



If it wasn't a tornado on April 4th, it came pretty darn close to the real thing. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

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attention to Gov. Nathan Deal, who could possibly include Towns County in a disaster declaration that would mean federal dollars to help offset the cost of clean up efforts following the storm.

Commissioner Kendall said that the storm was one of the worst in recent memory.

"We don't have a dollar figure on the damages," Commissioner Kendall said. "We had trees down all over the county. Again, we don't have a dollar figure on the damages. We haven't heard anything from the governor yet, so we're still waiting and watching."

Clyde Shook, who oversees the county's Road Department, said that his crews cleared more than 50 trees from the county's roadways in the aftermath of the storm.

"We had a lot of tree damage," Shook said. "I know this sounds like a lot, but we had 50 or more trees down across the roads. There were a lot of trees down that weren't across the roads."

"This was a bad storm with a lot of damage," Shook said. "It's one of the worst storms we've had in several years."

Towns County Emergency Management Director Ricky Mathis said the most extensive tree damage was

in the Fodder Creek area.

"And we had the two houses that I know of that had the roofs taken off," Mathis said. "There were a large amount of trees down. I haven't heard anything mentioned about a tornado, the damage was caused by straight line winds."

Mathis said that there were no injuries reported during the storms.

Sheriff Clinton said the damage at his home in the Hog Creek community was extensive. The roof was ripped off, the rafters slightly twisted and extreme water damage from the storm's deluge.

"The insurance company called it a tornado and I'm not going to argue with them," he said. "It just flooded the house. Water just poured down through the ceiling, down the walls, it soaked the floors."

The sheriff said he heard the storm coming and it sounded like a jet engine.

He gathered his wife and children and headed for a closet. He brought a mattress to put over the family, which will soon grow by one in a couple of months.

"Jane (daughter) heard it and she started screaming," he said. "Crystal (wife) grabbed Jane and

I grabbed Ian (son) and we got in the closet. I came back out and jerked a mattress off the bed and covered us up.

"I've never heard anything like it before," he said. "Afterward, Sheriff Clinton went outside to assess damages. A willow tree in his yard was missing its top. That top landed on the deck of the home."

"It took the complete roof, I mean front, back, both sides of the gable, I mean everything," he said. "I never heard any of that happening; all I could hear was that jet engine. When daylight came, you could see there as a storm path."

The sheriff had nothing but high praise for the folks that came out to help immediately after the storm, which included off-duty deputies.

"I can't say enough about the people here in Towns County," he said. "I know that we're fortunate to live in this community. It's full of good people and Crystal and I both appreciate each and every one."

The most important aspect of the incident is that no one was hurt, the sheriff said.

"We lost some material stuff," he said. "But, the Good Lord knows that we've still got each other. That's what matters the most."

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flow again this year."

Parrish said he was pleased to see such an encouraging turnout to the community meeting.

"This is becoming a lasting event for Towns County and Hiwassee," he said. "We want to see folks in your shops and restaurants. We'll only have these

car show folks from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Then we'll turn them loose and we want them to come do business with you.

"Anyone who wants to stay open late on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, that's great," he said. "We can direct these folks to you."

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storms were deemed more intense than the system that came through Towns County on Monday night and early Tuesday.

The National Weather Service reported that the

storm system coming into Georgia from Alabama weakened as it approached Northeast Georgia.

The heavy rains were reduced to April showers by 1:15 a.m. Tuesday.

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funds have been approved for inclusion on the state's priority lists of projects and are eligible for funding in the current legislative session.

Those funds would be lost if the legislature approves funding while the local governments are listed as non-qualified local governments. State Library Facilities Director Nathan Rall has said the county and local governments must be qualified in order to receive the state's capital outlay grant. The threat of losing state priority funding status

for the library has prompted Commissioner Kendall to seek a court resolution to the disputed service delivery agreement.

Commissioner Kendall said that he wanted to emphasize to the courts the importance of lifting sanctions against funding for Towns County while the parties involved continue to negotiate a service delivery agreement in good faith.

Commissioner Kendall learned on Friday that the Georgia Department of Transportation has taken

one road project away already.

That project, the resurfacing of two county roads, means the county lost \$133,000 in road funding due to its non-qualified government status.

Also at stake is \$112,000 in grant funding for the Towns County Health Department and \$270,000 for the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition.

A Superior Court decision to lift grant funding sanctions during the mediation process could come this week.

Banker's Hour...continued from page 1

Day, mistress of ceremonies and event organizer, kicked off the show with an introduction of the Chief Executive Officer of UCBI, Jimmy Talent.

Talent excitedly spoke of the cast, saying, "I didn't know how they could get any better than they were last year, but they did."

He also recognized the cast members, sacrific-

ing their Saturday night to participate in the show.

With economic times as they have been in UCB's banking communities, it has never been more important to the cast to entertain people and show them a good time than this year, Day said.

She said it takes about 100 bank employees to put on the event, which covers

not only the performers, but backstage and ushering.

Entertainers participating in the show from the Blairsville and Hiwassee communities included Chris Adams, Eric Collins, Anna Gladdin, Mike Infante, Jessica Johnson, Melissa Nanney, Janice Smith, Bryan Soskeny, Greg Stephens, Kurtis Underwood, Allison Boswell and Kim Bridges.



From the golden pipes of David Riddle, to the simplistic comedy of Chris Adams, audiences at Anderson Music Hall thoroughly enjoyed "Entertainment on the High Seas." Photo/James Reese

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one huge orange fireball.

"After we got there, we were able to get a quick knockdown on the blaze. We had it out in five minutes," Copeland said.

The building, used for storage of antiques, was located on the Earl McClure property, Copeland said.

"It was a total loss,"

Copeland said. "Basically, it was 800 square feet of antique furniture, items that were irreplaceable."

"After our initial investigation, it was determined that two teenagers were smoking in the building and that led to the fire," Copeland said. "The owners of the property didn't want

to press charges.

"I can guarantee you one thing, I gave those two a talking to that they won't soon forget," Copeland said. "The best thing that came out of this is that we don't have two dead teenagers."

"It was very easily could have been a very tragic situation," he said.



Firefighters got a knockdown on this blaze on Georgia 288 in five minutes. Photo/Jim Davis

American Legion Auxiliary meets

American Legion Auxiliary meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Blairsville Civic Center at 7 p.m.

All ladies who have had a husband, father, son, brother, or grandfather that served in military is eligible for membership.

We are a community service organization. If you would like to be a member please call Eulalie Jones, President at 706-745-7097 for more information. N(Apr13,21)CA

Free legal services

Free legal services are available to senior citizens and low-income clients in your area. Services are based on case type and financial eligibility. GLSP does not handle criminal cases. For an appointment, please call 800-745-5717 or 770-535-5717 between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, Monday - Thursday. N(Apr13,21)CA

Mountain Coin Club meets

Mountain Coin Club meets the second Tuesday of every month at Blairsville Civic Center from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. for fellowship, education and auction. Public is welcome.

For more information, please call YOCS 706-379-1488. N(Apr6,21)CA