

# Towns County Herald

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 81 Number 27

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Clouds	85 61
Fri: Storms	83 59
Sat: Storms	83 58
Sun: Storms	76 57
Mon: Rain	75 53
Tue: Rain	73 51
Wed: Rain	72 50



Upstream Elevation Predicted 5/12/10	
Lake Chatuge	1925.50
Lake Nottely	1774.90
Blue Ridge	1685.70

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## Cornwell case

GBI Public Affairs Director John Bankhead told *North Georgia News* that the GBI is investigating to see if there is some link between the late James Scott Carringer, 42, of Young Harris, and the disappearance of Kristi Cornwell. Cornwell has been missing since Aug. 11, 2009.

In April, Carringer killed himself inside a car in Buckhead. He was a suspect in the abduction and rape of a person he knew.

The GBI has not called Carringer a suspect or a person of interest in the Cornwell case. Carringer drove a silver Nissan Xterra prior to obtaining the black vehicle he had when he killed himself. A silver Nissan may have been involved in the Cornwell case. The GBI has been to Carringer's home, but did not say if they found any evidence.

"We don't know if there is any connection of not between James Scott Carringer and the disappearance of Kristi Cornwell," Bankhead said.

The website [www.nganews.com](http://www.nganews.com) will publish information from law enforcement agencies about this situation and the Cornwell case as it becomes available.

Norman Cooper North Ga. News

## Food Pantry

A free food distribution is scheduled Tuesday, May 18th. The distribution will be at the Towns County Food Pantry from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. All in need of food are encouraged to attend. If you're unable to pick up food please call (706) 896-4783, prior to distribution day.

All clients and inquires are kept strictly confidential.

## Fund Raiser

The Towns County Booster Club will host a Car/Truck/Motorcycle Show on May 15 in the Towns County High School parking lot. Admission to the event is \$5. Entry fees are \$20 for a car or truck and \$10 for a motorcycle. No awards will be given; this is a fundraiser event. The event benefits athletics in grades six through 12 in Towns County Schools. Deadline for entry is May 1. Call (706) 781-8763 for more details.

## Spring Game

The Towns County Indians' Blue and White Spring Football game is scheduled for May 14 at 5 p.m. at Frank McClure Stadium in Hiawassee. Tickets are available at C&J Mountain Outfitters.

## Stewart is TCHS Valedictorian

By Charles Duncan  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
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Jeff Stewart has never scored lower than 94 on any course during his four years at Towns County High School.

He's considered one of the most well-rounded students ever to attend the school.

Stewart was named Towns County High School's Class of 2010 Valedictorian on Friday.

"It's a great feeling; I'm pretty excited about it," he said. "I'm proud of this honor. It's been an honor to have attended Towns County High School."

"Not ever school is perfect, every school has its flaws," he said. "But I think there are great kids here, great teachers. I don't know what I would have done with music anywhere else."



Jeff Stewart gets a handshake from Principal Roy Perren following the announcement that the TCHS senior is the Class Valedictorian. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Being a Towns County High School student has been one of the greatest experiences of my life."

Given his attitude and work ethic, TCHS Principal Roy Perren said Stewart will go far.

"He's great in every class he takes," Perren said. "He's a renaissance man; he's good at what ever he wants to do. I have no doubt that where ever he goes,

he's going to be successful. "Jeff has the fire in the belly, the desire to succeed," Perren said. "He's going to do well."

Stewart says he doesn't really have a secret to success other than he's always strived to do his best regardless of the task at hand.

"I've always been a

See Stewart, page 13A

## Hamilton new boys' basketball coach

By Charles Duncan  
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Ken Hamilton is a Towns County Indian, tried and true.

From the last time he pulled on his No. 25 Indians' jersey in 2001, to the last game he coached in February as interim head coach, Hamilton has thought of nothing but being the head basketball coach of his beloved Indians.

He'll get that chance after the Towns County Board of Education affirmed his selection Monday night as the Indians' head boys' basketball coach for 2010-11.

"This position has been Ken's goal," Towns County High School Principal Roy Perren said. "We interviewed several people for



Ken Hamilton

this job and he earned the position. I'm impressed with his character."

Five seniors will suit up for Hamilton's Indians in 2010-11, including the Hamilton-like Bradley Swanson, who incidentally wears No. 25. Other returning seniors include the intense and aggressive D.J. Rogers, big man Brett

See New Coach, page 2A

## Ralston: 'the future is bright'

By Jessica Keaton  
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David Ralston knows what it's like to walk the aisle at Young Harris College.

He accomplished that feat in 1974 and went on to earn a bachelor's degree at North Georgia College in Dahlonega and later, a law degree from the University of Georgia School of Law in Athens.

A burgeoning career in journalism gave way to a career law practice in his adopted home of Blue Ridge.

Ralston, born in Ellijay, where he graduated from Gilmer County High School, also had political aspirations.

In 1992, he was elected to the Georgia State Senate and served until 1998 when he won the Republican nomination for Attorney General. In 2002, Ralston was elected to the Georgia House of Representatives to serve the residents of House



House Speaker David Ralston delivers the Commencement Address to his alma mater at Young Harris College on Saturday morning in Glenn Auditorium. Photo/Jessica Keaton

District 7, which includes Fannin and Gilmer counties and part of Dawson.

On Jan. 11, in an historic moment in state legislative history, Ralston was chosen to lead the Georgia House of Representatives

as House Speaker, the chosen one to replace a disgraced and resigned House Speaker Glenn Richardson.

Ralston's path to the Gold Dome and one of the

See YHC grads, page 13A

## County to buy park land

By Charles Duncan  
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A piece of Towns County's heritage will be its future.

Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall told a crowd attending the annual Arts and Heritage Festival that the county will purchase land on Mining Gap Trail to preserve as green space and create a county park.

Surveys will soon take place, deeds will be drawn and sometime in July when the deal is done, the county will have between 45 and 55 acres, depending on the survey, Kendall said.

The property will be developed into athletic fields, walking trails and pavilions, similar to Meeks Park in neighboring Union County. Kendall also vows to use the land for the preservation of county green space.

The park's footprint is about the size of the Towns



Commissioner Bill Kendall

County Comprehensive School campus, Kendall said.

"We'll soon have a county meeting to discuss all this and I want to encourage all of you to attend," he said. "The deed will read that this property will be a park in perpetuity so future leaders cannot change this."

Kendall said that overall development of the

See Park, page 2A

## Presley Post Office restored

By Charles Duncan  
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The preservation of one of Towns County's "greatest treasures" is now complete.

Members of the Towns County Historical Society, local dignitaries and a strong contingent of community well-wishers were on hand Saturday as the veil was lifted from the "Old U.S. Post Office sign attached to the front of the recently renovated 78-year-old historic building that once housed the timeless Presley, GA Post Office.

See Post Office, page 13A



Dan Simpson removes the veil from the restored Presley, GA Post Office sign on Saturday. Alan Saylor looks on with approval. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

## CB&T comes through for Food Pantry

By Charles Duncan  
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Community Bank & Trust's Senior Vice President Lisa Strickland was feeling an incredible amount of community spirit on Monday as she handed Wilma Ash a check for \$500.

The Towns County Food Pantry gladly accepted the bank's generosity. They can take that money and turn it into \$2,500 with their buying power at the North Georgia Food Bank in Athens.

"Definitely, \$500 goes

See Food Pantry, page 2A



CB&T Senior Vice President Lisa Strickland presents Wilma Ash and Richard Botting a \$500 check for the Towns County Food Pantry on Monday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

## Tomatoes a plenty



United Community Bank handed out approximately 12,300 tomato plants and tons of food on Friday during their annual Customer Appreciation Day. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Charles Duncan  
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Approximately 12,300 tomato plants given away at United Community Bank's annual Customer Appreciation Day last week could have a huge economic impact locally.

Those plants, with an anticipated yield of 34 tomatoes each, would yield 418,200 tomatoes. That translates into about 1.5 million 'mater' sandwiches. However, it's unclear how many quarts of mayonnaise and loaves of bread would be needed to complete the Appalachian delicacy.

One thing is for certain, UCB attracted a crowd at its Hiawassee branch on the day traditionally known as Arbor Day in Georgia.

"It was a great crowd," said Towns County native Reggie Shook. "It was a great day and it tickles me

to see everyone come out and enjoy themselves. Those tomato plants are really something else."

The bank shared food, fun and tomato plants with its customers. A tradition that set's the bank apart from its competition.

UCB Hiawassee CEO and President Rick Martin was amazed at the potential yield of the bright green tomato plants passed out to the thousands who attended Customer Appreciation Day.

"Wow, that's a lot of tomatoes," Martin said.

Martin, sporting a broad smile, had to be pleased with the turnout.

The last brick of to-

See UCB Day, page 12A

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