

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, September 4, 2013

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Sunny	85 56
Fri: Clouds	82 57
Sat: Clouds	81 56
Sun: Clouds	82 56
Mon: Clouds	82 57
Tues: Clouds	79 57
Wed: Clouds	79 57



Upstream Elevation Predicted 09/04/13	
Lake Chatuge	1,923.31
Lake Nottely	1,772.03
Blue Ridge	1,681.63

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SPORTS Pages 12-13



FOOTBALL
Friday Sept. 6th 7:30 pm
vs. Fellowship Christian

SOFTBALL
Tues. Sept 3rd 4:45
vs. Providence
Thurs. Sept. 5th 4:45 pm
@ Prince Avenue

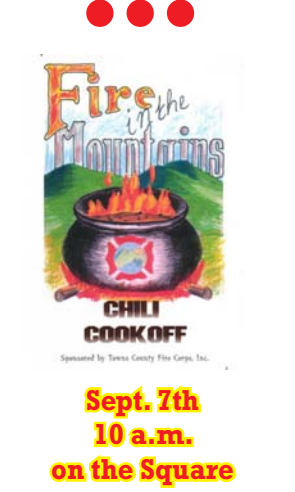
MIDDLESCHOOL FOOTBALL
Thurs. Sept 5th 5:30 pm
@ Lakeview



Talent Show Auditions
Anderson Music Hall
September 28th
by 3 PM

TOWNS COUNTY Farmers Market

Fridays 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Saturdays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.



Arts & Crafts
Celebrate Autumn Arts & Crafts Show
Sept. 21-22, 2013

See Page 8A

Talent show will determine Merle's opening act

By Heather Poole
Towns County Herald
heather.tcherald@windstream.net

Anderson Music Hall, and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds will host a talent contest, with the winner opening for Country Music icon Merle Haggard on Oct. 25th at 7 p.m.

A Country Music Hall of Fame legend, Haggard is set to return to Hiwassee to perform at Anderson Music Hall.

For one lucky performer, there's a chance to open for Haggard and also collect \$500 in prize money, Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said.

Talent show auditions will be held Sept. 28th, at Anderson Music Hall. Those auditioning must be at the Music Hall by no later than 3 p.m.

There is a \$10 competition entry fee. No bands are allowed in the competition, Thomason said.

Those hoping to compete must sign up by Sept. 26th by phone at (706) 896-4191.

Contestants (no age requirements) must bring music



Merle Haggard
on a compact disc or a soundtrack. A guitar or accompaniment is permissible.

Also, the public is invited to attend and watch the competition at no charge, Thomason said.

Contestant numbers will be drawn out of a hat to determine order of performance, Thomason said.

The Top 10 male and Top 10 female vocalists will be announced at the auditions to come back and compete in the Finals.

On Oct. 5th, the Talent

Show Finals take place at Anderson Music Hall at 7 p.m.

Admission is \$10 per person.

"Contestants get in free — all others must pay," Thomason said. "Contestants are allowed to sing their own song, but are strongly discouraged, because original songs do not get as great of an audience response, which is a major part of the score."

"Scores are based on talent, stage presentation, appearance and audience response," she said. "The winner of the Finals gets \$500 and will open the Merle Haggard concert on Oct. 25th, at Anderson Music Hall."

Haggard is well known for helping to create an original musical sound known as the *Bakersfield Sound*.

Along with Buck Owens, Haggard helped create the sound. It was a title given to the recognizable sound that resulted from a certain twang of a Fender Telecaster.

The sound also is cre-

See Auditions, Page 10

BRMEMC set to raise power rates in October

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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With its annual meeting just around the corner, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC GM Matthew Akins is expecting a lot of questions about the utility company's announced rate increase set for Oct. 1st.

Customers will soon see their electric bills go up by 3 percent to 6 percent beginning Oct. 1st, the electric cooperative announced last week.

The rate increase spans across all customer classes creating a 6.28 percent increase for customers with a monthly kilowatt usage of 500 kilowatts, according to an advertisement schedule to run in today's Towns County Herald.

"Rate increases like this are never welcomed by our members, yet, in order to maintain our business viability, as well as mandatory fiscal requirements, we must take this action," EMC General Manager Matthew Akins said. "I know



Matthew Akins
that many in our community will automatically assume that this increase is to cover the cost of our new headquarters facility, but, the truth of the matter is that neither TVA nor BRMEMC would have needed this increase if sales had remained strong."

According to the EMC, total kilowatt-hour sales have been on the decline in recent years, yet the fixed operating

See Increase, Page 10

Honeybee populations on the decline

By Heather Poole
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More than 2.4 million colonies.

That is how many collective honeybee colonies survive in the United States.

While it may seem like an incredible number, it is actually incredibly scary.

In 1947, the total number of honeybee colonies totaled 5.9 million.

That is a decrease of 3.5 million bee colonies in just 66 years.

To some, that may not seem like such a bad thing. The reality is that honeybees supply Americans with a majority of their diet.

According to Dr. Paul Arnold, Professor of Biology Chair, Biology Department at Young Harris College, honey-



The Beekeeping Institute at Young Harris College is one of a kind.

bees provide humans with one third of their dietary needs.

Honeybees are essential for Orchard trees such as cherries, apples, almonds and more.

They are especially important in blueberry pollination in North Georgia.

They also aid in polli-

See Bees, Page 10

Kendall makes it official; Chili Cook-Off set for Sept. 7

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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It's all about the chili on Saturday in Downtown Hiwassee.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has declared Sept. 7th as Towns County Fire Corps Day in Towns County.

The Affair on the Square will prove to be very entertaining and fun for the entire family.

This year's event, which is returning after a two-year hiatus, will have a Bounce House for the kids, live Music by Fire Corps VP Rob Mawyer, Rifle Raffle, and silent auctions just to name a few of the fun stuff going on.

The big treat, there's lots of Chili to sample and vote for.

The Fire Corps' silent auction venue has great items for bidding, from Resort stay packages, vineyard packages, fall eating packages and also includes a rifle raffle featuring a Savage Mark II Rimfire Series .22 caliber rifle, with Sun Optic Scope.

Tickets are \$5 each or five for \$20.



Commissioner Bill Kendall

Smoked Boston Butts will be available for sale as well.

The Fire Corps smoker has limited space, so please place all orders early by calling one of the county's fire stations. The Fire Corps was hit in May at its Yard Sale event.

There is still time to register to win one of three cash prizes for best Chili recipes.

Just visit the Web at www.tcfirecorps.org or call Perry Bush, the Chili Cook-Off Chairperson at (706) 896-6875 for more details and applications.

Come spend a few hours supporting the local volunteer Fire Fighters and have a great time at the Affair on the Square.

Suwanee couple survives crash scare

By Charles Duncan
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A Suwanee couple experienced a miracle on Horse-trough Mountain in mountainous Union County on Friday.

The crash, not far from the Towns County border with Union, happened when George and Katherine McCarter were flying from Charleston, SC to Murphy-Andrews, NC Airport.

George McCarter, the pilot of the DA40 four-seater, experienced a loss of situation-

See Crash, Page 10



This DA40 four-seater wasn't far from the Towns County line.

New hydrants lower ISO ratings

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Special Local Option Sales Tax 2011 Series has just completed a major infrastructure project that has had a huge influence in making residents of Towns County safer.

It also lowers the fire rating in Towns County, dropping it from 6/9 to 5/9.

The \$270,000 project consisted of installing 152 new fire hydrants, which increases the total number of hydrants in the county to 700.

This project, along with the efforts of the countywide firefighting community, have managed to gain homeowners in Towns County a substantial amount of savings on their home-



Chief Mitch Floyd

owners insurance premiums.

The county was able to receive the better rating because of its status as one of the premiere Firewise counties in

the nation.

The volunteer program is a combined effort on the parts of the Towns County Fire & Rescue and the civilian Towns County Fire Corps.

Towns County is very fortunate to have the Corps as their volunteer support staff for Towns County Fire & Rescue and they help in raising funds for needed pieces of equipment and training.

Their efforts, in conjunction with the cooperation of the Towns County community, have removed many fire risks associated with the severity and adverse effectiveness of a runaway fire spreading throughout given areas.

The program has been

See Hydrants, Page 10

City Council races are set for Nov. 5th

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby returns to office as she was unopposed in the upcoming city elections.

Young Harris City Council Post 6 Council Member John Kelley also returns to office, and long-time Young Harris City Council Post 5 Council Member David Sellers will not seek re-election.

Young Harris City Council Post 4 Council Member Donald Keys will face opposition on Nov. 5th from Samuel



Mayor Andrea Gibby

M. Leslie.

Steve Clark and Hilary Martin will vie for the seat vacated by Sellers.

The November election marks two more council seats that will change hands.

Stuart Miller defeated incumbent Jennifer Mulkey in 2011.

In Hiwassee, Mayor Barbara Mathis, and Council members Stephen Smith and Jay Vernon Chastain Jr. all will return to office in November.

Mayor Mathis and the two council members are unopposed in the upcoming city elections in Hiwassee.

Rep. Collins to speak to Movers and Shakers on Sept. 13th

By Heather Poole
Towns County Herald
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U.S. Rep. Doug Collins, who represents Towns County in the 9th Congressional District, will speak to the Mountain Movers and Shakers at their meeting Friday, Sept. 13th at 8 a.m.

Collins will join the Movers and Shakers, as well as anyone else who would like to attend, at Mary's Southern Grill in Young Harris.

A native of Hall County, and a North Hall High School graduate, Rep. Collins earned his political science and criminal justice degrees from North Georgia College and State University. He was elected to Congress in November.

Prior to his seat in Washington, Rep. Collins represented Georgia House District 27.

Collins is the founder of the Army Corps of Engineers Reform Caucus, and he recently introduced the Marina Operator Tax Obligation Relief (MOTOR) Act of 2013.

The Act provides economic relief to lake communities by capping fees marinas operating on Corps lakes are forced to pay.

The Corps of Engineers placed arbitrary fees on all restaurant, gasoline, and marine engine sales in marinas. Currently, Georgia Districts charge upwards of 4.6 percent on all gross sales. The MOTOR Act would reduce it to just 1 percent.

Rep. Collins feels strongly about education, and he wants taxpayers to have a say in their children's education.

According to his website, Rep. Collins said, "Giving parents the ability to choose safe and effective schools will



U.S. Rep. Doug Collins

encourage innovation and bring accountability to failing systems."

Considering taxpayers are estimated to pay \$120,000 from Kindergarten through grade 12, it is not surprising that Rep. Collins believes taxpayers should decide how that money is spent.

Many parents have just sent their children off to school, so finances and education are both certainly relevant concerns.

Recently, Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton spoke at a Movers and Shakers meeting, and he shared his concern about two Georgia House Bills.

The bills are HB 1 and HB 1176, and they would both impact Towns County.

For those unfamiliar with the bills, House Bill 1176 is presented as a Criminal Justice Reform Act, but as Sheriff Clinton pointed out, it could become a big problem for county prisons because it takes the overflow from the state

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

