

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 84 Number 1

Wednesday, November 7, 2012

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Sunny	57 28
Fri: Sunny	63 32
Sat: Sunny	64 34
Sun: Sunny	63 42
Mon: Clouds	61 39
Tue: Rain	58 34
Wed: Rain	57 40



Upstream Elevation Predicted 11/07/12	
Lake Chatuge	1917.76
Lake Nottely	1763.49
Blue Ridge	1672.36

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## Sports Page 10

### Frank Riley

The Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council is pleased to announce that it has hired Frank M. Riley, Jr. of Hiwassee as its executive director. Frank comes to the Council with an extensive background in forestry, management, agriculture, and small business.

The RC&D looks forward to utilizing his skills as they complete existing projects and implement new ones in an effort to fulfill their mission statement which is: "To assist individuals and communities in utilizing and protecting our natural resources while improving the economy, environment and quality of life."

The Chestatee Chattahoochee RC&D Council is based in Demorest, Ga and covers 13 counties in Northeast Georgia.

## Happy Birthday Herald



Harold West

The Towns County Herald turns 84 years old this week.

The first Towns County Herald, all six pages, was published on Nov. 8, 1928 as the county's legal organ under founding Editor and Publisher L.P. Cross.

A year's subscription cost \$1.25. A three-month subscription - no longer available - was 50 cents, which today is the cost of one paper.

The first subscription was sold to a local man named Franks and the paper sold almost 500 subscriptions the first year.

The newspaper was purchased by Harold and Wanda West in February 1965.

In his introduction as the new publisher, Harold West wrote, "In these sad and troubled times, much of the world is filled with hate, frustration, fear, and violence.

"We believe that it is especially important that communities such as ours labor for greater possible understanding and good relationships."

The newspaper is owned today by Harold West's son, Kenneth West.

# 2012 State Champions!

By Joe Collins  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

**Macon** - They'll soon be raising a state championship banner in the Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium.

Actually, make that two. The uber talented Towns County Lady Indians' Cross Country team went to Macon with one goal in mind, bring a state championship back home to Hiwassee.

They did in style as junior Ansley Vardeman, junior Caitlin Sheffield, sophomore Sierra Nichols and junior Taylor Vardeman finished among the Top 6 runners.

Ansley Vardeman was the first to cross the finish line in a time of 21:34.37, almost a minute ahead of Georgia Military College's Elizabeth Savage.

Sheffield finished third, Nichols finished fourth, and Taylor Vardeman finished sixth.

The next Lady Indian to cross, sophomore Karlie Albach, finished in 16th.

The Lady Indians blistered the course at Georgia Industrial Children's Home to take the first Public School Cross Country Championship in Class A since the Georgia High School Association divided the titles between public and private schools.

Vardeman anchored her team to the title and claimed the individual champion's crown with a time of 21:34.37.

She was just as humble as she was when she captured the Area 4-A individual title.

"This is great," she said. "It's all so great. I am so proud of our team and I am proud for Head Coach Jeannie Ledford and I am so happy for senior Bradley Smith (finished seventh overall in the boys championship meet)."

Smith earned his spot at the State Meet with a third place overall finish at the Area



The 2012 Class A State Champion Cross Country Team, the Towns County Lady Indians. Photo/Joe Collins

Meet in Athens on Oct. 25. He ran as an individual and held his own as he finished strong and placed seventh overall in the state with a time of 18:48.34.

This was Smith's first year competing in Cross Country and he made his family proud.

"It's hard to believe that this is his first year when you look at how well he has done," Coach Ledford said. "He is a very talented runner and his record for the season against the teams we raced is really good."

Ansley Vardeman and

her teammates started out in the middle of the pack and she had to fight her way down the opening hill, with dew on the grass, and try not to fall to gain a good place in the pack.

She is living proof that

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## Incumbents rule; Coroner's race too close

By Libby Shook  
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A handful of outstanding provisional ballots could be the deciding factor in the Towns County Coroner's race.

Incumbent Democrat Ricky Mathis leads the Coroner's race by 16 votes over political newcomer Tashina Eller at press time.

With approximately 60 provisional ballots outstanding, that is the closest race of the 2012 General Election in Towns County.

In other races, Incumbent Commissioner Bill Kendall and Incumbent Sheriff Chris Clinton will serve another four years. Probate Judge David Rogers and Clerk of Court Cecil Dye ran unopposed and will continue in their current posts for another four years.

The results of those outstanding provisional ballots could impact the race between Incumbent Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers and challenger Bill Kuykendall.

Rogers defeated Kuykendall by 66 votes at the end of the Election Night. However, the provisional ballots could bring the race within the required amount for a recount. Recounts occur when the candidates are 1 percent or less apart. Rogers is leading 50.54 percent to Kuykendall's 49.46 percent.

According to Elections Superintendent Jonni Marie Shook those outstanding provisionals will not be verified and tabulated before Thursday or Friday.

Incumbent State House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison returns to office. Allison, a Blairsville Republican, soundly defeated Democrat Jana Hill, of Rabun County. Allison claimed



The Towns County elections were decided mostly during Early Voting. Election Day voting kept some races close. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

18,699 votes, or 72.50 percent in Towns, Union and Rabun counties.

The controversial Charter School Amendment passed 3,204, or 56.53 percent to 2,464, or 43.47 percent. Amendment II passed 3,342, or 62.02 percent, to 2,047, or 37.98 percent.

Commissioner Kendall returns with a sound defeat over Republican Steven Gerdes. Kendall claimed victory with 3,575 votes, or 58.98 percent, over Gerdes' 2,486 votes, or 41.02 percent. More than 81 percent of Towns County's registered voters turned out for this election.

Sheriff Clinton road a strong wave of support to victory over his Democratic opponent Daren Osborn. Clinton claimed 72.36 percent of the vote, for 4,434 votes to Osborn's 1,694 votes.

Clinton thanked his family, supporters and Towns County voters, naming them as the keys to a successful campaign.

Rogers collected 3,070 votes, or 50.54 percent to Re-

publican Kuykendall's 3,004 votes, or 49.42 percent.

Mathis claimed 2,963 votes to Eller's 2,947 votes.

In the 9th District Congressional race, Doug Collins easily won Towns County, and was easily elected within the district.

In the two Public Service Commission seats, Incumbent Chuck Eaton and Incumbent Stan Wise, both Republicans, were walk away winners.

Mitt Romney soundly defeated President Barack Obama by 3,569 votes in Towns County, as well as in the state of Georgia. Much of the rest of the country didn't see things that way.

After 11 p.m. Romney conceded to President Obama, as Barack Obama remains the 44th President of the United States with 301 electoral votes to Romney's 203.

The turnout for the Presidential Election year was huge, with more than 81 percent of locals casting ballots. Much of that was covered in early voting.

## Kendall: Mountain Protection Act will be enforced

By Libby Shook  
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A proposed logging operation in the Jones Gap Road community must file an application with the county government as well as purchase a \$1 million insurance policy protecting the county road and follow Best Management Practices to prevent erosion.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said it was a must that the Mountain Protection Act be enforced in the logging of 270-plus acres in the close-knit community of more than 200 people.

Kendall and the Towns County Planning Commission addressed concerns about the logging operation on Jones Gap Road in rural Towns County last week with members of the Bald Mountain Park Homeowners Association.

They also heard comments from Scofield Timber Co., who is contracted with property owner Sheila Donehoo of Cherokee County to remove logs from 270-plus acres on Jones Gap Road in Towns County.

County Attorney Rob Kiker, as well as the property owner, Donehoo, also attended



Commissioner Bill Kendall assures residents of the Jones Gap Road community that before any logging is done, the Mountain Protection Act will be enforced.

never had to make application before."

Kiker also informed Scofield Timber and homeowners that this includes "all land 2,200 feet or more above sea level, that has a percentage slope of 25 percent or greater for at least 500 feet horizontally, and shall include the crests, summits, and ridge tops which lie at elevations higher than any such area."

Kiker went on to read from the Mountain Protection Standards, Sections 3, saying, "Proposed land disturbing

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## BOE proposes tax increase

Special to Towns County Herald  
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The Towns County Board of Education has proposed a .936 mill increase for 2013, the Board of Education announced Monday night.

The board met Monday night to approve advertisement of the Five-Year Tax Digest and to post announcements regarding millage rate hearings over the next two weeks.

Towns County Schools Superintendent Melissa Williams, said the proposed increase in millage is to offset state budget shortfalls, shortfalls in the local tax digest, and a decline in local sales tax revenue.

The proposed budget for the fiscal year 2013 is \$11.4 million. Several steps were taken to cut expenses that included cutting 10 positions, increased class sizes at all grade and program levels, using existing staff to fill vacancies created through retirement, and increased state funding opportunities, continue to operate on a reduced calendar, and decreased select benefit options for employees.

Preliminary estimates show these steps saved the school system around \$500,000.



Melissa Williams

A shortfall of revenues combined with increased financial burdens imposed by state cutbacks, increased Local Fair Share obligations and mandated salary requirements have impacted the 2013 millage rate proposed by the BOE.

State funding has decreased \$944,741 in the last five years. An additional \$161,000 was cut in 2013 funds. Rising insurance costs for non-certified employees has increased \$158,000 for FY2013. Teacher Retirement System obligations shouldered by the system are up \$75,000 this year alone.

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