

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, May, 16, 2012

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Sunny 74 54
 Fri: Storms 77 54
 Sat: Sunny 77 55
 Sun: Cloudy 78 55
 Mon: Cloudy 78 59
 Tue: Storms 78 59
 Wed: Storms 80 59



Upstream Elevation Predicted 05/16/12
 Lake Chatuge 1924.71
 Lake Nottely 1772.59
 Blue Ridge 1672.98

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Bill Kendall



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Trap Shoot

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton is oiling up his gun.

From 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, Sheriff Chris Clinton and the Chatuge Gun Club will kick-off the Fourth Annual Georgia Sheriff's Association Youth Homes Benefit Trapshooting Event at the Shooting Range on Owl Creek Road in Towns County. The 2012 event is being sponsored by the Jackie Jones Automotive Group. The event will feature raffles and silent auctions as well as door prizes.

"All the proceeds go directly to benefit the children of the Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes and because the Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes is a public charity, any donation to the Georgia Sheriff's Youth Homes qualifies for the highest tax deduction allowed by law," Sheriff Clinton said. "You don't have to participate in the trap shoot to participate in the other events of the day. Please come out and join us as we have a great time and raise money for a great cause."

The price for individual shooters is \$50 for 50 targets. Teams will be given preference on shooting times over individuals. The cost of a five-person team is \$250. There's also a 50/50 drawing and a Pig Shoot.

Prizes include a \$500 gift certificate donated by Alexander's Store and a 10/22 Ruger semi-automatic rifle .22LR. Call (706) 896-8343 for more details.



Prom Night is one for the ages for juniors, seniors

By Libby Shook
 Towns County Herald
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Blairsville – Saturday night it would not be uncommon at all to see young men and women parading around town, or walking into restaurants, decked out in formal attire wearing a beautiful corsage or boutonniere.

You may even see some hand-holding, smiling, or that special look seen only between sweethearts, as they are getting ready for what might be considered 'the event of a lifetime,' at least at this point in the lives of these young people.

You see, Saturday night North Georgia Technical College was the scene of an unforgettable event for many Towns County High School Students...prom night had arrived for this year's 2012 Junior-Senior Class.

Behind every exciting

prom night, you will find exhausted Junior Class Sponsors who donated endless hours planning, coordinating, overseeing fundraisers, chaperoning of students, while also continuing to carry on their regular, everyday classroom responsibilities as well.

The four sponsors responsible for working with the 2012 junior class and making sure that everything 'goes off without a hitch,' and that everything is kept very hush-hush until the big night, are: Sarah Morrison, Kelly Holloway, Chris Vardo, and Melissa McConnell.

They are deserving of a great deal of recognition and appreciation for their efforts.

"Our students worked very hard to raise money and funds for prom," Holloway said about this

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Ali Blectley and Dakota Barrett share a dance on the ballroom floor after they were announced as the 2012 Prom King and Queen on Saturday at North Georgia Technical College. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Williams praises Towns students

By Libby Shook
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The bell rang and Julie Payne, Lion's Club President, welcomed everyone to their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 8th, at Georgia Mountain Fairground's Anderson Music Hall.

Everyone stood at attention as she led the members and their spouses/guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Lion Ken Fuller led the opening invocation and

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Towns County Schools Superintendent Melissa Williams spoke to the Lions Club last week. Photo/Libby Shook

One man's trash, another's treasure

By Libby Shook
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At a time in this politically correct era when "Go Green," "Save Our Planet," and "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" are big catch phrases and natural resources are being consumed at an alarming rate, Skip Peters, a retired log home builder, certainly does his part.

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Georgia and Skip Peters at their home. Photo/Libby Shook

Band celebrates its beloved members

By Libby Shook
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Towns County High School Auditorium was alive with the 'Sound of Music' on Thursday night. No, Julie Andrews was not in town, but some of the finest aspiring, young musicians that the Towns County School System has to offer were. This was the scene of the 'Spring Band Concert & Awards Night' program with a near full house as parents and other family members, family friends, former band students, and community members came out to witness the great talent that Towns County's Schools have to offer. This was not only the final

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The Towns County Band's winds section performs at last week's Banquet and Awards Ceremony. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Mother's Day show a hit at Resort

By Libby Shook
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Young Harris' Brasstown Valley Resort kicked off spring with their Fourth Annual Mother's Day Arts and Crafts weekend.

The two-day event was located in the main lodge building, so even though the much need rain was beginning to fall Saturday morning and continued into Sunday, the only time guests to the event had to worry about dampening their spirits or themselves was when walking from the parking lot through the mountain laurel

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The annual Mother's Day Show at Brasstown Valley Resort offered a variety of gifts for Mom. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

BOE statement regarding budget struggles for FY2013

Special to Towns County Herald
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This year, in particular, board of education members are facing tremendous challenges because of the economy and funding cutbacks which directly impact students, staff and services.

In October of 2011, the board took steps to balance the current school year's budget by using its cash reserve funds to offset the approximate \$2.2 million budget deficit.

Being mindful of the current economic situation gripping the entire country, the board pledged to take steps to reduce expenditures for the FY13 budget while maintaining the instructional integrity and legacy citizens have come to expect from the schools of Towns County.

Tough decisions were made and steps were taken to reduce expenditures for FY13. These steps included cutting 10 positions, 8 of which were filled by 49 percent employees; reducing some system paid employee benefits; increasing class sizes at all grade and program levels,

using existing staff members to fill vacancies created through retirement, changing program offerings to increase state funding opportunities, and continuing to operate on a reduced calendar (students will attend school 178 days and teachers will work 184 days).

These steps helped but the state continues to push down cuts to local systems. Our preliminary allotment sheet showed an additional \$160,000 that the state withheld for the LFM (local five mills) that had not been anticipated. Add this cut in state funding with increases in State Health Benefits for classified employees in the amount of \$160,000; increased TRS funding of \$75,000; certificate/step increases for certified employees of \$175,000 and any savings realized by the budget cuts made by the board have been eaten up.

It is a challenge to explore every avenue possible to maximize our revenue and cut our expenses without jeopardizing the instructional opportunities we make available to our students.

Green Egg Fest returns

The Georgia Mountain Fair and Towns County Tourism Association are proud to host the Second Annual Hiawassee Green Egg Fest Friday and Saturday.

The festival, a hit in its first year, is yet another successful tourism event for the community.

More than 60 hotel rooms have already been booked with more reservations to come. The local authorized Green Egg dealer, Hiawassee Hardware has sold 55 Green Eggs in anticipation of this year's event. Additional sales are expected. The festival is a

great opportunity to purchase a Green Egg due to special event pricing.

More than 100 cooks have registered for this year's event and are ready to fire up their Big Green Eggs.

Tasters are needed to sample and experience the amazing food cooked on the Green Egg.

It's also a great opportunity to exchange recipes.

Come out and learn why the Big Green Egg is the ultimate cooking experience. Those planning to attend must preregister at www.mountainegg.com

Defenders of Freedom Day at Ridges

The Ridges Resort and Marina is hosting Defenders of Freedom Day at the resort Saturday, May 19th.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has declared Saturday a day to honor America's Armed Forces in Towns County.

Respect and admiration will be shown to those who have served, both living and fallen on Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Ridges.

The event is part of the resort's 25th Anniversary celebration. It's a day when all Military and Defenders of Freedom will be honored on this day, the Ridges General Manager Chad Hooper said.

"The Ridges Resort &

Marina will continue to support and promote their community, the military and their country," he said.

Hooper encourages local residents to attend the ceremony that begins at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

The ceremony includes a dedication of the resort's American Flag.

"This is an event that is free to the public," Hooper said. "As we all know too well, freedom isn't free and that's what makes this event so special."

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

