

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Wednesday, June 25, 2014

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Clouds	86 62
Fri: T-Storms	84 63
Sat: T-Storms	85 65
Sun: T-Storms	86 65
Mon: T-Storms	85 65
Tue: Clouds	91 67
Wed: T-Storms	90 67



Upstream Elevation Predicted 06/25/14	
Lake Chatuge	1,925.21
Lake Nottely	1,776.00
Blue Ridge	1,686.02

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## SPORTS

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**The Towns County Board of Education Regular Board Meetings scheduled for Monday, July 14, Will be Relocated to the Towns County Board of Education Central Office.**

**For questions or directions, please call 706-896-2279**



**4th of July Boat Parade at The Ridges Resort and Marina 10 AM at Nantahala Bay**  
See page 2

**Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition schedules C.R.E.E.K. Days**  
See page 3

**GA Mtn Fairgrounds is seeking volunteers**  
See page 3

**Recreation Department's July 4th Activity Day**  
The Towns County Recreation Department's annual July 4th Activity Day will be on Friday July 4th, 2014 at the Recreation Department Ball Fields. The Recreation Department invites everyone to come out and have fun in the sun!!

## British Motorcycle rally draws a crowd

By Matthew Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Greater Atlanta British Motorcycle Association held their 29th Annual British in the Blue Ridge Rally and Bike Show at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds for the weekend as gear heads wheeled-in in droves.

This is its second year in a row at the Fairgrounds. GABMA was founded in 1982, established for those all over the Southeast who preserve the passion for motorcycles designed in England and those rebuilt with a British motif.

"It's all volunteers here, and it always has been," said Robert Underwood, director of the weekend events. "Everybody contributes their time and effort to the club. We have a custom built bike we're giving away in a drawing. It's made in the style of a café racer, more commonly used in the early 1960s as a bike that travelled quickly, racing from one café to another."

Vendors set up on Friday at the Fairgrounds, where registration for the events took place, kicking off the three-day



British motorcycle enthusiasts flocked to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds over the weekend. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

event as kickstands were lifted for the Afternoon Ride. The Poker Run followed the next day as bikers rode to various checkpoints, drawing a card at each stop. The Bike Show followed, as many old school, pre-war bikes were on display as well.

"Here, there's 1000 ccv

Vincent V-Twin motorcycles. They stopped making those in the early 1950s and it is very, very fast," said John Underwood, legal officer of the GABMA and fellow motorcyclist explaining some of the rarities on wheels. Riders from all over

See Rally, Page 8

## Toddler drowns in pond off Cynth Creek Road

By Charles Duncan  
Towns County Herald  
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A 2-year-old boy drowned in a pond on Sunday off Georgia 75 off Cynth Creek Road, Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton said Sunday.

Sheriff Clinton said Towns County deputies responded to Chatuge Regional Hospital to a report of a 2-year-old child found in a pond unresponsive.

The pond was located near a residence on Cynth Creek Road in Hiwassee, Sheriff Clinton said.

According to Towns County sheriff's reports, the child was reported to have been outside playing with two older brothers. The mother discovered her 2-year-old son missing and began searching for him.

The mother found the

child in a nearby pond. The mother began CPR and Towns County EMS was requested to respond to the scene.

The child was transported to Chatuge Regional Hospital in Hiwassee by Towns County EMS.

The child was pronounced dead a short time after arriving at the hospital.

The names of the child and family members are being withheld pending notification of relatives.

It appears to be an accidental drowning. The incident remains under investigation by the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

"It goes without saying that this is a terrible tragedy," Sheriff Clinton said. "Our hearts break for this child and family. Please keep them lifted up in your thoughts and prayers."

## Kendall to toe the line on county spending

By Matthew Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Initial analysis of Towns County's Tax Digest show's it is on the rise.

It could lead to a .022 decrease in the county's millage rate.

That's the projection for the tentative 2014 Tax Digest as unveiled by Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall last week during the monthly county meeting at the Towns County Courthouse.

"We're going to keep a tight rein on spending," Commissioner Kendall said. "We don't anticipate raising taxes in county government, but, there will be a substantial increase by the Towns County School Board."

The Tax Digest has been on the slide over the past five years because of the recession.

"We lost \$77 million last year on 40 percent assessment," Kendall said. "The actual value of Towns County went down two and a half times that because it's based on 40 percent of market value."

Early projections indicate the 2014 Tax Digest is



Commissioner Bill Kendall

worth \$7 million more than last year, Kendall said.

"We don't know the exact figure yet, at least it's not going down," he said.

The county's millage rate, although it's not official yet, is projected to drop from 5.622 mills to 5.6 mills.

One mill is equal to \$1 for each \$1,000 in assessed property value; Towns County assesses its property at 40 percent.

The Fire Tax Millage is .5 mills with fire tax revenue at \$357,815, with a total decrease of \$77,802 since 2009.

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## Hiwassee Council proposes lean budget

By Matthew Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Hiwassee City Manager Rick Stencil broke down the proposed \$4.085 million 2014-2015 budget for the City of Hiwassee last week at City Hall on River Street.

The special called meeting, held Wednesday, June 18 by the Hiwassee City Council and the City Manager provided an inside look at next year's budget, looking at city income and anticipated 2014-2015 expenditures.

According to Stencil, General Fund income has decreased from \$1,257,559 in Amended 2012-13 to a proposed \$736,950, a loss in revenue of \$520,609. The proposed 2014-15 Budget assumes that property tax and Local Option Sales Tax income will increase without the need of an increase in millage.

The city's current millage is 2.270 and in 2013, 2.270



Rick Stencil

raised \$167,531 (the current Budget amount).

The 2014-15 millage rate will depend on the assessments by the County Tax Assessor's Office.

Net Assessments have been trending downward but recent information from the County Tax Office shows an upward trend.

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## Pet-A-Pet a true Mountain success

By Matthew Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Humane Society Mountain Shelter serving Towns and Union counties unleashed their 2014 Pet-A-Pet on Saturday where more than 150 animal lovers gathered to show support for local pet adoptions and animal awareness.

Many fortunate animals were adopted in lieu of the Mountain Shelter's efforts, which included face paintings, free hot dogs, animal training for kids as well as adults, and a guided tour of the facility, which has seen a major design and animal-care overhaul over the last few years both inside and outside its doors.

The shelter, which is a private, non-profit, charitable organization, is very family and kid friendly, as they work with elementary through high school students throughout the year to help teach kids the value of properly caring for animals through a safe, hands-on ap-

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## Library open house could be in mid-July

By Matthew Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The opening of the revamped Towns County Public Library will be one for the books.

With its debut just around the corner, Debbie Phillips, branch manager at the Towns County Public Library for almost 23 years, gave a tour of the under construction and almost completed facility that now boasts nearly 8,000 square feet.

"We hope about the middle of July to have our Open House," said Phillips. "This building was originally constructed in '88 and was never built for growth, never built for computers."

"This is the fastest growing library in our region and we just ran out of space and needed more room," she said.



Construction continues at the soon-to-be open Towns County Library in Hiwassee. Photo/Matt Jarrard

"It took seven years through our legislative system to get it. The funding was 90 percent state and 10 percent local," Phillips said.

Just within the last few

weeks, the building has gained new siding on the outside front towers, newly grouted bathroom floors, sheetrock

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## Ralston names Allison to study committee for wrongfully accused

By Charles Duncan  
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Georgia House Speaker David Ralston (R-Blue Ridge) has appointed House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison (R-Blairsville), to the House Study Committee on Compensating Wrongfully Convicted Persons.

The committee, established by House Resolution 1332 also includes State Rep. Carolyn Hugley (D-Columbus), who will serve as Committee Chair, State Rep. Ben Harbin (R-Evans), State Rep. Rahn Mayo (D-Decatur), and State Rep. B.J. Pak (R-Lilburn).

The committee's task is to determine a uniform method for fairly and reasonably compensating wrongfully convicted persons.

The committee will recommend any actions or legislation that it deems necessary



Stephen Allison

or appropriate. The committee will study procedures used in other jurisdictions in the United States in an effort to ensure that any person wrongfully convicted in Georgia is compensated fully and fairly.

The committee will publish a report of its findings and recommendations, which may include suggestions for proposed legislation.

The report will be made on or before Dec. 1.

## Early voting begins June 30 at Old Rock Jail

By Charles Duncan  
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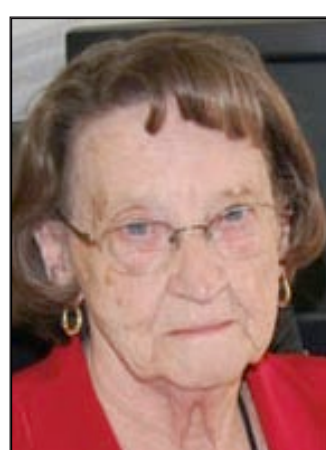
Early voting for Towns County's Primary Election runoff begins June 30.

Early voting continues through July 18 at the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration Office at 91 Berong St. in Hiwassee.

A driver's license is necessary for registered voters to be eligible to vote. Voters also can call the office at (706) 896-4353 to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to them.

Voter precincts are the same as the May 20 Primary. Voters going to the incorrect precinct can always vote by provisional ballot.

The Elections Office cur- See Early, Page 8



Irma Nichols

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

