

Snow...from Page 1A

as Monday of last week that a snow storm was brewing and potentially headed for Georgia, and leading up to the wintry weather, Rickey Mathis started getting in touch with all the county's first responders.

Mathis is director of the Towns County Emergency Management Agency, a position he has headed up for some years now.

For his part, Mathis disseminated weather briefings from the National Weather Service and kept in touch with the state, and he was confident that Towns County's first responders would be ready when the storm hit and throughout the weekend.

And indeed they were – roads were treated and scraped, fire personnel responded to motorists who came upon black ice, the Towns County Sheriff's Office stayed on top of all traffic considerations, and everyone else was ready on standby should they be needed, including Towns County EMS, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC and others.

“We do have professionals that are trained, vehicles that are equipped, and resources – we're going to get to people,” said Mathis. “Don't panic, we're going to get to you. Yeah, you've got to consider our response time may be delayed in certain circumstances, but we can't change what the good Lord gives us. We do the best we can with it.”

Sheriff Chris Clinton and Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw got out before the storm to spread the word about staying indoors and off roads during the bad weather, and for residents to call 911 should they need assistance.

The sheriff used Facebook to get other information out to the public, such as up to date road conditions and closures/delays.

As of press time Monday, the *Towns County Herald* had not heard of any major injuries caused by Winter Storm Helena.



The Georgia Department of Transportation at the State Barn in Hiawassee, filling up with a pre-treatment brine mixture to coat the roads before the snow fell last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



GDOT out scraping roads, here near the Brasstown Bald Visitor Center. The Towns County Road Department also worked around the clock to clear as many roads as possible over the weekend. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Photo by Whitney Dyer



Photo by Whitney Dyer



This bird was one of many that had no problem getting out in the snowy environs of Towns County. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Photo by Frank Uhle