

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928

www.townscountyherald.net

50 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 81 Number 8

Wednesday, Dec. 30, 2009

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Showers	45 29
Fri: Snow	36 18
Sat: Snow	37 17
Sun: Cloudy	40 19
Mon: Snow	37 22
Tue: Cloudy	45 23
Wed: Sunny	46 25



Upstream Elevation Predicted 12/30/09	
Lake Chatuge	1919.30
Lake Nottely	1763.20
Blue Ridge	1668.50

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### Our gift to you

The Towns County Herald wants to make a difference during hard times.

For those currently unemployed, Senior Citizens and U.S. Military veterans, the Herald offers \$5 subscriptions for 1 year. That's a savings of \$21 off the newsstand price.

This offer extends to residents of Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay County, NC.

Simply bring proof of unemployment status; a simple Photo ID will suffice for Senior Citizens.

Veterans must provide proof of U.S. Military service.

The Herald also offers \$10 subscriptions for new subscribers from Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay County, NC.

At the end of one year, those subscribers can renew at a rate of \$15.

Again, we hope to make a difference when folks need it the most.

### Tax Office closed

Towns County Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers announces that the county tax offices will be closed on Thursday to conduct annual end of year accounting procedures. The Tax Commissioner's Office also will be closed on Friday, New Year's Day in observance of the New Year's holiday.

### Cruise-in meeting

The Towns County Tourism Association is sponsoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruise-In Car show Aug. 12-14 at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. The event was a tremendous success last year bringing more than 5,000 visitors to the community. A community meeting will be held at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Thursday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. in the Anderson Music Hall. Promoter Rakes Parish will discuss community involvement for the 2010 show. Call (706) 896-4966 for more details.



# Happy New Year!



## Out with the old in with the new; bye-bye 2009

By Charles Duncan  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD  
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It's almost over and I'm glad. The prospects for 2010 already show signs of economic recovery.

This week, we'll take a look back at the year that was and the signs of a new year that bring economic hope to our community.

I also want to take this time to share some personal experiences from 2009.

I'll sing no sad songs for 2009. However, I will thank the Good Lord and my multitude of friends and family who prayed for my survival following emergency heart surgery in March.

You see, I was healthy as a horse until early February when somehow I developed a dangerous blood infection that almost killed me. My blood stream went sep-

tic, or so the doctors tell me. To be honest - I was knocking on Heaven's door.

Thanks to the professionals at the Ronnie Green Heart Center in Gainesville, an understanding publisher in Kenneth West and an incredible stand-in performance by retired Towns County Herald Editor Carl Vanzura, I was allowed to get back on my feet.

Spending 49 days in intensive care will make a person think. I lay there thinking of new ways to attract new readership and advertising. In the last few weeks, you've seen the fruits of those days spent in intensive care.

We've been offering discount subscriptions to the unemployed, Senior Citizens and U.S. Military veterans living in Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay County, NC.

For \$5, those individuals can try out the Towns County Herald for the first time, or they can extend their loyalty beyond the fences of their current subscription.

For \$10, new readers in Towns and Union counties in Georgia, and Clay County, NC, who don't fit the above criteria, can subscribe to the Towns County Herald for \$16 off the newsstand price. Sign up for as many years as you like.

We're also in the midst of signing up every member of the Towns County Chamber of Commerce to a year's subscription and we're now Partners in Education with the Towns County School System, teaming up to bring the newspaper to every fifth, sixth and seventh grader in Towns County.

I'm not here to tout



Charles Duncan

our horn or pat our newspaper family on the back. Rather, I'm here to tell you that I'm lucky to be alive and I want to seize the opportunity of a new lease on life to impact our community like never before.

I was born here, I live here and one day, I'll die here. But before that happens, I want to build the foundation of the strongest hometown newspaper in America. Something that you and I both can be proud to call our own.

A lot of people are

preaching that newspapers are dying. Well, I'll never believe that. You see, the bigger, corporate newspapers have essentially abandoned their mission of a print newspaper in favor of the Internet. Well folks, the truth is, those bigger, corporate newspapers have never come here to cover our community. That is, not unless there was an overwhelming tragedy that peaked the interest of a broader audience.

The Towns County Herald, your hometown newspaper since 1928, continues to thrive and continues to bring you the happenings that occur each week in our community. The Towns County Herald has the potential to be the best hometown newspaper in the good ole' U.S. of A. I really

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## 2010 brings economic hope

By Charles Duncan  
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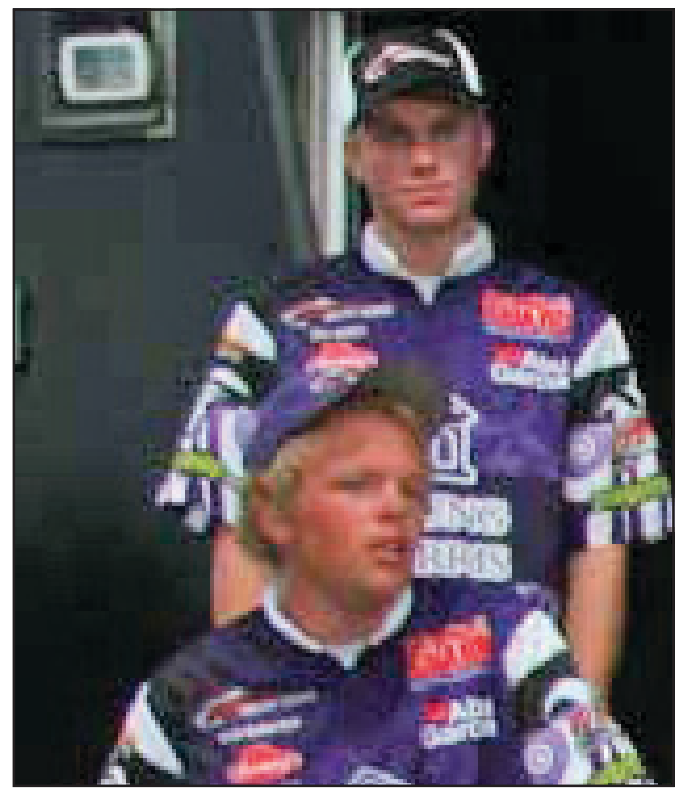
As the clock ticked down on 2009, the economic hope of 2010 began to take shape.

During the last scheduled meeting of 2009, City of Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis announced that as many as 50 new jobs were headed this way. The Baptist Retirement Association of Georgia had just closed on 23 acres near Towns County Schools to build a 120-unit retirement facility.

The facility not only brings 45-50 new jobs, but also brings numerous construction jobs while the facility is being built. Once built, it brings 120 new residents with buying power.

While 2010 was supposed to be the August debut of Lowe's Home Im-

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The fishing success of Clint McNeal and Brad Rutherford may spark a renewed bass tournament craze on Lake Chatuge in 2010. The Young Harris College bass fishing duo has advanced to the national title tournament scheduled in April in Knoxville, Tenn. Photo/Courtesy collegefishing.com

## 2009 almost in the history books

By Charles Duncan  
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A new city councilman in Hiwassee, an historic tax break, a family tragedy and a proposed commercial development put on ice dominated the headlines in 2009.

While the year is almost gone, it's appropriate to take a look back at the year that was and track the notable news stories.

On election night, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, Towns County registered voters decided to give themselves a tax break. When it was all said and done, 1,899 Towns County voters came to the local polls. Of those totals, 1,806 supported an amendment that Towns County homeowners with local exemptions the only county in Georgia with a \$10,000 tax break. Only 52 voters didn't want a tax break. The vote increases



A fire at 581 Scataway Road claimed two lives in December. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

the local exemption from \$2,000 allowed by the state to \$10,000 only in Towns County. The break takes effect Jan. 1.

In January, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall announced the effort to make Towns County the only one of Georgia's 159 counties to get the extra \$8,000 for local homestead exemptions that had been eliminated by the Georgia General Assembly.

In February, the Towns County Lady Indians advanced to the state playoffs again. They didn't make it to the Final Four, but made Towns County proud in a spirited run at a Class A state title. Also, Indians' wrestler Timmy Collier fought his way through a crowded pack of wrestlers to earn the fourth place

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## Called County meeting on Jan. 4

By Charles Duncan  
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Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall is seeking sealed bids for interest rates on Towns County General funds.

The sealed bids will be opened at a special County Meeting on Jan. 4, at 2 p.m. in the Towns County

Commissioner's Office, in the Courthouse, in Downtown Hiwassee.

Bids requested are as follows include fixed interest rates (APY) on three, \$500,000 Certificates of Deposit, beginning approximately on Jan. 5 for a term of 12 months. Bid forms will be provided.

Commissioner Kendall said that the county

reserves the right of automatic renewal of the Certificates of Deposit with the winning bidder for one renewal term, if so desired.

Towns County also reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason.

Sealed bids should either be brought to the Jan. 4 special meeting, or mailed to the Commission Office.

## New Year's Eve is a happening event

By Charles Duncan  
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The Temptations headline an eventful leap into 2010 when they come to Anderson Music Hall on Jan. 2.

Tickets are still available to hear the legendary Motown sound which gave new meaning to Soul.

Through the years, the Temptations have released four Billboard Hot 100 No. 1 singles and 14 Billboard R&B No. 1 singles. This three-time Grammy Award winning group is most famous for its well known hits, *Papa Was a Rollin' Stone*, *My Girl*, and *Ain't Too Proud to Beg*.

Ticket prices are \$37 plus \$2 handling and \$27 plus \$2 handling.

Rick Davenport and the Sundown Band will ring in the New Year at The Ridges Resort from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. on New Year's Eve. For \$50 per person, patrons get a gourmet buffet, dancing and a champagne toast at midnight. A cash bar is available. Call

(706) 896-2262 for reservations.

Café Portofino is pulling out the stops with the music of the Charles Milne Quartet, a four-course chef's specialty menu, two drink coupons and a champagne toast at midnight. All for \$75 per person, or \$150 per couple. For reservations, call (706) 435-0502.

At Brasstown Valley Resort, expect a blast from the past to welcome 2010. Brasstown Valley's New Year's gala includes "Studio 2010," during the 70's Disco themed Nightclub, featuring the music of the Uptown Band. The New Year's Eve celebration includes a gourmet dinner buffet beginning at 9 p.m.; a host bar, featuring fine liquors and signature Martinis, which opens at 8:30 p.m. and remains open until 12:30 a.m. The New Year's Eve package is \$449 per couple and includes a room, taxes and services. Waiting in your room: a bottle of champagne and chocolates. For more details, call (800) 201-3205.

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## Sheriff urges fire safety

By Charles Duncan  
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Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton urges Towns County residents to adopt a personal fire safety plan for 2010 in the wake of the Dec. 7 tragedy on Scataway Road.

"Recently, a family in Towns County lost two loved ones due to a house fire," he said. "This type of tragedy occurs far too often. There are some things that you can do to help keep yourself and your family safer."

Sheriff Clinton urges the installation and maintenance of smoke detectors in each home.

"Smoke detectors can save your life, but only if they are in good working order," he said. "Maintain and test smoke detectors regularly and never remove the batteries for other uses."

Another safety tip: if a smoke detector sounds while you are sleeping, roll to the floor and crawl, Sheriff Clinton said.

"If you encounter smoke, remember the best air will be closest to the floor," he said.

The sheriff asks residents to be sure to give heaters and fireplaces plenty of space.

"Placing combustible material close to a heat source can cause it to ignite and start a fire," he said.

The sheriff also urges families to adopt an escape plan in the event of a fire.

"A good plan should include two escape routes from any room in the home," he said. "You should designate a place to meet outside. Once out of the fire, stay out."

If your clothes are on fire, "stop, drop, and roll!" Sheriff Clinton said.

"By now most of you have heard of this. If your clothing catches fire, stop, drop to the ground, and roll," he said. "This is the best way to smother the flames. It is a good idea to cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs from smoke and flames."

"You should practice this plan with your family so that everyone is familiar with it," Sheriff Clinton said.

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

