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shoreline cleaning project, which will take place on Saturday, Nov. 4, from 9 a.m. to noon.

"We're going to be doing our Seventh Annual Lake Chatuge Cleanup at the Towns County Swim Beach Pavilion," said Keagan. "You'll want to arrive early, we'll have hot breakfast and we have T-shirts for everybody. And then, we'll have pizza and prizes at the end of the event."

"Last year, we collected 1.2 tons of trash, and our six-year total is 6.75 tons of trash. We've cleaned up a lot, it's gotten a little cleaner, I must say, but there's still a lot out there."

"We encourage everyone to come out if you can, to come and volunteer for the event, but we also very much need volunteer leaders. Since there's so many coves in the lake, we



**Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw**

often have people go out and drive to different areas, so we need volunteer coordinators to take groups."

Folks interested in volunteering for the cleanup can contact Keagan by email at [admin@hrwc.net](mailto:admin@hrwc.net).

"What would we have without the lake, what would we have without clean water?" said Bradshaw. "We wouldn't have anything. So, it's very important that we support these folks."

In his Commissioner's Report, Bradshaw said that the county budget was right on target, if not a bit under, and that his office was hard at work on next year's budget.

This month, the commissioner prepared a special handout for guests that highlighted a variety of facts and statistics about the county, including increased population estimates and real estate sales, along with other indicators of growth.

"Unemployment is definitely getting better, and we're excited about that," said Commissioner Bradshaw. "And we're excited about Advanced Digital Cable, which has finally moved in where the old Mohawk building is. They're in there, they're working and

operating there, and we're excited about that."

The commissioner spoke on his continued commitment to bringing as many tourism dollars to the area as possible, and said he was working with the Towns County Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds to maximize the potential there.

"I can stand right here and tell you that, in 2016, over \$48 million was spent on tourism in Towns County," said Commissioner Bradshaw.

In the old business portion of the meeting, Bradshaw held a second reading and adoption of an amendment to the county sign ordinance via resolution, which will allow the county to assess fees for the review of sign applications and for the issuance of sign permits.

Those fees were addressed under new business, and the commissioner amended the Towns County Schedule of Fees for Sign Permits to reflect a \$25 application review fee, as well as a sign permit fee that will cost applicants \$3 per square foot of sign face, plus a \$25 final permit fee.

Previously, the county had not been charging fees to review sign applications or issue sign permits.

# Fall Festival comes to a close; Casting Crowns performs Thursday

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

For nine days, the Georgia Mountain Fall Festival celebrated mountain heritage and the beauty of an Appalachian autumn, serenading, entertaining and bringing family-friendly fun to all those who visited from Friday, Oct. 13 through Saturday, Oct. 21.

"The Fall Festival went really well this year," said Hilda Thomason, Fairgrounds General Manager. "Overall, we had good attendance. The first part of it was really good. The booths all did well and we had a bunch of wonderful volunteers that came in and helped."

"Of course, the Lions Club always comes in and helps. It just worked perfectly. It was great. And the weather was absolutely gorgeous."

Some festival favorites of patrons this year was, as always, the Pioneer Village with its nod to the olden days of homemade corn whiskey, blacksmithing, log sawing, quilting, hominy making and more.

This year, after enjoying a leisurely stroll through the exhibit halls, catching glimpses of demonstrations in the village and picking up a must-have homemade item from one of the craft vendors, patrons could enjoy a live performance from not one, not two, but 12 Bengal Tigers, including a beautiful White Tiger.

"Every day the bleachers were full down there for the tiger show," said Thomason. "I had five sets of bleachers down there and it filled up. People were sitting on the ground as well. And the school kids came over from different counties and they all seemed to enjoy it too."

"The tigers were really beautiful and the show was great. The helicopter rides were good too. They were here on the weekends and a lot of people went up to see the beautiful fall foliage from the helicopter. That worked out really well too."

The music shows packed a crowd at Anderson Music Hall. Especially popular, Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder, who keep music lovers entertained on Tuesday.

And while it's sad to see a great thing leave, never fear because the Fairgrounds is busting at the seams with concerts, festivals and events to attend through the end of the year.

First up on the plate, is a concert from Christian music favorite, Casting Crowns, on Thursday, Oct. 26. Tickets for the show are still available, though they are going fast and Thomason advises to purchase a ticket sooner rather than later.

"We've sold somewhere between 1,500 and 1,600 tickets so far," said Thomason. "It's not sold out yet, so you



**Porch Pickin' has always been a fun activity in the mountains. Photo/Lily Avery**



**Quilt Makin' is still a popular thing to do in the area, and all in Pioneer Village. Photo/Lily Avery**



**The Georgia Mountain Fall Festival is always sure to draw a crowd. Photo/Lily Avery**

can purchase them at the gate. It's going to be a really good concert.

"It starts at 7 p.m. and the gates will open at 6 p.m."

And following will be the 2nd Annual Appalachian Brew, Que & Stew Festival on Saturday, Oct. 28, which promises to be a great way to spend the last weekend in October with plenty of good food, good drinks and great music.

Next month is sure to be just as exciting, with a Jamey Johnson concert to kick things off on Saturday, Nov. 4, and on Dec. 1, The Beach Boys bring songs from another generation

to Hiawassee. And there's also the much-anticipated Mountain Country Christmas in Lights, which will run Thanksgiving Night through New Year's Day.

"We're going to be starting Oct. 30 putting up Christmas lights for the show," said Thomason. "The Christmas lights company is coming to put up all of the displays and lights and get ready for another great holiday season at the Fairgrounds."

For more information on ticket pricing and the many upcoming events, visit [georgiamountainfairgrounds.com](http://georgiamountainfairgrounds.com).

## Career Coach in Towns County

The Career Coach will be located Towns County Library in Hiawassee on Tuesday, October 31, 2017 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The address for the library is 99 South Berrong St.

The unit will be available to assist individuals with searching and/or applying for jobs online, writing a resume and/or cover letter, discerning career interests, and WIOA funded training opportunities. Please stop by and also share this event with anyone you know that might benefit from our services. TO1025.F15H

## Kennel Club meeting

The Hiawassee River Valley Kennel Club meets the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Shane's Rib Shack in Ellijay. All dog enthusiasts are welcome. NT1025.Z2CA