Last week we sent out an e-mail blast to all our members for a 'Call for Extras.'"

According to Lee, on April 16th and 17th, filming will take place in Young Harris and extras will be needed. It's important to note that the extras being

See Trouble, page 12A

Watershed action plan: 'return lake's health'

Rapid growth in 1990s hurt Chatuge's quality

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Callie Moore knows Lake Chatuge by heart.

As the executive director of the Hiawassee River Watershed Coalition, it's her baby. She jumps when it cries out in the night. Since 1995, it's been crying an awful lot.

Increased development, increased impervious surfaces and unchecked stormwater runoff have left her baby almost on life support.

A 2007 action plan study paid for by federal grant dollars showed that increased levels of nitrogen and phosphorus were killing the lake. Algae was smothering her baby.

"You've seen it on TV, these large mats of algae just smother the lake," she said. "Algae blooms are a lake's worst enemy. That's the extreme, that's what we're trying to prevent."

The economy took a turn for the worse around the time the study was complete. Ironically, it's been a blessing for the lake. Algae levels have almost dissolved.

"Over the years, the lake has gone from crystal clear where you could see



Callie Moore

all the way to the bottom, to well, it's not muddy, but you just can't see all the way to the bottom," Moore said. "Increased algae in the water is the reason."

Moore says it's imperative to keep summer time concentrations of algae at bay.

"We want to prevent algae blooms in our coves," she said. "Lake Chatuge is really broad and shallow and the cove areas are really vulnerable to algae blooms

See Watershed, page 12A

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

