

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

www.townscountyherald.net

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928

50 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 82 Number 12

Wednesday, January 26, 2011

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Cloudy	42 23
Fri: Cloudy	44 26
Sat: Sun/Wind	47 25
Sun: Clouds	44 23
Mon: Clouds	45 28
Tue: Snow	45 25
Wed: Snow Showers	48 25



Upstream Elevation Predicted 01/26/11	
Lake Chatuge	1918.16
Lake Nottely	1762.22
Blue Ridge	1621.03

INDEX

2 sections, 18 Pages

Arrests.....	2A
Church/Obits.....	2,3B
Classifieds.....	4B
Editorial.....	4A
Calendar.....	4A
Legals.....	5B
Sports.....	10,11A
Television.....	6A

Chamber Chronicles Page 9A

Car Crash

A Blairsville woman was seriously injured in a two-vehicle head-on crash on Georgia 515 last week in Young Harris.

The Georgia State Patrol says Karen Jo Jones' 2005 Ford Focus crossed the center line and struck a 1995 GMC Sierra driven by Bobby Jason Kitchens head on.

The accident occurred Jan. 17, the patrol said.

Jones was traveling westbound toward Blairsville; Kitchens was driving eastbound toward Hiwassee, the patrol said.

Jones suffered serious injuries and was life-flighted to Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tenn. Kitchens suffered a non-life threatening injury, the patrol said.

An update on the conditions of both drivers was not available at press time.

TCHD Furlough Schedule

Due to budget cuts, the Towns County Health Department staff is furloughed two days a month. The furlough dates for February are Friday, Feb. 4 and Friday, Feb. 18.

Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Pantry will hold its free food distribution on Tuesday, Feb. 1 if Towns County Schools are open. 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

The 17-1 Towns County Lady Indians' basketball team is now ranked 10th in Class A in both the Georgia Prep Country Coaches Poll and the AJC weekly high school poll for Class A schools.

Kendall sends Service Delivery dispute to courts

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has instructed County Attorney Rob Kiker to contact the Enotah Judicial Circuit and ask for a judge to be appointed to expedite a Service Delivery Agreement.

Towns County, the city of Hiwassee and the city of Young Harris entered 2011 without an approved service delivery strategy, thus rendering each government with unqualified local government status.

"During the past several months, the county has called and conducted several meetings with the city of Hiwassee, the city of Young Harris, and the Towns County Water Authority," Commissioner Kendall said. "These meetings were an attempt at reaching service area agree-

ments. At this time, an agreement is not in place."

A service delivery strategy agreement allows local governments within the same county borders to receive state and federal funding through grants. Without an effective agreement, those local governments are on the outside looking in, in terms of state and federal funding.

A service delivery strategy agreement is a state mandate to avoid duplication of services within the county borders.

The ongoing dispute in Towns County is over the watershed service area in Young Harris, which the city of Young Harris has laid claim to without the consent of the Towns County Water Authority. The Authority has served the Young Harris Watershed for three decades.

The city of Young Harris has said that the Young Harris Watershed is not ne-



Commissioner Bill Kendall got it. However, the Towns County Water Authority refuses to surrender its stake to the watershed, which includes countless dollars spent on infrastructure.

The services dispute has put millions of grant dollars in jeopardy. Non-qualified governments are prohibited from receiving grant money. At stake is \$1.825 million in funding for the Mountain Regional Library.

The funds have been approved for inclusion on the state's priority lists of projects and are eligible for funding in the current legislative session. Those funds would be lost if the legislature approves funding while the local governments are listed as non-qualified local governments.

State Library Facilities Director Nathan Rall has said the county and local governments must be qualified in order to receive the state's capital outlay grant.

The threat of losing state priority funding status for the library has prompted Commissioner Kendall to seek a court resolution to the disputed service delivery agreement.

"I have instructed the county attorney to file proper papers with the Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court to have a judge appointed to take charge and to expedite a service delivery agree-

ment," Commissioner Kendall said.

Commissioner Kendall said that he wanted to emphasize to the courts the importance of lifting sanctions against funding for Towns County while the parties involved continue to negotiate a service delivery agreement in good faith.

"It is important to get a judge appointed as soon as possible since the judge will have authority to lift funding sanctions against all (local governments) and entities in Towns County," Commissioner Kendall said.

The chosen judge must come from outside the circuit, most likely a senior judge from another circuit. Once in the hands of a judge, a mediator is appointed within 30 days. The mediation process is to be completed within 60 days after the mediator is appointed.

Principal Dermody calls it a career

By James Reese
Towns County Herald
tcherald@windstream.net

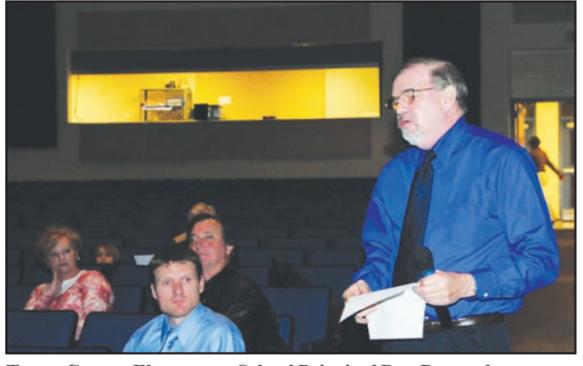
Don Dermody has been labeled as *Mr. Consistency* in the Towns County Schools System.

The veteran educator, who serves as principal of Towns County Elementary School, always puts students first every day he is on the job, Towns County Board of Education Chairman Mike Anderson said.

"You can always count on Don Dermody," Anderson said. "When the telephone rings, you know you're about to hear someone say something good about Don. He's always about the students, it matters to him that they're getting an education."

At the end of the school year, Dermody will take on another challenge: retirement.

Dermody is calling it quits following an amazing



Towns County Elementary School Principal Don Dermody presents his letter of retirement to the Towns County Board of Education last week. His colleagues say he will be missed. Photo/James Reese

career in education, a career that included having served as a superintendent at a large school system in Arizona. He submitted his letter of retirement at last week's Towns County Board of Education meeting at the Towns County Schools Auditorium.

"Don is incredible," Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens said. "When he came here, he brought a ton

of knowledge and expertise to the Towns County School System. He's been a big part of this community."

Under Dermody's guidance, Towns County Elementary School became an education center committed to providing an atmosphere that nurtures, guides and challenges all students in a safe environment.

See Dermody, page 3A

Allison crafts Internet law

State Rep. attempts to make Internet stalking a crime

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison is hard at work crafting legislation to make Internet Stalking a crime.

Allison, who represents Towns, Union and Rabun counties in State House District 8, is getting some help from local attorneys on the heels of a \$404,000 jury award to a Blairsville man in Union County Superior Court.

Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley and local lawyers Fletcher Griffin and Russell Stookey are working with Allison to craft legislation that would make it a crime to stalk individuals on the Internet.

The proposed legislation follows a suit that involved the personal bashing of a Blairsville hair dresser named Gene Cooley by



State Rep. Stephen Allison

anonymous posters on TOPIX following the 2008 murder of his girlfriend.

The bashing happened in the community chat room in TOPIX.

Stookey said that a discussion about the murder of Paulette Harper by her ex-husband, Steve Harper, who in turn, took his own life led to a discussion about Cooley.

The discussion on TOPIX somehow morphed

See Legislation, page 3A

BOH Ingles Branch to close in April

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Citizens South Bank has filed a legal notice to close its Bank of Hiwassee Ingles Branch "on or about April 30."

According to the Notice of Proposed Closing of a Branch Office: "customers of the branch office to be closed may conduct business at Citizens South Bank's other office in Hiwassee, located approximately one-eighth of a mile Southeast of the Ingles Supermarket branch office."

That location is the main office of the Bank of Hiwassee at 20 South Main Street, which will be the only branch in the city of Hiwassee. The branch



The Towns County main offices in the city of Hiwassee and the city of Young Harris will remain open, according to a legal notice in this week's edition of the Towns County Herald.

The ATM at the Ingles Supermarket will remain in operation, according to the legal notice.

The Bank of Hiwassee's operations center, on the square near the County Courthouse, which was placed up for auction, has been bid on by the City of Hiwassee, city records show.

The actual legal notice is published in today's edition in the Legals Section.

The Bank of

See Ingles Branch, page 2A

Towns County students enjoy another snow day

Surprise snow on Monday closes classrooms

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

The Winter of 2011 just got a bit crazier.

The National Weather Service and just about every weather forecaster in the South is feeling a bit psyched out after a cold weather front dropped about an inch of snow on extreme Northeast Georgia early Monday.

No one predicted the Monday bout with frozen precipitation.

The system prompted another missed school day for Towns County students.

Initially, the school system called for a two hour delay in classes on Monday. About 8 a.m., the two hour delay was called off because of deteriorating road conditions on the second roads of travel.

By lunchtime, all the snow was gone.

The ice storm the weather folks called for Tuesday morning, well, it was wet, but it wasn't frozen. The weather prognosticators called for snow Wednesday night in the Northeast Georgia Mountains (it's possible).

Forecasters are predicting a frozen greeting for February on Tuesday and Wednesday (officially, Ground Hog Day). The official call is for snow; we'll have to wait and see.



Dr. Richard Behrens

The words ice or snow has left school officials in the Northeast Georgia Mountains feeling helpless when it comes to making up school days.

Towns County students have missed 10 days this school year due to inclement weather. Four of those days have been rescheduled (two have already been made up). However, there is a whole lot of school left in 2011 and six days must be rescheduled.

"We're at the mercy of nature on this one," said Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens. "I can't recall a winter like this before."

It definitely looks like it's back to the drawing board for Dr. Behrens.

Charlie Daniels here on March 5

Don Williams here March 26; tickets for both on sale Feb. 4

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

The Devil is coming down to Georgia.

Charlie Daniels will play Anderson Music Hall March 5.

Daniels, who scored his first major music triumph when he sold one of his written songs, *It Hurts Me* to Elvis Presley, is best remembered for his Grammy Award-winning *The Devil Went Down to Georgia*. He also scored with *Long-haired Country Boy*, *The South's Gonna Do It Again*



Charlie Daniels

and *The Legend of Wooley Swamp*. He's also renowned as one of the greatest fiddle players of his generation. Daniels also is an accomplished Gospel and Christian singer.

The Georgia Mountain

Fairgrounds also welcomes Don Williams back to town to do his Hiwassee show on March 26.

Tickets for both concerts go on sale Feb. 4. Prices for each concert are \$35 plus \$2 handling for Level I seating and \$25 plus \$2 handling for Level II seating.

Williams was unable to perform at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Oct. 23rd due to a serious respiratory illness. That didn't stop the Georgia

See Concerts, page 3A

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

