

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Sunny	66 41
Fri: Clouds	69 41
Sat: Sunny	72 44
Sun: Sunny	74 46
Mon: Sunny	73 47
Tue: Sunny	72 50
Wed: Sunny	68 48



Upstream Elevation Predicted 10/22/2014	
Lake Chatuge	1,918.02
Lake Nottely	1,765.65
Blue Ridge	1,674.41

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Football

Fri 10/24 @ Commerce 7:30 PM

The Fiddle Queen reigns again at Fiddlers' Convention

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The legend of Snellville's Emma DeJarnette continues.

The 17-year-old fiddler made Snellville proud once again during her annual visit to the Fall Festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

"This meant quite a lot to me," DeJarnette said following her coronation as 2014 Fiddle Queen. "I've been coming here since I was 5, and I've grown up watching my role models win. To think that I'm finally at that competitive point, it's awesome."

"I've been coming here for years," she said. "I've competed in other competitions, but this is definitely my No. 1 competition. It's my favorite place to be. The competition this year was incredible; winning two titles in a row was really a challenge."

When the dust settled close to midnight on Saturday, DeJarnette was once again all smiles and celebrat-



Emma DeJarnette, 17, of Snellville, accompanied by guitarist Rob Percy, claimed her second consecutive Georgia State Fiddle Queen Championship Saturday night at Anderson Music Hall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

ing her second consecutive Georgia State Fiddle Queen title, this time over 50-year-old Tim Laughlin, of Bluff City, Tenn.

"I competed a lot when I was a kid," Laughlin said. "I haven't played in but a couple of competitions in the last 25 years. Emma is real good;

I'm glad to have shared the stage with her tonight. I'm real proud of her, and she deserved to win."

DeJarnette has been a regular at Fiddlers' conventions since she was 5 years old. She won the Beginning Fiddlers' competition in 2011 at Anderson Music Hall.

She has also traveled the Southeast competing in fiddle competitions.

DeJarnette was in a league of her own as she claimed the state champion Fiddler crown.

As Saturday turned to Sunday, DeJarnette had a yet another night to remember

at Anderson Music Hall. By the end of the night, even Charlie Daniels would have been proud.

The 2014 Fall Festival concluded Saturday night with the Georgia Fiddlers' Convention at Anderson Music Hall, warming plenty of hearts with many, although instrumental strings attached.

More than 20 musicians, including DeJarnette, and Laughlin, ranging from ages 10 and up were at the top of this year's musical joyride as judges decided who would be the Best of the Best.

Prizes were given in 13 categories: harmonica, buck dancing, dulcimer, Dobro, old time banjo, mandolin, banjo, flat-pick guitar, finger-style guitar, bluegrass band, beginning fiddle, junior fiddle, and senior fiddle. At the end of the evening, a Georgia State Fiddle Champion was crowned.

When all categories were decided, there was to be one final fiddle-off between both top junior and senior fiddle winners, laying claim to the Georgia State Fiddle

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Towns County Library is open

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The newly renovated and expanded Towns County Public Library held its long-awaited Open House Saturday morning.

Many residents attended the event, which featured an outdoor dedication just in front of the library steps.

Public officials and library staff spoke to the crowd about what was in store for them within the new library, and more importantly, how much hard work and dedication went into the \$1 million renovation.

Teresa Moore, who is chair of the Mountain Regional Library Board of Trustees, welcomed everyone to the event.

"We're so pleased and proud of this facility and what is accomplished here," said Moore. "I thought about who I could thank, and there are just too many, and I would be afraid that I would leave someone out."

Moore thanked some people anyway, including



The Towns County Public Library is open for business. The library was officially reopened on Monday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Mountain Regional Library Director Donna Howell, Towns County Library Branch Manager Debbie Phillips, and the architects and the planning committee behind bringing the project to life.

"I appreciate everybody coming out for this occasion,"

said Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall. "The reason we're here today is a lot of teamwork from a lot of people."

Commissioner Kendall was behind the SPLOST refer-

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Kendall cuts county millage rate

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall is cutting taxes again by lowering the county millage rate, which was set at the monthly county meeting Thursday.

The new county millage rate is 5.535 mills, resulting in a total property tax of \$3,973,252 being collected for the county portion of this year's property taxes.

This is a reduction of \$50,021 in county property taxes over last year.

Last year's millage rate was 5.622, and brought the county \$4,023,273 in property taxes.

Commissioner Kendall said that it was his pleasure to introduce another decrease



Bill Kendall

in property taxes to taxpayers, "especially in times when many are still hurting financially from the worst recession since the Great Depression."

Further, the commissioner also said that he received "a strong mandate from our citizens at the ballot box to op-

erate county government with low taxes through conservative spending, strict budget control and efficient management of their tax dollars."

Reviewing the five-year tax digest, Commissioner Kendall stated that he has kept his commitment "by cutting taxes for five straight years, 2010-2014, for a total reduction from the tax rate of 2009 over the five-year period of \$5,233,485."

Also at the county meeting, Commissioner Kendall set the 2014 millage rate for the Towns County Fire Department at 0.50 mills, and reaffirmed to Towns County Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers in a letter that the Towns County Board of Education had set its millage rate on Oct. 2 at 7.995 mills.

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Early voting is underway in Towns

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Early voting is in full swing, so Towns County registered voters should head to the Towns County Registrar's Office in Hiawassee, located next to the courthouse, to cast their votes from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Chief Registrar of Towns County Board of Elections Irma Nicholson has been involved in Towns County elections for 25 years, since George H. W. Bush was in office.

Nichols has a dedicated team of clerks in Carolyn Chastain, Kathy Norton and Mary Lou Thurman, all of whom are on hand daily to make sure the process runs smoothly.

"Three weeks before the election, early voting starts," said Nichols. "Ours started on the 13th of October and it will go through the 31st of October. And the last week they call ad-



Irma Nichols

vance voting rather than early voting, that third week. We're open one Thursday out of the election cycle, and that'll be the 25th of October."

So, what's the process once voters find their way to the Registrar's Office?

"They come in here, they check their picture I.D.," said Nichols. "If they're on the list or in our files, then they go

ahead and fill out their form, and the girls make them a card, and they go to the machine and they vote, and they're done."

Last week was the first full week of early voting, and as of press time Monday, 642 Towns County voters had turned up at the polls.

Absentee voting has been going on a little bit longer than early voting.

"That starts 45 days ahead, we can start mailing out because of the absentees and servicemen, and people being overseas living, so they have time to vote and get the ballot back after we send them to us," said Nichols.

As for Election Day, which is Tuesday, Nov. 4, Nichols and her staff expect a big turnout, which could mean a long day for them.

"We don't leave from the time we come in at 7 in the morning until all the precincts

See Early Voting, Page 10

Sam Nunn, Michelle Nunn coming to Hiawassee

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Retired U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn, who served Georgia for 24 years in the U.S. Senate and U.S. Senate hopeful Michelle Nunn, his daughter, will hold a Meet and Greet Thursday at 2:30 p.m. at the Upper Pavilion of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiawassee.

The Nunn's are coming to town to support longtime friends Zell and Shirley Miller, who will be in attendance for the dedication of the Zell and Shirley Miller Library at the new Rollins Campus Center of Young Harris College on Thursday.

A special ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony for the library will be held on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 1:15 p.m. to honor the two distinguished alumni that the three-level space is named for.

Michelle Nunn, a Democrat, is in a dead heat with Republican David Perdue for the opportunity to succeed retiring U.S. Sen. Saxby Chamblis, also a Republican.

Albert Jones, who has been chairman of the Democratic Party of Towns County since February, is looking



U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn



Michelle Nunn

forward to their arrival.

"What I'm going to try

See Nunn, Page 10

Bower indicted on charges related to stabbing of Towns deputy

By Charles Duncan
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Hiawassee - A 28-year-old Hayesville, NC man has been indicted by a Towns County Grand Jury related to the stabbing of Towns County Sheriff's Deputy Aaron Deyton, Towns County Superior Court records show.

Grand Jurors handed up an eight-count indictment on Daniel Lee Bower with charges that include criminal attempt to commit a felony, two counts aggravated assault on a peace officer, obstruction, possession of methamphetamine, DUI Drugs, tag light violation and failure to wear a seat belt, Superior Court records show.

Deputy Deyton, of Blairsville, who was stabbed and airlifted to Northeast Georgia Medical Center for treatment on Oct. 1, continues on the road to recovery.

"From what I understand, the doctors feel like he's going to make a comeback," Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton said.

Deputy Deyton, who lives in Union County, was stabbed in the neck following a brief foot chase and physical confrontation with Bower, Sheriff Clinton said.

A city of Hiawassee police officer stopped Bower on a traffic stop in the parking lot of Hiawassee's Mull Motel. The officer had assistance from two sheriff's deputies, one of which was Deputy Deyton.

The incident where Deputy Deyton was stabbed in the neck, ended in the Hardee's parking lot in Downtown Hia-



Daniel Lee Bower

wassee, Sheriff Clinton said.

Bower was taken into custody at the scene.

Bower is being held in the Towns County Detention Center without bail, jail records show.

Sheriff Clinton offered nothing but praise for Deputy Deyton in the wake of his life-threatening ordeal.

"Aaron Deyton's a perfect example of everything a deputy should be - I mean, he's a real hero in my book," said Sheriff Clinton. "He goes out every shift willing to risk his life to keep people safe, and that's basically what he was doing that night, and he did everything right - nothing he could have changed, in my book. It's just, we don't get to pick when these events happen."

Deputy Deyton comes from a law enforcement family,

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

