

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Storms	76 54
Fri: Storms	73 45
Sat: Clouds	73 44
Sun: Clouds	74 47
Mon: Storms	73 47
Tue: Sunny	77 49
Wed: Sunny	78 49



Upstream Elevation Predicted 09/21/11	
Lake Chatuge	1920.87
Lake Nottely	1768.94
Blue Ridge	1674.77

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## Last Kiss

The Third Annual Summer's Last Kiss - An Affair with the Arts, is scheduled for Sept. 24 and Sept. 25 on the Downtown Square in Hiwassee. Summer's Last Kiss is a community celebration of creative expression held on the square featuring art, music, dance, poetry, crafts, food and fun. Come join event sponsors in Hiwassee on Saturday, Sept. 24 and Sunday, Sept. 25 for a community celebration of creative expression held on the Downtown Square. The affair takes place from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. If you are a craft or art vendor, visit [www.summerslastkiss.com](http://www.summerslastkiss.com) for an application or call (706) 896-4966 for more details. Calling long distance? Call (800) 984-1543. The event is sponsored by numerous Downtown businesses along with the Towns County Tourism Association and the Towns County Chamber of Commerce.



## Reward

Recently the Tree Tops Chevron on Bell Creek Road was burglarized. The Towns County Sheriff's Office, along with the store's owner, is seeking help from the public in an effort to quickly solve this crime. Any information which leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for this crime will be treated confidentially, and a reward is offered by the owner of the store.



## New

## Deadline

The Towns County Herald deadline for classified advertising submissions has changed due to printing schedules. The new deadline is Friday at 5 p.m.

# Akins: No rate increases from BRMEMC

By Charles Duncan  
Towns County Herald  
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Almost 500 members of Blue Ridge Mountain Electrical Membership Corporation came to Anderson Music Hall on Saturday morning to attend the cooperative's 77th Annual Meeting.

There was some good news: EMC electric rates will stay the same in the months ahead. There was some bad news: Tennessee Valley Authority will have a 2 percent wholesale increase in the cost of generated power. Users of the system will pay \$1.48 per kilowatt hour extra beginning Oct. 1.

And there was some more good news, at least for October: TVA's fuel cost reductions will offset the \$1.48 per KW hour.

That's the word from BRMEMC General Man-



GM Matthew Akins

ager Matthew Akins.

Akins told the crowd of 483 customers that the utility hopes to be in its new facilities by April 2012. Planning for that project began almost six years ago.

Akins said there were several reasons why the cooperative realized the need for a new headquarters facility back in 2006.

"These same reasons are valid today," he said.

The cooperative, Akins said, has outgrown the fa-

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Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Customers register for door prizes. Almost 500 members of the cooperative attended the 77th Annual Meeting at Anderson Music Hall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

# An AT community unites

Towns County becomes state's third Appalachian Trail Community

By Charles Duncan  
Towns County Herald  
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Towns County resident Jerry Carnes was all smiles on Friday.

He stood before a crowd of more than 40 people in front of the gazebo on the Downtown Square in Hiwassee. Carnes was caught up in the moment. Somehow, he knew this day would come. He had envisioned a day when hikers of the Appalachian Trail would be a welcomed site in Towns County.

After all, it was Carnes who began the movement last year to help Towns County become a designated Appalachian Trail Community.

It happened on Friday as Morgan Sommerville, Appalachian Trail Conservancy regional director, officially unveiled the signage designating Towns County, Hiwassee and Young Harris as the third community in Georgia to be designated an Appalachian Trail Community.

"We've looked forward to this moment for over a year," Carnes said. "This is not the efforts of one person; this is the effort of a community. It involves many more people and much more time than one person could set up."

Carnes recognized the Trail Community organizing committee: Candace Lee, president of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce, Connie Fisher, Joan Crothers, Pam Fagan, Ron Haven, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall, Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, Rosemary Royston,

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Towns County has joined an exclusive club: Appalachian Trail Community. It's one of three in Georgia. Photos/Charles Duncan

# Towns the site of new motion picture

By Charles Duncan  
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Have you ever heard of Tinsel Towns?

Well, by October, it's likely everyone will have heard the news that an adaptation of Brock Cole's *The Goats* will be filmed partially in Towns County.

Kai Thorup, a location manager for a movie company has selected the beach area of Towns County Beach and Public Pavilion and Cable Island as scenes for the upcoming filming of the movie *The Goats*.

The setting for the book is a mountainous area in Maine, which includes a social retreat called *Camp Tall Pines*. The uninhabited islands throughout Lake

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Commissioner Bill Kendall and Film Location Manager Kai Thorup prepare for launch from Towns County Beach last week. An adaptation of Brock Cole's *The Goats* will be filmed in Towns County on Lake Chatuge. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

# Lake Chatuge claims first victim of 2011

48-year-old North Carolina man drowns at Cedar Cliffs

By Charles Duncan  
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A 48-year-old North Carolina man is the first victim to drown in Lake Chatuge in 2011.

Santiago Eleazar Rios-Maldonado, of Hendersonville, NC was in the area of Cedar Cliff Road in Towns County, said Captain Mark Padgett, Region Supervisor for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Region II Law Enforcement Office, headquartered in Gainesville.

Rios-Maldonado had been working with a crew in the area constructing a home, Capt. Padgett said.

"Apparently the crew had been doing some work on a house in Towns County and at the end of the day, he (Rios-Maldonado) went for a swim," Padgett said. "According to witnesses he was swimming between two docks when he apparently experienced some difficulties on the return swim."

"He was thrown a rope, he grabbed a hold of the rope, but he couldn't hold on," Capt. Padgett said.

The incident happened at 4:55 p.m. Sept. 12, Capt. Padgett said.

A call was made to Towns County Fire & Rescue about 20 minutes after Rios-Maldonado got in trouble in Lake Chatuge. Rescue crews arrived quickly and divers searched the waters for Rios-Maldonado.



Fire Chief Mitch Floyd

At 5:45 p.m., Diver Terry Parker, of Towns County Fire & Rescue recovered Rios-Maldonado's body in 17 feet of water, about eight feet from the boat dock, Capt. Padgett said.

It was the first drowning in Lake Chatuge in 2011, Capt. Padgett said.

In 2011, 24 persons have died in water-related incidents in the Northeast Georgia region. Those incidents include boating accidents and drowning incidents, according to state records.

Towns County Fire Chief Mitch Floyd said that the recovery was quick once divers hit the water.

"There was a delay in alerting authorities for whatever reason," Chief Floyd said. "The victim had been in the water for about 20 minutes before a call was made to 911. There was a language barrier."

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family," Chief Floyd said.

# GBI: 'All clear at Young Harris College Campus'

By Charles Duncan  
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An incident investigated by several law enforcement agencies at Young Harris College last week yielded nothing significant, according to law enforcement agencies involved.

It was "better to be safe than sorry" after an YHC employee discovered a note of "a threatening nature" outside one of the buildings where students attend classes, authorities said.

John Bankhead, spokesman for the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, said that Young Harris College Campus Police requested his agency's assistance once the note was discovered on campus.

"Nothing came of it," Bankhead said. "I guess you could say the investigation was a better safe than sorry moment. No arrests were made and the investigation yielded nothing of significance."

As a precaution, Young Harris College administrators suspended morning classes on Sept. 13, until an investigation of the Tuesday morning threat was completed.

Agencies involved included the Towns County Sheriff's Office, deputies from Union County and GBI.

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

