

# Clerks ...continued from Page 1A

fashion. Jarrard has served as City Clerk/Finance Officer for the City of Young Harris for 21 years, starting in December 1991. "Until a couple of years ago, I worked here by myself, but the City continued to grow so much that I had to have help," Jarrard said. "My job is never boring because it is constantly changing. I really enjoy the opportunity to meet all the interesting people that live in our valley," she said. "We have a great Mayor and City Council who are constantly working to improve the services and the City of Young Harris." Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby refers to Jarrard as "my right arm." "I couldn't do without her," the mayor said. "She is a valuable part of the team here at the City of Young Harris and we appreciate the job she does

and the professionalism she exhibits." White serves a dual role as Hiwassee's Municipal Clerk of Court and City Clerk. White has served in this capacity for nearly 25 years and enjoys her job and serving the City of Hiwassee. Mayor Barbara Mathis describes White as "a very loyal and devoted person." "Wylene has been an employee for the City of Hiwassee since June 1988," Mayor Mathis said. "She has attended education programs, seminars, and met all requirements for the Clerk's office." "She is always available to offer assistance with problems of any sort and always loyal to her job," Mayor Mathis said. "Wylene is a valued employee. I would like to say a great big thank you to her on behalf of the City of Hiwassee." Congratulations Wylene and Shirley.

# EggFest ...continued from Page 1A

participants this year. In addition to all the delicious food which will be available throughout most of the day, you won't want to miss out on the many vendors, free wine sampling, and a couple of new and innovative accessories for the Big Green Egg. There also will be free classes offered to attendees with demonstrations by some of the top chefs in the country. There will be classes for everyone, from the novice egg-ger to those already skilled in

"egging." Come out and join in on the food, fun, and festivities. The gate opens to "tasters" on Saturday, May 18th, beginning at 9 a.m. The Meet & Greet will be held Friday, May 17th, from 5-8 p.m. in the Main Exhibit Hall. Pre-registration is suggested. Call the Fairgrounds' office at (706) 896-4191 for additional details or visit their Web site, www.mountainegeffevent.eventbrite.com.

# Health Fair ...continued from Page 1A

services," said Chatuge Regional's Kathy Kitchens. There were many on-site vendors who came out to advertise their businesses and let people know what services they have to offer. They had a lot of good information available and also made available brochures and fun free items to folks who stopped to check them out. This was Assistant Administrator John Mark Gor-

don's first Health Fair as he is fairly new to the organization. "I feel that it was a great success and hope the community feels the same," he said. "It's all about giving back to the community." "We offer lab work at a reduced rate hoping that folks will come in and take advantage of the low-cost screenings," he said. "We hope to have many more successful Health Fairs in the future."

# Rally ...continued from Page 1A

Sharpe said that the campground at the GMF was full as early as Thursday night, with riders camping in tents and pop-up campers. Sharpe and his wife were in a tent. It was a soggy time to be in a tent or on a motorcycle, however, as heavy rain and high winds swept through the area and plenty more was in the forecast. They didn't let their spirits be dampened though, and held out high hopes that the rain would be moving out. Sharpe reported that they intended to get in as much riding time as they could and stick as close to schedule as possible. They had six road rides scheduled including the Vintage Focus, the Helen and Six Gaps ride, the Poker Run, the North Carolina Waterfalls Ride, and two Adventure Rides. "The BMW Performance Center out of Spartanburg, SC are leading our adventure rides, the mixed road and off-road rides," said Sharpe. According to Sharpe the average rider is 55 plus and comes from all walks of life, but they had several folks in their 70s and 80s that made the trip, and even a few that were close to 90. "They do it for the love of riding and for the adventure," said Sharpe. There was close to 30 vendors set up in "Vendor Village" looking to promote their products and spark an interest in motorcycle riding. Dale Coyner of Herndon, VA said this was his first time down here for this particular event. Coyner, however, is not a stranger to these parts. He has even written a book about the area entitled, *Motorcycle Journeys Through the Appalachians*. "I try to let people know and try to help them understand, it's not just a lot of Hillbillies and coal miners," he said. "I

hope to do some educating with my books." There were several events schedule each day including Cornhole games, the SMART-rainer Motorcycle Simulator, a Stayin' Safe Seminar, and the popular Vintage Bike Show. The bikers had a wonderful chili dinner prepared by Ian 'Scoobie' Scoobins on Friday night as well as a scheduled bonfire social. These bikers were serious about having a good time in spite of the rain and wind. They had a grilled steak-out scheduled for Saturday, and even though they had to do a little improvising, they carried on as usual and enjoyed their steaks. They were even entertained again this year by "Georgia's Song Bird" EG Kight. They wrapped everything up with their annual Award's Ceremony Saturday night as they recognized the oldest and youngest male and female riders and the longest distance male and female riders. This group certainly demonstrated a great deal of spirit even in these adverse weather conditions. The BMW group always has a designated charity for their 50/50 raffle and once again this year they chose the Susan G. Komen Three-Day Walk to sponsor. Even with numbers down this year due to the inclement weather, they still managed to put aside a pretty good chunk of cash for the Komen Foundation. They also sponsor the Towns County Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund each year. They come through each Christmas with a trailer full of toys for the children of Towns County. When these folks are in town, make sure you stop and say hello and welcome them to our little neck of the woods, as they sure do make an economic impact when they roll in.

# Defenders of Freedom

The Ridges Resort & Marina will host the Second Annual Armed Forces Day celebration at the resort. The event is scheduled for 9 a.m., Saturday, May 18th at the Resort. Come join the Ridges as they honor our local veterans and celebrate Freedom that they continue to deliver. Scheduled events include a Flag Dedication, Color Guard Presentation and recognition of our

Veterans' sacrifices. Refreshments are provided by The Oaks Restaurant. Please come join Ridges General Manager Chad Hooper and the good folks at the Resort as they honor our nation's most spirited defenders of freedom. The event, is a pre-Memorial Day veterans recognition remembrance. Always remember, Freedom is not free.

# Services...continued from Page 1A

Carolina, each paying their respects with a farewell salute in honor of the devotion to duty this fellow officer had always shown. It was an impressive gesture by those who are under oath to serve and protect just as Brian Wilson had always done. The officers had just taken their seats as a hush fell over the sanctuary. The opening cords of Lynyrd Skynrd's popular southern folk song "All I Can Do is Write About It" began. A line in the final verse of the song said it better than anyone, "You can take the boy out of ole' Dixieland but you'll never take ole' Dixie from a boy."

Pastor Josh Bennett welcomed everyone on behalf of the Wilson family and led them in prayer, asking God to grant peace "that only He can give" to the family and friends. Pastor Bennett summed up the life of Brian Allen Wilson.

"Brian was a unique individual and an awesome person who was very courageous, but the most courageous thing I ever saw him do was accept the Lord as his Savior," Bennett said. "He will be sorely missed by all who knew and loved him."

Pastor Bennett read from II Corinthians 12: 8-10, "My Grace is sufficient, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."

Towns County sheriff's Chief Deputy Jeff Edge followed Westberry, and offered a heartfelt eulogy.

"Brian was a friend to anyone who needed a friend and he was a vicious protector of the innocent, especially children," Edge said. "He was a kind and gentle soul to those he supervised. He was loyal to those he loved. He was a competitor of the highest order, even if it meant racing across the parking lot in street shoes and a tie.

"He was obsessive about his appearance and he felt that no matter what you were doing, you had to look good doing it," Edge said. "He was always prepared for any emergency and could pack more into a patrol car than anyone.

"He was a giver," Edge said. "If you showed the slightest interest in anything he had, then he would give it to you



Lt. Brian Wilson's coworkers came to McConnell Memorial Baptist Church to pay their final respects on Wednesday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

and ask nothing in return. "He was a laugher and could find humor in any situation," Edge said. "He could have done anything he wanted with his life and he chose to become a protector of people and when you had to have the best you would send Brian. "He is irreplaceable," Edge said. "Brian was my friend."

Erin Westberry, Brian Wilson's sister-in-law, followed Edge and sang a beautiful song, *Angel Beside Me* in tribute to the relationship he had with his wife Emily and all his family.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton stepped to the pulpit following the song, offering his personal tribute to Brian Wilson, his friend and co-worker.

"Brian and I talked on many occasions about how we never get to pick how or when our time will come but we can choose how we live our lives.

"Brian Wilson is to be commended on how he lived," Sheriff Clinton said.

"He loved his family and he talked about them often and as any red-blooded American, he loved his momma.

"He found his soul mate in his wife, and as a daddy, there has never been a man who loved his little girl more than Brian," the sheriff said.

"To his friend, Cory, he was as close to you as a brother. Brian looked after his friends and loved ones and he took care of them.

"As a cop, I appreciated

the fact that I could take him to a fight," Sheriff Clinton said. "You could count on him. Brian was a winner and betting on him was like cheating, because when you are betting on a Wilson, you know you're going to win.

"He had a miraculous way of making people laugh and he would pull off some of the biggest stunts you have ever seen," Sheriff Clinton said with a smile. "I asked him many times, as did Jeff, just how in the world did you make it through Parris Island? "I'll tell you how he made it, because he was Brian. He meant a lot to his family, his fellow deputies and to me," the sheriff said.

Brian Wilson's pastor at Macedonia Baptist Church, Pastor Harold Ledford, closed the service and summed up Brian Wilson's life and relationships.

"I have know Brian for some 20 years as our lives became entwined with the passing of his dear sister," Pastor Ledford said. "Later on I got to know Brian even better as I became his pastor. He was a gift from God. We appreciate his service to his country and to his community.

"I want you to know that my wife picked out my tie today. She told me that Brian's favorite color was pink and I see pink all over today," Pastor Ledford said.

"Brian was a Christian and on Sunday, April 3, 2011 at 1:30 p.m., in my office, he

got down on his knees and acknowledged Jesus Christ as his savior," Pastor Ledford said.

"He stood before the congregation at Macedonia Baptist Church on April 17, 2011 and he openly and honestly professed his belief in Jesus Christ as his savior.

"He was baptized on Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011 and became a member of our church by receiving the Believer's Baptism," Pastor Ledford said. "He struggled with the issues of life just like all of us do, but, he knew that the power of God would prevail because he had God in his life and that was enough."

Hall County's Color Guard then came forward, one at a time, and delivered the final inspection and salute before escorting Brian Wilson's body from the sanctuary.

The funeral procession left the church behind more than 70 police and sheriff cars representing the officers who attended the service while the EMS vehicles followed in the rear.

Robby McClure, owner of Bannister Funeral Home said the funeral procession was one to remember. "I have never seen as many people lined along the road to the grave site as I saw today when we passed with Brian," McClure said. "It was unbelievable how much the people of Towns County loved him and honored him as they came out of their businesses and lined the street waving and saluting."

# Graveside ...continued from Page 1A

ficers maintained their salute until the coffin was placed at his final resting place.

Pastor Anthony Dye provided a moving tribute and memorial to this beloved family man with inspiring scripture and consoling words to the family.

The Georgia Army National Guard provided military honors and the Hall County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard provided the Three-Volley, 21 Gun Salute followed by the traditional playing of Taps in honor of Towns County's fallen hero who had left this earth way too soon.

As the flag was removed from his coffin and folded in the traditional military-style triangle and presented to Brian Wilson's wife Emily, the tragic reality of this devastating loss to family, friends, and all of Towns County began to soak in.

Fellow peace officers and friends, who had come to show their respect and to honor this well-deserving defender of



Lt. Brian Wilson's coworkers bring him to his final resting place at Burch Cemetery on Sunnyside Road. Photo/Libby Shook

freedom and community, lined up to extend their condolences to Lt. Wilson's family.

A very moving and emotional part of the graveside service was when the family paid their final tribute to this beloved man as one-by-one, they placed pink carnations on his coffin.

The men of the family removed the pink shirts they had worn in remembrance and honor of their loved one and draped them over Lt. Wilson's coffin.

A family member explained that "pink was his favorite color. He wore it all

the time." Rest in peace Lt. Brian Wilson. You will be fondly remembered for your dedicated service to your country and community, as well as your loyal devotion to family and friends. Towns County's loss is Heaven's gain.

# Langford ...continued from Page 1A

program is in good shape and I have extreme confidence in Mr. (Jonathan) Gibson and Mrs. Williams, that they will make the perfect hire for the young people of Towns County," Coach Langford said. "I have enjoyed working with Mr. (Roy) Perren and Mr. Gibson and I am very optimistic about the future of Towns County High School and its football program."

Langford, who leaves with a career record of 17-43, changed the football culture in Towns County. He made the team, and the community believe in the football program for the first time.

Under Langford's direction, the Indians snapped out of a 36-game losing streak in 2008, the last time they had won a game was Sept. 10th, 2004. The Indians claimed their only win that season with a 16-0 victory over Mt. Zion.

On Aug. 29th, 2008, the Indians' losing streak ended with a shocker, a 20-0 win over Region 8-AA Rabun County.

Langford's Indians would put 335 points on the board that season.

They finished the 2008 football season with the only winning record in Indians' his-



Kyle Langford

tory, 7 wins, 3 defeats. They should have finished 8-2 that season, but for some friendly officiating in Hayesville, NC. They lost 34-32 to the Yellow Jackets on Sept. 19th, 2008.

They won 10 games over the next four seasons, but, the real story was that these Indians were high scoring and competitive, a tribute to their offensive-minded head coach.

They lost some close games, and some not so close games. One of the most memorable was the 47-45 come from behind win over Glascock County in 2010. Incidentally, the Indians won in overtime.

During his six seasons as

the Indians' head coach, he broke former Head Football Coach Hosea Collins' all time wins record by beating St. Francis 35-33 on Oct. 26, 2012. He also set a new record on that same evening as those 35 points gave the Indians 30 or more points scored in four consecutive games.

Terry Rogers, executive director of the Georgia Athletics Coaches Association said Langford was a model football coach.

"I've known Kyle for many years and he is an outstanding coach and individual," Rogers said. "Cook County is getting a quality coach and a great person by hiring him. He will serve their program well and they will benefit by having him as part of their team."

Towns County Schools Superintendent Melissa Williams said the Indians had lost a member of the family.

"I was saddened to hear that Coach Langford was offered the chance to leave our system," Williams said. "However, once he came and spoke with me and explained that this has a lot to do with being able to be close to family again, I understood, and told him that family has to come first.

"Coach Langford has done a great job, and has been a very supportive member of our staff,"

Williams said. "This will be a great loss to Towns County, and to the fantastic program he has helped to build. We want to wish him the very best in his future endeavors."

Indians' Athletic Director and Assistant High School Principal Jonathan Gibson said Langford will be missed.

"Obviously, we hate to see Coach Langford and his family leaving, but, we fully understand why," Gibson said. "We are very grateful for Coach Langford's hard work and the dedication he has shown to the students here in Towns County.

"There is no doubt our program is in much better shape now than when he arrived and that is a testament to his hard work and dedication," Gibson said. "We wish him and his family nothing but the best in his new position. Cook County is getting a fine coach in Kyle Langford."

Indians' Assistant Head Coach Darryl McClure will take temporary control of the football program for the Towns County administration starts the process of finding a replacement for Langford.

This will not be an easy job as he has left some big shoes to fill. Thank you coach for all you have done for TCHS football and TCMS baseball.