

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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50 Cents

www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 82 Number 9

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Cloudy	51 28
Fri: Cloudy	48 27
Sat: Rain/Snow	47 24
Sun: Sunny	44 24
Mon: Cloudy	44 26
Tue: Snow	44 23
Wed: Sunny	40 20



Upstream Elevation Predicted 01/05/11	
Lake Chatuge	1918.21
Lake Nottely	1762.14
Blue Ridge	1624.74

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Battle of the States

Don't forget to turn to pages 10A and 11A to catch up on all the action from the 17th Annual Battle of the States Christmas Basketball Tournament.

This year's event featured a lot of great basketball and a few surprises on the court.

Once again Basketball Beat Writer Jerry Kendall has provided wire-to-wire results from one of the county's most exciting events. The unforgettable sports event also features the award-winning photographs of James Reese and Lowell Nicholson.

Public Hearing Jan. 13

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has scheduled a Jan. 13 meeting at the Towns County Courthouse to discuss an intergovernmental agreement with the cities of Hiawassee and Young Harris for the purpose of holding a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax referendum.

That meeting will be held at 11 a.m. in the Courthouse and the public is invited to attend.

Commissioner Kendall said Monday that the SPLOST referendum will be on the March 15 ballot during a special election to determine if Towns County voters support a 1 cent spe-

Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Pantry will hold its free food distribution on Tuesday, Jan. 11. The distribution will be held at the Towns County Food Pantry on Jack Dayton Circle from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. All that are in need of assistance are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to pick up your food, please call (706) 896-4783 for more details prior to distribution day. This allows us to make arrangements to deliver food to you. All clients and inquiries are kept confidential.

Lady Indians take second in Battle of States

By Jerry Kendall
Towns County Herald
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The Towns County Lady Indians came as close as they've come in the 17 years of their Battle of the States Christmas Basketball tournament to staking claim to the championship of their own holiday event.

The Lady Indians fell victim to a late scoring surge by the Gordon Lee Lady Dragons and finished with a second place trophy, losing the title game 62-48.

Leading the Lady Indians in scoring for the game were Jordan Moss with 22 points, Ben Pong with 8, Eryn Cochran with 7, and Lindsay Patton with 6 while Cochran led in assists with 3 according to your reporter's unofficial tally.

Lady Indians' senior Moss and freshman Cochran were named to the All-Tour-

namment team for the three-day tournament, of which the start was moved from Dec. 27 to Dec. 28 due to inclement weather.

The Lady Indians advanced to the tournament's championship round with victories over Hayesville and Union County. The Lady Indians claimed a 58-34 win over the Lady Jackets in their tournament opener.

Scoring leaders for the Lady Indians were Moss with 19 points; Gabby Arencibia with 12; Ali Bleckley with 6; and Kindle Moss, Cochran, and Makayla Underwood with 5 each. Leading in assists according to your reporter's tally were Cochran with 4 and Ben Pong with 3.

Later, the Lady Indians would complete a series sweep of the Lady Panthers from Blairsville with a hard

See Tournament, page 2A



Towns County Lady Indians' senior Jordan Moss puts up a deuce against Union's Angie Hughes during the 17th Annual Battle of the State Christmas Tournament in Hiawassee. Photo/James Reese

A New Year has dawned



Party goes welcome in the New Year at Brasstown Valley Resort in Young Harris. Photo/James Reese

By James Reese
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At The Ridges Resort, Rick Davenport and the Sundown Band were, in more ways than one, an instrumental part of the New Year's celebration.

The band joyously per-

formed Rock and Roll classics that included Van Morrison's *Brown Eyed Girl* and *Lights* by Journey.

"The evening was incredible," said The Ridges' Michelle Osborn. "Everyone had a great time, they danced the night away."

In Young Harris, it was

a *Hooray for Hollywood* adventure at Brasstown Valley Resort.

Uptown Entertainment Band, or as they're known in Atlanta as U.E.B., supplied more than ample entertainment for the party's chosen theme for Brasstown Valley's dynamite of an evening.

Cornwell was murdered; Carringer prime suspect

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The Georgia Bureau of Investigation believes a Towns County man took a horrific secret with him to his grave last year.

On Monday in Cleveland, the GBI's top officer named James Scott Carringer the strongest suspect in the Aug. 11, 2009 abduction and murder of 38-year-old Kristi Leigh Cornwell.

Vernon Keenan, the GBI's director, held a news conference at GBI Headquarters in White County to discuss the weekend discovery of Kristi Cornwell's remains in rural Union County near the North Carolina border.

Carringer, 42, who was co-owner of The Appraisal Agency in Young Harris, is the strongest suspect in connection with the abduction



James Scott Carringer and murder of Kristi Cornwell, authorities said.

Georgia Bureau of Investigation spokesman John Bankhead revealed that on the night Kristi Cornwell disappeared, Carringer was within a two-mile radius of the wooded area where her remains were found in a shallow grave on a rural trail in Union County.

Carringer's cell phone records indicate that his cell phone pinged a cell tower in

See Carringer, page 2A

SPLOST on March 15 ballot

By Charles Duncan
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Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has scheduled a Jan. 13 meeting at the Towns County Courthouse to discuss an intergovernmental agreement with the cities of Hiawassee and Young Harris for the purpose of holding a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax referendum.

That meeting will be held at 11 a.m. in the Courthouse and the public is invited to attend.

Commissioner Kendall said Monday that the SPLOST referendum will be on the March 15 ballot during a special election to determine if Towns County voters support a 1 cent spe-



Commissioner Bill Kendall

cial tax to support capital improvement projects in the county and in Hiawassee and Young Harris.

From the county's perspective, Commissioner Kendall if the SPLOST is approved by voters, he intends to use the county's proceeds to begin develop-

ment of the Ralph and Johnnie Foster Memorial Park. That project includes the construction of a multi-purpose community center, the commissioner said.

"One of the biggest items in the SPLOST is developing Foster Memorial Park and constructing a multi-purpose building for use as a community center," he said. "Also, the cities will have some important projects."

The commissioner also intends to acquire 30,000 gallons of sewer capacity for the county from the city of Hiawassee by using \$150,000 in SPLOST funds to upgrade the wastewater treatment plant. That \$150,000 will be used to

See SPLOST, page 2A

Union fire was arson; suspect hangs self in jail

Double fatal murder victims included Towns man

By Charles Duncan
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A state medical examiner's report shows proof positive that Joseph Leroy Powell and Chad Derek Marshall didn't die from fire-related causes in Union County on Dec. 23.

Rather, the medical examiner's report shows that the two men died from repeated gunshots from a .45 caliber handgun.

The man believed to have killed them delivered a personal brand of justice on himself, according to local and state authorities.

On Dec. 28, Cody Benjamin Norregaard, 28, of Blairsville, was taken into custody at a residence at 178 Forest Circle in Union County on numerous drug charges in that jurisdiction. While he was incarcerated in the Union County Jail, GBI Agent Dustin Hamby secured five other warrants regarding Norregaard. Those warrants obtained by the North Georgia News in Blairsville included two counts of murder, burglary, first-degree arson and armed robbery related to the deaths of Powell, 62, of Blairsville, and Marshall, 38 of Young Harris.

Arrest warrants indicate that Norregaard took a flat screen television, a computer monitor, a military style



Derek Marshall



Joe Powell

ammunition box, a brief case and a green duffle bag containing items from the Powell residence.

Authorities then say that Norregaard shot and killed Marshall and Powell with a .45 caliber handgun before setting the Powell home on fire.

After the warrants

See Fire, page 2A

A lot of work to do in 2011

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall expects 2011 to be busier than 2010.

In addition to a March 15 Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax referendum, the commissioner has plans to enact Taxpayer Empowerment protection, pay as you go safeguards to prevent long range funding needs for employee retirements and promises not to raise taxes in 2011 when adopting the 2012 budget

and setting the county's millage rate.

"I think that 2011 promises to be a very fruitful year for our county," Commissioner Kendall said. "We'll still be watching our spending from our general budget. We're going to be looking out for the taxpayer again this year."

The commissioner is most proud of his proposed local legislation to protect Towns County taxpayers from not having a say in whether money should be spent without a vote.

"A few years ago, without much public atten-

tion and knowledge, the state legislature gave counties the power to put property owners in debt for millions of dollars for 30 years or more without residents having a say in the matter," Commissioner Kendall said. "These projects don't have to be voted on by the general population. The county can simply choose to put taxpayers in debt without their consent."

The commissioner vows to change that through local legislation called the Taxpayer Em-

See Projects, page 2A

