

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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50 Cents

www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 82 Number 34

Wednesday, June 29, 2011

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Rain	86	59
Fri: Sun	87	62
Sat: Sun	90	64
Sun: Sun	89	64
Mon: Clouds	87	63
Tue: Rain	85	63
Wed: Rain	85	64



Upstream Elevation Predicted 06/29/11	
Lake Chatuge	1925.42
Lake Nottely	1778.16
Blue Ridge	1678.79

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Firefighter BBQ

Mark your calendars for Saturday, July 2 as Towns County Fire and Rescue host their annual barbeque at the Fire Station in Young Harris. The event is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Firefighters will be smoking Boston Butts all night with applewood to make the most tender BBQ in Towns County.

Plates are \$5 and whole Boston Butts basted with Special Firefighter Sauces are \$30. To pre-order your Boston Butt, call (706) 379-3060. Leave your name, number and the number of Boston Butts that you desire. Pick up your Boston Butts by noon. Stop by and help raise funds to purchase vital firefighting equipment.

While you're waiting, have your vital signs checked by EMTs. Tour the facility and meet your local firefighting heroes.



Lady Indians

Towns County's 12 and Under Lady Indians softball team is headed to the state playoffs in Chickamauga on July 8. The Lady Indians need financial support to help pay for essentials like hotel rooms, travel and food. Those interested in pitching in and helping the Lady Indians in their quest for a state softball title in the Dizzy Dean State Tournament may contact Wes Hooper, (706) 896-2600, at Towns County Parks and Recreation for more details on how to help. If we all chip in a little, these girls have a shot to get there and back with a trophy. Let's help these young ladies get to their destination and show them just exactly what community support really means in Towns County.

SFB Hiawassee Branch to close Sept. 30

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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On Oct. 1, Towns County will be down to two banks.

That's because Stephens Federal Bank will close the doors of its Hiawassee branch on Sept. 30.

"We regret the necessity of this decision," said Tim Ash, President and Chief Executive Officer of the bank. "However, current unfavorable economic conditions which continue in our market area make this action necessary. While Stephens Federal remains a 'well capitalized' institution, we must take some difficult steps to remain sound well into the future."

The closure of Stephens Federal Bank's Hiawassee branch marks the second bank to announce it will close up shop and

leave town since late April. Community Bank and Trust City Executive Juanita Shope announced that the Hiawassee branch of CB&T would consolidate with the Clayton branch on July 29th.

Again, the ragged economic climate was cited as the reason for CB&T's departure from the local banking scene.

"Our first priority is to ensure that Community Bank & Trust is a sound and profitable bank so that we can continue to serve the banking needs of Northeast Georgians for many years to come," Shope wrote in a letter to her banking customers.

Ash said Stephens Federal Bank was prepared to continue to serve its customers at its offices in

See SFB, page 11A



Stephens Federal Bank will close the doors on its Hiawassee Branch on Sept. 30. President and CEO Tim Ash said current economic conditions prompted the action. Photo/James Reese

CMA members want to come back

By James Reese
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They came from near and far – Utah, Colorado, Missouri, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas just to name a few.

And when the dust settled Saturday at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, many of the almost 2,000 Christian Motorcycle Association members attending their Eastern National Rally were anxious to come back to Towns County in 2013.

The Eastern National Rally is held every other year. The group already is weighing bids for the 2013 Rally. Towns County is a frontrunner.

Savannah Chapter President Elton Stafford hopes the Rally returns to the Fairgrounds in 2013.

"We've had a great time with a lot of our great Christian friends," he said. "The people of Hiawassee and Blairsville have treated us with the utmost respect. They're very loving people; I just wish that the CMA will bring us back up here again."

The event was similar to a family reunion, comparatively speaking, a camp meeting combined with a family-oriented revival. The group invited everyone in the community to the Rally; you didn't need to be a CMA member or a motorcyclist to attend.

"Our message is to go out riding the highways and byways as God wants us to do; to seek out and search all that we can find to tell about Jesus Christ," Stafford said. "We are in the latter days now. Obviously times are getting short. God wants us to work harder than ever to get folks to follow Jesus Christ."

See CMA Rally, page 11A



Christian Motorcycle Association members were pleased with Towns County's hospitality. Photos/James Reese and Lowell Nicholson

Candace Lee to lead Towns Chamber

By Charles Duncan
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The Towns County Chamber of Commerce has a new president with a familiar face.

Candace Lee, formerly of Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, currently working with a nonprofit group in Ohio, will assume the duties of Chamber President on Aug. 1, said Charles Burton, a member of a special three-person Chamber Executive Board selection committee.

It was that familiar face and familiarity with the day-to-day operations of the Towns Chamber that helped a Chamber Executive Board



Candace Lee Search Committee recommend Lee, Burton said.

"She understands both sides of the equation," Burton said last week. "She's been a Chamber Board representative and she understands nonprofits. She is a

perfect fit for the job."

Lee was one of two finalists for the post. More than 20 persons applied for the position.

Lee succeeds Angel Long, who was named Chamber President in 2009. Long stepped down to make time for her family rather than her professional career. She has three small children under the age of 6 years old.

The rigors of being Chamber President had made it hard for Long to keep up with the day-to-day activities of her children while working Monday through Friday with week-end shifts included.

Towns man dies in White County crash

Cornelia man charged with vehicular homicide

By Charles Duncan
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Cleveland - Funeral services were incomplete at press time for a 62-year-old Towns County man killed in a two-vehicle crash in White County over the weekend.

William Lester Craig was returning home from work on Saturday, driving on Asbestos Road in White County, when his 1994 Ford Escort was struck head-on by a 2004 Chevrolet 2500 driven by 25-year-old Brent Lamar Russum, of Cornelia, said Gordy Wright, public information officer for the Georgia State Patrol.

"The accident occurred on (June 25th) around 5:10 p.m.," Wright said. "One vehicle (headed South) traveled off the west shoulder, causing the driver (Russum) to over correct, resulting in a head-on collision."

Russum was traveling South on Asbestos Road; Craig was traveling North,

Wright said. "(Russum) went off the west shoulder, came back across the center-line and collided head-on with the Escort (driven by Craig)," Wright said.

Craig died as a result of injuries sustained in the crash; Russum, according to Wright, fled the scene of the crash on foot.

"He fled the scene on foot, but was brought back to the crash scene," Wright said. "Once they found him (Russum), he was taken for medical treatment to Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville by ground transport."

Russum's medical condition was not available at press time.

Russum is charged with first-degree vehicular homicide; driving under the influence (refused blood test); hit and run; leaving the scene of an accident; failure to report an accident with

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GMF fireworks set for Fourth of July

Annual Boat Parade at 11 a.m.; fireworks set for 9:45 p.m.

By Charles Duncan
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The mountain streams, beautiful views and cooler temperatures could prove as a magnet for tourists during the Fourth of July holiday.

Last year, they came from near and far, from as near as Cumming to as far away as Massachusetts. They all wanted to witness the same thing: the beauty of Lake Chatuge and the cool of the night mountain air.

If Mother Nature cares to cooperate this weekend, Towns County is projected to be the place to be to celebrate the Fourth of July Weekend.

On Monday, the annual Boat Parade experiences a different twist, with the event taking place in the morning, rather than in the afternoon.

"The Boat Parade is scheduled for 11 a.m., and it's going to end at the Fairgrounds, up in the cove area. We'll have hot dogs, chips and drinks," Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' General Manager Hilda Thomason said. "The Fireworks are set



Annual Fireworks on tap July 4th at 9:45 p.m. Photo/James Reese

for 9:45 p.m." It's anticipated that there will be a petting zoo and pony rides at the Fairgrounds during the Fourth of July holiday. The Enchanted Valley Square Dancers will be swinging their partners

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

