

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928

50 Cents

www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 86 Number 33

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Rain	90 68
Fri: Rain	89 68
Sat: Rain	88 68
Sun: Clouds	89 68
Mon: Rain	90 66
Tue: Rain	92 68
Wed: Clouds	93 68



Upstream Elevation Predicted 06/17/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,925.43
Lake Nottely	1,776.55
Blue Ridge	1,686.64

INDEX

2 Sections, 18 Pages

Arrests.....	2A
Chamber.....	12A
Church.....	6A
Classifieds.....	2B
Editorial.....	4A
Legals.....	3B
Obituaries.....	7A

SPORTS Page 9A



Hiawassee June 27th

Page 3

Free Food Distribution North Mt. Zion Church of God



Page 7A

Youth Beach Party June 21st

Page 3A

TOWNS COUNTY Farmers Market

Saturdays 9am-Noon

JUNE 19 & 20



Union County Saddle Club Arena

Sheriff's Trap Shoot raises almost \$8,500

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Owl Creek - The Towns County Sheriff's Office raised nearly \$8,500 during its Seventh Annual Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes Trap Shoot and Turkey Shoot at the Chatuge Gun Club on Friday, June 12. And Sheriff Chris Clinton is still expecting another sizeable donation from a remaining corporate sponsor. "This is by far our best year to date," said Sheriff Clinton, who fully embraced the youth homes by starting the shoot after he took office. "I'd be willing to bet we receive our sixth Top 10 award late next month."

Towns County's trap shoot has continually been in the Top 10 fundraisers per capita among the 159 other



Union County's Blane Brown had a good day shooting on Friday. sheriffs' offices around the state, each year proving more successful than the last.

There are currently five youth homes in Georgia that benefit from the funds raised by the shoot and efforts made by other Georgia sheriffs' offices, with more than 70 children currently residing in the homes. Pickens County Sheriff Donnie Craig, who is president of the Georgia Sheriffs' Youth Homes, was on hand

See Trap Shoot, Page 10A

Towns hosts second Wine and Jazz Fest

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Residents and patrons from all over the North Georgia area enjoyed the Second Annual Appalachian Wine, Jazz and Art Festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Friday, June 12, and Saturday, June 13.

The festival featured more than a dozen area artists and six top-notch jazz acts, as well as four restaurants from the surrounding region and fine wines from 10 Georgia wineries and one from Hayesville, NC.

Hightower Creek Vineyards and Crane Creek Vineyards, being the two from Towns County, acted as host vineyards for the event. "The last three years



Festival goers enjoy a taste of wines from regional vineyards. wineries in the area now, and as more continue to come in, we'll see more tourism specifically geared toward wine and

See Fest, Page 10A

After 30 years, Pat is a senior herself

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

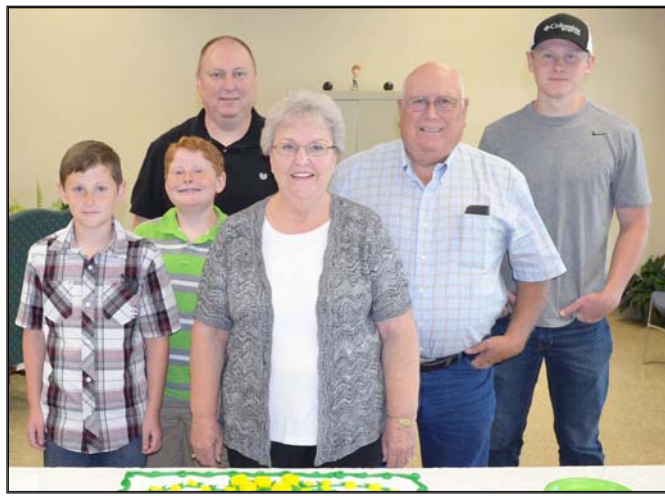
Friends and family at a special reception to wish her a fond farewell on Wednesday, June 10, joined Pat Nicholson, who has retired as director of the Towns County Senior Center after 30 years.

"I want to thank each one of you for letting me be a part of your lives, and the joy I've had for all these years, and for the opportunity of meeting y'all and having y'all as a family - an extended family, that's what it is," said Nicholson to the crowded room, many of whom she'd faithfully served during her career.

Larry Nicholson, Pat's husband, was particularly proud of his wife, and is looking forward to spending their mutual retirement status together.

"I'm going to enjoy it - she's my sidekick," said Larry. "I've had her for 49 years, I'm going to keep her for 49 more."

The Nicholson's son, Bryan, attended the event with his three boys: Jake, Matthew



Retired Senior Center Director Pat Nicholson and family.

and Jesse.

"I'm really proud of mom, that she's stuck with the job as long as she has," said Bryan. "A lot of people move on, and she's been a part of many, many, many peoples' lives here, and has always considered them extended family. She's adopted almost everyone she's ever met."

Many shared their thoughts that Wednesday, thanking Nicholson for her commitment over the plentiful

See Pat, Page 10A

New wastewater treatment in the cards

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The City of Hiawassee will soon be installing a new wastewater treatment system to replace its old one. The new one is expected to perform better and be easier to maintain. The city is hoping to install it in July after the next city council meeting.

City Engineer Don Baker was optimistic about the upgrade. "The unit they currently have is an older style," he said. "The company is not out of business, but they don't make that particular unit anymore. The replacement bulbs are difficult to find and there might not even be any more left. And they do burn out periodically."

The proposed new unit will be easier to manage and less of a liability to clean and maintain.

"The proposed unit, this company's been around for a long time, and they're going to always make these things, as far as I can tell. The new unit has a self-cleaning bulb. The problem with the non-self-cleaning bulb is, any time you handle a long bulb like that, there's a chance that you'll break it. They cost about \$100 apiece," said Baker.

The new wastewater treatment units use ultraviolet



Don Baker

light to disinfect the water. "What happens is, the water passes around the bulbs, and the UV light disinfects any organisms in the water. Otherwise you have to use chlorine, which is a chemical," said Baker.

"The problem with chlorine is it is a chemical and it has some chemical hazards," he went on. "And now when they do expand the plant, if they were using chlorine, they would have to de-chlorinate, because after you chlorinate it, you kill the bugs, and you have to take the chlorine out because you don't want to kill any fish in the lake."

Not only does the chlorination process introduce potentially harmful chemicals into the lake, but also the de-chlorination process introduces a further wave of chemicals. Ultraviolet treatment eliminates the need for chemicals.

"Even though these systems cost a little more money than a chemical feed system, it's going to pay for itself in the cost of the chemicals," said Baker. "It's a state of the art system. They've been around for a long time but they've been perfected over the last five years."

City Manager Rick Stancil explained how the city would pay for this new system. "Currently we have money set aside. We've got reserves and potential SPLOST money. It's part of our overall efforts to improve the discharge," he said.

The discharge at the sewer plant is currently very clean, but Stancil and Baker hope to do even better. The new system will, in the future, help to prevent the buildup of phosphorus and nitrogen. Both are harmful to the lake in that they promote the growth of algae, which steals oxygen from other organisms.

"The discharge currently at the sewer plant meets all state and federal standards, and the water we pull out of the lake is probably dirtier than the water we put back into the lake," said Stancil. "This is another step forward with both the improved disinfectant and the nutrient reduction program, we'll be exceeding all state and federal limits."

Kendall codifies county ordinances

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has codified all county ordinances.

The only items on the May meeting agenda were the second reading of the resolution to adopt the Code of Ordinances of Towns County, and the second reading of the resolution to incorporate all changes and modifications to the existing ordinances into the Code of Ordinances of Towns County.

"Since 1856, when the county was formed, we have gone back and researched, and we'll have all the ordinances, or all local laws, on the books, that you can pull up by website," said Commissioner Kendall.

The resolutions were adopted, officially combining all Towns County ordinances and resolutions into the Code of Ordinances of Towns County, including updates to the code since codification began in



2013.

"This has been a long and challenging process," said Commissioner Kendall in a press release, commending his office staff for assisting Municipal Code Corporation, or Municode, a company out of Florida that specializes in codification, in researching county law dating back to the inception of the county.

"Towns Countians and other citizens anywhere will be able to conveniently access

See County, Page 10A

Council to consider smoking ban on Downtown Square

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Hiawassee Mayor Barbara Mathis and City Council met for the regular city meeting on Tuesday, June 2.

In the meeting, John Harmon of Hiawassee asked the council to consider a smoking ban on the city square in the interest of public health.

"I'd anticipate presenting something to the council next month," said City Manager Rick Stancil following the meeting, citing a need to check state law to see if violations of any ordinance banning smoking on the square could be handled locally instead of in superior court.

The Young Harris City Council recently banned smoking in Mayor's Park and Cupid Falls.

Also in the Hiawassee Council meeting, the mayor and council issued a proclamation commending Fortitude Estate Jewelry Inc. for its in-



Mayor Barbara Mathis

vestment in the community. Fortitude is a new business located in the Antique Mall on Main Street, and is operated by owner Marco Morello. Morello is responsible for bringing Casey Weston of TV show "The Voice" fame to town on June 6 for a concert conducted in front of the business.

City council held a First Reading of the 2014-2015 End of Year Budget Ordinance, as

See Hiawassee, Page 10A

Council takes care of business

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Young Harris - On Tuesday, June 2, the Young Harris City Council met to discuss regular business.

First and foremost is some good news. The City of Young Harris has received a "Clean Opinion" from R.L. Jennings and Associates Accounting Services for its 2014 financial audit. The "Clean Opinion," or "Unqualified Opinion," is the best result that can be achieved according to the Government Accounting Standards.

The next major item of business was for the Council to adopt a master fee schedule by resolution. The master fee schedule will detail permit fees for building, planning and zoning, engineering, and other fees. The City considers the master fee schedule essential for setting fair fees and notifying everyone involved.

In other news, the process of demolition of the Old Swanson Store at the corner of Highway 76 and Murphy Street has begun. Clint Hobbs,



Mayor Andrea Gibby

the representative from Young Harris College, reported that the college will soon begin to tear the building down when the current process of abatement is complete.

Next, Young Harris College is proposing to pave the parking lot at the Old Young Harris Elementary School. The Young Harris Planning Commission has indicated that the parking lot meets the requirements for erosion and sediment control as well as the requirements for the tree ordinance. The application is recommended for approval by the planning commission.

The United States De-

See Young Harris, Page 10A

BOE working to fill vacancies

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Monday, June 8, the Towns County Board of Education held its monthly board meeting in the high school auditorium. The meeting was brief, but dealt with the longstanding issue of faculty stability.

The board first addressed a change of administration for the Family Connection program. "Family Connection is a community-based resource that we house in the school system," said Superintendent Darren Berrong. "They do a lot of things like provide school supplies to families who may not be able to afford school supplies, and in some cases they provide clothing for students who are in need of some of those items."



Dr. Darren Berrong

for Towns County Schools is housed with Family Connections in the school system. Jenny Stowers, the Family

See BOE, Page 10A

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

