

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Rain 58 34
Fri: Sunny 63 38
Sat: Clouds 61 41
Sun: Rain 52 31
Mon: Clouds 48 31
Tue: Clouds 57 37
Wed: Clouds 60 43



Upstream Elevation Predicted 3/17/10
 Lake Chatuge 1919.20
 Lake Nottely 1763.40
 Blue Ridge 1676.50

INDEX

2 sections, 20 Pages

Arrests.....2A
 Church/Obits.....2,3B
 Classifieds.....5B
 Editorial.....4A
 Calendar.....4A
 Legals.....5B
 Sports.....8,9A
 Television.....4B

Chamber Chronicles Page 10A

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For a limited time, the Towns County Herald will offer \$8 subscriptions for one year to new subscribers.

The offer extends to residents of Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay County, NC.

The newspaper is making a difference during hard times.

For more than two months, the newspaper has offered those currently unemployed, Senior Citizens and U.S. Military veterans \$5 subscriptions for 1 year. That's a savings of \$21 off the newstand price.

This offer also extends to residents of Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay County, NC.

Again, we hope to make a difference when folks need it the most.

Pancake Breakfast

Unicoy Masonic Lodge and Hiwassee Eastern Star Chapter will sponsor a Pancake Breakfast fundraiser at the Towns County Senior Center from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday. Tickets are available in advance and at the door for \$5. The breakfast includes pancakes, eggs, sausage, orange juice and coffee.

Fund Raiser

The Towns County Booster Club will host a Car/Truck/Motorcycle Show on May 15 in the Towns County High School parking lot. Admission to the event is \$5. Entry fees are \$20 for a car or truck and \$10 for a motorcycle. No awards will be given; this is a fundraiser event. The event benefits athletics in grades six through 12 in Towns County Schools. Deadline for entry is May 1. Call (706) 781-8763 for more details.

Spring Sale

The VFW Thrift Store is having yet another whale of a sale. All clothing, shoes, and purses are listed at 50 cents each. The sale lasts through March 31. Don't wait, hurry on down before these fabulous bargains become history.

Enotah judgeship at stake in Senate Bill 485

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

One of the three Enotah Judicial Circuit judgeships is proposed to be eliminated in the recently introduced Senate Bill 485.

State Sen. Mitch Seabaugh, the Majority Whip of the Georgia State Senate has proposed eliminating 19 Superior Court judgeships, including one in the Enotah Circuit, which includes Towns County.

The judges on the Enotah Judicial Circuit bench are Chief Judge David Barrett and judges Murphy Miller and Lynn Alderman.

Seabaugh, a Coweta County Republican, introduced Senate Bill 485, legislation that would reduce the number of Superior Court judgeships by 19 in an effort to help alleviate the state's



State Sen. Mitch Seabaugh search for more than \$1 billion in budget cuts. Currently Georgia has 205 Superior Court judges; Seabaugh's bill would reduce that number to 186.

If approved by both the Senate and House of Representatives, and signed off on by Gov. Sonny Perdue, the legislation would become law Jan. 1.

Seabaugh proposes no cuts to the Coweta Judicial Circuit, which has six judges and covers Carroll, Heard, Troup, Coweta, and Meriwether counties.

Other judicial circuits affected by the proposal include Appalachian, Gwinnett, Atlanta, Stone Mountain, Ogeechee, Augusta, Southern, Chattahoochee, Southwestern, Cobb, Cordele, Dougherty, Dublin and Eastern.

The Atlanta Judicial Circuit would be the hardest hit, losing four judgeships.

Seabaugh suggests that the Superior Court system has not been carrying its weight during the state's budget crisis and has made far fewer cuts than many other departments.

To balance the upcoming Fiscal budget, the Senate is looking for more than \$1 billion in cuts from

Gov. Perdue's recommended 2011 budget. The majority of cuts to the 2011 budget will come through the Senate appropriations process.

"This is one of the few items that require statutory action," Seabaugh said. "The Senate only has seven days left to work legislation through the committee process and over to the House by Legislative Day 30 on March 25."

Seabaugh says cutting the number of Georgia's Superior Court judges would save the state approximately \$14 million.

Seabaugh said that after months and months of declining state revenues and significant budget cuts over the past few years, the state is forced to "find efficiencies and savings everywhere possible."

"In some cases, this

requires legislative action to reduce the size and scope of government," Seabaugh said. "We looked at the overall cases filed per judge and found a more efficient balance of cases filed. Projected budget revenues return us to 2004-2005 levels. This is an area the legislature could find savings by reducing the number of judges to near 2004-2005 levels."

The most recent count of judicial caseloads throughout the state, completed in 2008, showed a need for 275 Superior Court judges, or 70 more judges than are currently serving on circuit benches throughout the state's 16 judicial circuits.

Also, there is evidence to suggest that the number of cases per judge is growing amid the current recession.

See SB 485, page 3A

Lodge to serve Young Harris, County

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

In 1966, Stephens Lodge No. 414 F&AM came to life on Highway 66 in Young Harris.

Early this summer, the lodge that has generated thousands of dollars to benefit the Towns County community and its residents will offer one more benevolent service: community center.

The currently under construction Lodge, built on land donated by Johnny and Janice Cochran, will be the new home for Young Harris Pharmacy and the Masonic meeting place for members of Stephens Lodge No. 414 F&AM.

It also will serve as Young Harris' community center where families can gather for whatever occasion is on their calendar. It also will serve as additional meeting space for the Young Harris City Council – and if



Stephens Lodge No. 414 trustees Paul Shook, Clint Hobbs and Richard Nichols join Commissioner Kendall in signing an agreement to utilize the lodge for public events. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

need be, for County Commission meetings, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said.

On Monday, Kendall met with Stephens Lodge trustees Richard Nichols, Paul Shook, Clint Hobbs and Chris Turpin to sign an agreement that also makes the Lodge the meeting place in Young Harris for wedding receptions, birthdays, reunions and family get togethers.

"We want to thank the Commissioner of Towns County," Hobbs said. "He helped make this partnership possible. It's the community pulling together in yet another way so that the community can be served."

The two sides entered into an agreement to allow Young Harris and county residents to utilize the facil-

See Lodge, Page 5A

Local man charged with child molestation

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

Bail has been set for a 59-year-old Towns County man accused of child molestation and aggravated child molestation against a child under 14 years old, Towns County Superior Court records show.

Senior Judge Robert S. Struble set bail on March 10 at \$60,000 for the accused Stanley Reginald Raymond, of a Hiwassee address, according to a Bond Order filed in Towns County Superior Court.

Raymond is accused of molesting a child under the age of 14 years old between the dates of Jan. 1, 2005 and March 5, 2010, according to an arrest warrant secured by Towns County sheriff's Detective Brian Wilson.

Detective Wilson went

before Towns County Probate Judge David Rogers on March 5th to secure the arrest warrant, Towns County Probate Court records show.

According to the warrant, Raymond allegedly violated the child and caused the child physical pain, thus meeting the state requirements for the charge of aggravated child molestation.

The Bond Order filed in Towns County Superior Court indicates that Judge Struble was designated by the Enotah Judicial Circuit to set bail in Raymond's case.

According to court records, Superior Court judges David Barrett, Murphy Miller, and Lynn Alderman have recused themselves from hearing the case, thus the assignment of the case to Judge Struble.

See Molestation, page 3A

Work begins on temporary fields

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

The metamorphosis of a portion of the Towns County Industrial Park property is underway.

County workers are completing the task of transforming a portion of the Park into athletic fields for local Parks and Recreation events.

The County workforce has been busy removing rocks, smoothing down the rough spots and putting down lime and fertilizer to temporarily convert the grounds from prime commercial real estate into athletic fields.

Always in search of property for additional ath-



County workers focus on the deed at hand as they prepare Industrial Park property for use as temporary athletic fields.

letic fields, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall agreed in February to lease property from the Industrial Development Authority for the Towns County Recreation Department.

"It is common knowledge that we don't have enough athletic fields," Commissioner Kendall said.

See Fields, page 5A

Egg-stra Relay fun set for Saturday

Third Annual Stars Shine on March 27th

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

Well it's one for the money, two for the show, three to get ready now go Cat go to the Third Annual Stars Shine for Cancer.

It's that time of year again as the Relay For Life teams from Towns and Union counties join forces to benefit the American Cancer Society.

You can rest assured, Elvis will be somewhere in town.

The real fun begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday with the Egg-stra Fun with Relay For Life on the Courthouse Square in Hiwassee.

The event features games, cotton candy, a dunking booth, a cakewalk, plenty of food, that old rabbit Peter Cottontail, lots of popcorn, music and even face painting.

The lucky ones will take home items from an event auction as well.

The following weekend, the fun gets even more fun.

Tickets are on sale now at Cadence Bank in Blairsville and Seasons Inn for \$5 for an evening of fun and comedy at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

The entry price to the Third Annual Stars Shine for

Cancer event also is \$5 on the night of the show.

The 2010 event, once again a variety show at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is slated to begin at 5:30 p.m. on March 27 with Las Vegas Game Tables until 6 p.m.

This year's theme features local talent putting on a Las Vegas style show.

The event includes a live auction offering some fantastic items for event goers to bid on. For those with a sweet tooth, some tasty baked goods and concessions will be readily available.

Last year's event raised more than \$6,000 for the cause, with \$1,600 coming during the 30-minute auction, said Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason.

For more details about Relay For Life events for Towns and Union counties, call Mia Crowe, who has now been involved with Relay For Life for eight years, at (706) 745-5588.

Sara Evans, Jimmy Wayne play The Hall

By Charles Duncan
 TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
 charlesduncan@brmemc.net

Sara Evans brought her sultry, beautiful voice to Anderson Music Hall on Saturday, much to the delight of her fans that came to see her.

Evans was joined by Kings Mountain, NC's Jimmy Wayne who quickly got the joint jumping with his Country Music style. For those who hadn't heard of the North Carolina native, Wayne brought the crowd to a roar with his No. 1 hit from 2008, *Do You Believe Me Now*.

See Sara Evans, Page 3A



Country Music star Sara Evans engages the crowd at Anderson Music Hall on Saturday night with an electrifying stage performance. Evans made the night an event for her fans. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

