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Board of Health discusses flu season, new rabies regulations

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Flu season in Georgia typically occurs between the months of October and mid-May, which is when the Georgia Department of Public Health tracks flu activity.

And as of press time Monday, there's not been much to report.

"The surveillance started at the first week of October, so there's really no such thing as there's so far," said Dr. Pamela Logan, District 2 Public Health Director. "Activity is minimal, no outbreaks yet. Let's just hope it stays kind of minimal throughout the flu season."

Logan, speaking in the

Oct. 25 quarterly meeting of the Towns County Board of Health, pressed the importance of receiving annual vaccinations against the influenza virus.

"What we've done in our district is challenge each of the county health departments to do 20 percent more vaccinations than they did in the past year, and just about all of them have really hit that mark and exceeded," said Logan. "So, that's what we're trying to do, just greater coverage throughout the district so people stay healthier."

The flu is a serious and potentially fatal illness, resulting in more than 200,000 hospitalizations annually nationwide, and this year's flu season is expected to be a tough

one for two reasons.

"First, more than 90 percent of the influenza specimens tested nationwide are Influenza A (H3N2), and the rates of hospitalization and deaths are typically higher in seasons when H3N2 is the dominant strain," according to Public Health at DPH.Georgia.gov.

"Second, half of the H3N2 samples don't match the vaccine produced for the 2014-2015 season, indicating the virus has mutated or changed since the vaccine was formulated early this year."

Of course, the best preventative for the flu is still the flu vaccine, and everyone 6 months of age and older is advised to get vaccinated,

though there are supplementary ways to safeguard against the illness, according to Public Health.

"Take everyday precautions, like washing your hands, to protect your health," according to Public Health. "If you are exposed to or caring for someone with the flu, talk to your doctor about preventive antiviral medication."

The flu shot is available at certain area retailers with pharmacies and also at doctor's offices and the Towns County Health Department.

Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrington, who serves as chairman of the local Board of Health, announced that the

See Health, Page 6A



Dr. Pamela Logan is the District 2 Public Health Director. Here she is in the Oct. 25 quarterly meeting of the Towns County Board of Health. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Young Harris College expands educational options in the region

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Founded in 1886 by Methodist minister Artemas Lester, Young Harris College has thrived over the years due to its ability to adapt to changing times and new technologies.

Once a two-year school, today Young Harris College offers many baccalaureate-level degree programs as it continues to adapt to the needs of the region.

Enter the college's 23rd president, Drew L. Van Horn, Ph.D.

Van Horn said that when he came on board in October 2017, the college's Board of Trustees tasked him with a number of directives, the first of which was to ensure that Young Harris College remain viable as an institution of higher education.

"The second thing they wanted me to do was to really focus on re-engaging the college with the region,



Drew Van Horn

meaning responding to what the regional needs were," said Van Horn. "The first thing we did was, we re-established the mission of the institution."

"The mission basically said that the college was a residential liberal arts college. The board said that the college was going to become a

comprehensive college, which means we're offering more professional degrees. But we're committed to our liberal arts core, the core curriculum."

The college has three academic divisions: Arts and Humanities, Professional Studies, and Mathematics,

See YHC, Page 6A

Dancing with North Georgia Stars hits the stage on Saturday

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Enotah CASA volunteer and Board Chair Liz Ruf visited with the Mountain Movers and Shakers on Friday, Oct. 26, to talk about a very important event that's happening this weekend.

The Annual Dancing with North Georgia Stars Show & Gala is the premier fundraiser for the Enotah CASA For Children, and this year, it will be held on Saturday, Nov. 3, at 7 p.m., inside the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center.

Ultimately, the event is a dancing competition that pits different volunteer couples against one another to see who can raise the most donation money in the runup to the big event.

Of course, each couple also develops a dance routine and competes on stage to the delight of audience members.

Ruf was accompanied by dance couple No. 10 Vickie

See Dancing, Page 6A



In the Oct. 26 meeting of the Mountain Movers and Shakers, Roberto Romero and Vickie Levy offer a preview of their dance routine ahead of the Nov. 3 Dancing with North Georgia Stars event. Photo by Mark Smith

Brew, Que & Stew Festival brings hundreds to enjoy craft beer

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Right on the heels of the Georgia Mountain Fall Festival, the Third Annual Appalachian Brew, Que & Stew Festival once again brought crowds to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Saturday, Oct. 27.

Hundreds of people attended the event, enjoying an afternoon with family and friends as they sampled unique craft beers from over 20 different breweries.

Some of the breweries came from as far away as Birmingham, Alabama, to share their products with people that may not have heard of them before.

Although the morning started out with rain, festival attendance did not slow down.

"I am proud of the turnout of today's festival," said Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomas. "I'm glad people came out to enjoy the day despite the chilly weather and rain we had this morning."

The festival kicked off



Notice the leaves upon the ground, the jackets and hoodies worn all around - it must be fall at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds! Pictured here, attendees of the 2018 Appalachian Brew, Que & Stew Festival on Oct. 27. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

at 11 a.m. Saturday morning, when the breweries finished setting up and brought in the first batch of attendees for samples.

As samplers made it down the path to each of the breweries, they learned about what made each selected craft

unique from the others at the festival.

This sampling was not limited to just beer, however, and attendees were able to try hard ciders, lemonades, other kinds of hard drinks, and even food.

See Brew, Page 6A

CLEA members raise money for Sheriffs' Youth Homes



Good food was had by all during the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes Fundraiser at Sundance Grill on Oct. 27. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Jarrett Whitener
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Staff Writer

For three years now, the Towns County Citizens Law Enforcement Academy has held fundraisers to benefit the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes, and this year's fundraiser

occurred on Saturday, Oct. 27, at the Sundance Grill in Hiawassee.

"This is the main fundraiser we do every year to help the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes Program," said Anna Thomas, event organizer. "This is our first year doing the

fundraiser like this, so we hope it has a great outcome."

Switching things up this year, CLEA members held an Oktoberfest event featuring live music, dancing and barbecue plates for people to enjoy.

Entertainment for the See CLEA, Page 6A

Early voting ends on Friday; voter turnout remains strong

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

More than 2,800 people had voted early as of Saturday, Oct. 27, and early voting continues this week in the leadup to the big General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 6.

These early voting numbers are on par with the 2016 presidential election, according to the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration Office, which bodes well for a strong overall turnout in the 2018 midterm elections.

Between now and the conclusion of the early voting period on Friday, Nov. 2, during the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., registered Towns County voters can walk into the Board of Elections Office to cast their votes.

The board office is located in Suite A of 67 Lakeview Circle in Hiawassee, and it will remain open to voters even during lunchtime.

Election Day will be on Tuesday, Nov. 6, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and instead of voting at the board office, voters should

report to one of the four pre-assigned Towns County voting precincts: Hiawassee, Young Harris, Macedonia and Tate City.

The Macedonia Precinct has changed from the campus of Towns County Schools to Macedonia Baptist Church.

A sample ballot can be obtained at the board office and at www.mvp.sos.ga.gov, which also features valuable voter information personalized to each resident.

"Georgia law requires registered voters to show photo

identification in order to vote in person," according to the Georgia Secretary of State's Office. "When you vote in person, you must show one of the following photo IDs:

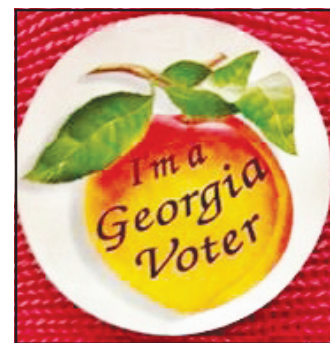
"A Georgia driver's license, even if expired; any valid state or federal government issued photo ID, including one issued by the Department of Driver Services or your Voter Registrar; valid U.S. passport; valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, this state, or any

county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of this state; valid U.S. military photo ID; valid tribal photo ID."

Voters looking for absentee ballots will need to contact the board office, which is situated next to the Towns County Courthouse, or call 706-896-4353.

Tuesday, Oct. 9, was the voter registration deadline to be eligible to cast a ballot in the Nov. 6 General Election.

Each of the following candidates will appear on the ballot:



For Governor, Republican Brian Kemp, Democrat Stacey Abrams and Libertarian Ted See Voting, Page 6A

2 Sections	16 Pages	Inside
Lake Levels	Arrests	2A
Blue Ridge	Church	4B
Chatuge	Classifieds	6B
Nottely	Opinion	4A
	Legals	7B
	Obits	5B
	Sports	2B

Barcode: 0497919315

Election Results Newspaper will be available on Wednesday, November 7th after 11 AM

See our special election results insert for all the details and results from the General Election.

Results will also be available at www.townscountyherald.net

FALL BACK