

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Clouds	46 23
Fri: Clouds	50 27
Sat: Showers	48 31
Sun: Snow	42 16
Mon: Snow	26 16
Tue: Sunny	36 16
Wed: Sunny	42 23



Upstream Elevation Predicted 12/08/10	
Lake Chatuge	1919.24
Lake Nottely	1764.20
Blue Ridge	1624.39

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Gatlin Concert at The Hall



The Gatlin Brothers

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds has a special offer for all church groups of 10 or more: half price tickets to see Larry Gatlin and The Gatlin Brothers. Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said it's rare to get to see a professional concert of the stature of Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers for just \$15 plus \$2 handling.

Ticket prices for groups of less than 10 are \$30 each, plus \$2 handling, Thomason said. For more details about this special Christmas Show offer, call the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds at (706) 896-4191.

Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Pantry will hold its free food distribution on Tuesday, Dec. 7. The distribution will be held at the Towns County Food Pantry on Jack Dayton Circle from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

All that are in need of food assistance are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to pick up your food, please contact the Pantry at (706) 896-4783 prior to distribution day so that arrangements can be made to deliver your food. Clients' personal inquiries are kept confidential.

MacKaye Hike

Benton MacKaye Trail Association Fun Hike, Saturday, Dec. 18. Non-members welcome. An easy/moderate six-mile round trip hike in Helen to Unicoi State Park Lodge and return. Buffet lunch at the lodge or bring your own. Register with Hike Leader Nancy Shofner, (404) 881-6346. Meet in Blairsville at 8:45 a.m. or Helen at 9:30 a.m.

Deal appoints Butterworth Senate Floor Leader

By Charles Duncan
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Add senate floor leader to State Sen. Jim Butterworth's resume.

Butterworth, a Habersham County Republican who represents Towns County in State Senate District 50, was appointed last week by Gov.-Elect Nathan Deal to serve as one of his three floor leaders in the State Senate for 2011-12.

The leadership role means Sen. Butterworth will carry soon-to-be Gov. Deal's legislation as it moves through the legislative process.

"I am extremely honored by this appointment from Gov.-Elect Deal," Sen. Butterworth said. "The common sense, conservative ideals that we share are exactly what Georgia needs to grow and develop into a leader on the national stage."



State Sen. Jim Butterworth



Gov.-Elect Nathan Deal

I look forward to working with the Senate and the Office of the Governor to pass effective policy that will attract people and businesses to the state."

A floor leader is responsible for introducing and carrying legislation on behalf of the governor. They also can assist in the drafting process of new legislation and act as a liaison between the public, the Senate and the Governor's Office.

Gov.-Elect Deal also tapped State Sen. Ronnie Chance and State Sen. Bill Jackson to serve as floor leaders over the next two years alongside Sen. Butterworth.

Gov.-Elect Deal voiced his support for the three senators he selected as his floor leaders.

"It is an honor to have these three men join my administration as Senate floor leaders," Gov.-Elect Deal said. "The respect they have earned from their peers and their proven leadership assures me they are the right men to promote my agenda in the Senate. They will be



Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle

critical elements of my administration's success in the Legislature."

Sen. Butterworth also is one of two senators selected by Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle to the ruling Committee on Assignments.

"In the short time Sen. Butterworth has served in the state Senate, he has proven that he is a capable leader who delivers results," Lt. Gov. Cagle said.

"I'm confident in Sen. Butterworth's ability and look forward to all he will accomplish," Lt. Gov. Cagle said.

Sen. Butterworth is an effective leader whose efforts in the State Senate have created new jobs from incoming industries throughout North Georgia.

He also is working with parents, educators and our local school system to provide world-class educational opportunities for Towns County school children.

In July's Senate District 50 race, Sen. Butterworth won reelection in a cakewalk over his Republican challenger Terry Rogers. Butterworth had 64.2 percent of the vote in the eight-county race. In Towns County, Butterworth claimed 62.6 percent of the vote.

Sen. Butterworth represents Towns, Rabun, Banks, Franklin, Habersham, Stephens and Hart counties, as well as a small portion of White County in State Senate District 50.

Christmas at The Ridges

By Charles Duncan
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The Ridges Resort and Marina has decked the halls in anticipation of a crowd during its holiday Open House on Sunday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The new owners have brought in renowned interior decorator Tamala Wells of Knoxville, Tenn. to make the holidays a very welcomed attraction at The Ridges Resort, General Manager Chad Hooper said on Monday.

"Tamala has been here few days and you'd just have to look around the place to see how different the place looks from holidays past," Hooper said. "It's hard to describe, well, I guess one word that could sum it up is incredible."

"The Open House on Sunday will give the community a chance to see what The Ridges looks like now,"



The Bear Wreath says it all: 'Welcome' to The Ridges Resort Open House from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Hooper said. "We want to invite the community out for cider, snacks and cookies and a good time."

Tamala's Interiors evolved out of the florist trade. Tamala, her mother and her aunts did decors for parties, weddings and holidays in the North Carolina Mountains. Eventually, the

business evolved into an interior design group.

"I've been on my own since the mid-1980s," Tamala said. "We moved to Knoxville eight years ago. When we moved to Knoxville, we just kind of moved

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'Chief' remembers Pacific pain at Pearl

By Charles Duncan
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Chief Petty Officer C.E. "Bud" Johnson, U.S. Navy Retired, remembers the attack on Pearl Harbor like it was yesterday.

A veteran of World War II's Atlantic, European and Pacific campaigns, Chief Johnson, of Hiawassee, remembers a promise he and his fellow Navy shipmates made the day the Japanese Navy launched a surprise attack at Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

"I was not at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7th, 1941," he remembers. "I was on board my U.S. Navy Ship U.S.S. Rhind (DD-404) attached to the U.S. Navy Atlantic Fleet at that time."

"We all made a promise that we would all Remember Pearl Harbor and all



Chief Johnson

those who paid the price for our freedom that we are blessed with today," Chief Johnson said.

Johnson was stationed on the Benham-class destroyer named after Rear Admiral Alexander Colden Rhind during the surprise attack. The Rhind was in Trinidad at the time of the attack on Pearl.

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'Old Man Winter' arrives early

By Charles Duncan
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It's time to start believing the weatherman: it is cold outside.

Of course anyone with an outside thermometer can tell that. Heck, just walk outside in a T-Shirt and you'll quickly find yourself heading back indoors to the nearest heat source.

And no one will doubt it when they hear the weatherman predict snow is in the forecast for early next week. The National Weather Service predicts a 60 percent chance of snow on Sunday and a 30 percent chance on Monday.

By midnight Tuesday, with the wind chill factor included, the real feel temperature in Towns County was 7 degrees according to the National Weather Service.

By 9 a.m. Tuesday, the temperature was a frigid 6 degrees, wind chill factor included.

The culprit behind the Arctic Blast of cold weather, an Alberta Clipper, bringing unseasonable cold temperatures to the Southeast and bringing Christmas cheer to the fuel and utility companies.

The forecast for the rest of the week is encouraging. The prevalent winds that have made temperatures feel 10-15 degrees colder than they actually are, will subside, according to the National Weather Service.

High temperatures are expected to peak on Friday at 50 degrees, with lows feeling like the upper teens



Wayne Barter of TreeTops Lakeside stacks firewood Monday in lieu of Tuesday's frigid temperatures. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

(18 degrees is predicted). Those frigid winds are expected to be calm, thus giving a warming effect in their absence.

Rain is predicted for Saturday with a high forecast of 48 degrees and a projected low of 31 degrees.

Fire wood is becoming an increasingly popular source of heat locally for many families and the cold weather blast is bringing firewood sales to the forefront locally.

The good news, if there is good news, accumulative precipitation hasn't been a part of the frozen equation.

Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens went to bed early on Sunday night in anticipation of waking to snow ac-

companying the frigid temperatures.

Fortunately, Dr. Behrens could quickly return to bed early Monday after waking at 4 a.m. to see if there was an accumulation of snow in Towns County.

The early reports: clear skies, cold temperatures.

However, in neighboring Union County, clouds lingered throughout the night and snow flurries come down in showers at times. With wind gusts of up to 30 mph, those snow flakes didn't stay on the roadways for long.

Only time will tell if the weather predictions for later in the week are accurate. If the already chilly temperatures are any indication, one wouldn't bet against those predictions.

Young Harris rings in Christmas Season



Santa chats with a local youngster following the annual Christmas Tree lighting at Mayor's Park in Young Harris. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Charles Duncan
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Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby was in the fourth grade and playing in the student band when the city's annual Christmas Tree lighting became a tradition.

"When I was young, I got to play in the band the way the kids did tonight," Mayor Gibby said. "We were playing those little plastic flutes and it sounded horrible. All the parents were just as proud then as they are tonight."

"This tradition is always a fond memory," she said. "We all become children again and it's just fun."

That ritual continued Friday night at Mayor's Park as the city, its residents, the Towns County Indians' Raider Marching Band brass

section and Santa Claus came together to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas Season.

The band played a medley of Christmas favorites including Jingle Bells, Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Let it Snow and Silent Night.

Also on this night, Janice Schultz of Enotah Garden Club told the crowd that this occasion was special. It's the night the city and the Garden Club paid tribute to one of the most progressive mayors in Young

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