

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County
Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928

50 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 80 Number 19

Thursday, March 19, 2009

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Showers 65 35
Fri: Sunny 58 32
Sat: Sunny 60 38
Sun: Cloudy 64 40
Mon: Showers 63 41
Tue: Showers 64 41
Wed: Showers 66 40



Upstream Elevation Predicted 3/17/09	
Lake Chatuge	1919.28
Lake Nottely	1763.52
Blue Ridge	1675.71

INDEX

18 Pages

Arrests.....	2
Church/Obits.....	8
Classifieds.....	14
Editorial.....	4
Elected officials.....	4
Legals.....	15
Sports.....	10,11
Television.....	6

Water board meeting

The Towns County Water Board meeting is scheduled to meet Monday, March 23 at 7 pm in the TC Water Office Building located on Jack Dayton Circle near Funworld.

Commissioners Meeting

The Towns County Commissioners Meeting is scheduled to meet Thursday, March 19 at 5:30 pm. For more information, call 706-896-2276

FREE Adult CPR Training

The Red Cross will be holding its annual free adult CPR training course on Saturday, March 21 at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church in Young Harris at 10 a.m. The class will run approximately 3 hours. Call now and sign up by calling 1-800-282-1722, ext. 29, to reserve a seat.

Mtn. Shelter meeting

The members of the Humane Society's Mountain Shelter have called a special meeting to be held on Monday, March 23, at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Civic Center in Blairsville. All members are urged to attend. You must be a paid member to vote. For more info, call 706-781-3843

Correction

The Herald ran the wrong date on a story concerning the upcoming concert with 60's R&B performers Percy Sledge, Clarence Carter, and the Tams. The concert will be at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on May 9.

Land dispute ends, Towns County gets 21 acres

By Bo Wilson
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

It's over. The 21-acre land dispute between the Towns County Industrial Development Authority and Clay-Towns Joint Development Authority has come to an end, closing the door on years of fighting between the two entities.

At its meeting earlier this month, the Towns County Authority voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of attorney Rob Kiker from the Clay-Towns Authority.

Kiker said following the discussions, the Clay-Towns Authority has offered back to the Town County Authority the 21 acres, 14 in Towns and seven in Clay County, N.C.

"It's the 21 acres that

was originally transferred, less what's been sold off from 2005," Kiker said. "In consideration of that, they're asking that we take into subject the judgement that was acquired against Clay-Towns, not Towns County. Also the Environmental Protection Division fine and order that was acquired against the CTA"

Kiker said Towns County would also satisfy the \$300,000 note that was made in favor of this board by the Clay-Towns Authority.

"It's not a perfect solution," he told the board. "It's not a great solution, but it appears to be the only solution."

Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall said taxpayers will not be responsible for payment.

"One thing I've tried to do is protect the taxpay-

ers of Towns County," Kendall said. "The taxpayers of Towns County will not be responsible. The property will have to stand on its own."

Kiker reiterated that in the meeting.

"This authority owned the property and had certain funds that were transferred to the CTA that assisted with economic development," Kiker said. "Therefore this authority is taking it back over. There is no obligation on the part of the taxpayers. There is no pledge of ad valorem taxes for any debt. The property will have to stand on its own for the indebtedness. That's no different than it was when it was with this authority in 2005."

As for the EPD fines of \$40,000, Commissioner

See CTDA, page 2

Lowe's Home Improvement interested in Hiwassee

By Bo Wilson
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Lowe's Home Improvement Store has expressed interest in building a center in Hiwassee, according to Mayor Barbara Mathis.

Mayor Mathis said Lowe's informed the city of Hiwassee they want to locate near the junction going to Hayesville, N.C.

"That is our understanding," Mathis said. "We've been told they have spent a lot of money on engineering."

The only problem: sewer.

Earlier this month, Mayor Mathis and City Manager Rick Stancil met

with representatives of Lowe's to discuss their request for sewer service.

Mayor Mathis said a response from the city will be dependent on action by Commissioner Bill Kendall or the Towns County Water and Sewer Authority.

"Commissioner Kendall said he is willing to help the city in any way he can to get Lowe's to locate in the city," Mathis said. "We would love to see a business like Lowe's come to Hiwassee. It would bring tax dollars and jobs to the city and county, but we have to wait and see what the study reveals."

To consider Lowe's request, there are several steps that must take place.

The first step would be to perform a line and flow analysis. The next step would be submission of the project to state and federal funding agencies.

The city's says they will not fund the line analysis or the matching portion of any grants or loans without long term funding being guaranteed to the city for infrastructure development in the county. Since the Towns County Water and Sewer Authority refused to provide sewer service, there will be no connections of county commercial lines to sewer service until the issue is addressed.

"We're under a

See Lowes, page 2

Hiwassee changes course on sewer project

By David Seckinger
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
tcherald@brmcmc.net

Don Baker with Engineering Management Incorporated (EMI) spoke to the Hiwassee City Council during their regular monthly meeting on March 3.

Baker reported on a change in the project to replace the Towns County Comprehensive School sewer line and to upgrade the Chatuge Lift Station. The project is partly funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grant.

With the help of a map, Baker explained how the original plans could possibly create problem overflows downstream. He said there are already two spots that have problem overflows when it rains.

Baker said they have

decided to bypass the problem area by laying down new lines.

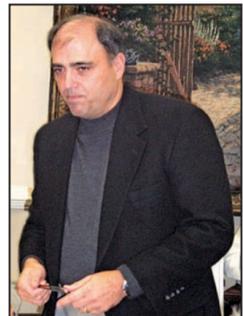
Baker said fortunately the new plan will improve the city sewer system without any expected additional cost.

City manager Rick Stancil told council that no vote was needed to make these changes, just a briefing, but they may have to vote later.

Other city business included:

Stancil said the Planning Committee met on Monday, March 2 at 2 p.m. but did not receive any new project applications. However, updates on pending and grandfathered projects were made. Stancil also said the Finance Committee did not meet.

Stancil discussed the Highway Partnership De-



Baker

velopment Project, saying additional site work has been done and has connected to the water line. The Big Sky Village Project has no new report.

Stancil discussed the 2009 Ten Year Capital Improvement Plan Update. The city has submitted eight

See Baker, page 2

Historical Society gets lesson on Cherokees

By David Seckinger
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
tcherald@brmcmc.net

"The Cherokee people were exactly that—people," said Gracie Schwartzman. "The word *heathen* and the word *savage* do not apply."

Schwartzman spoke to about 30 people last Saturday about the Cherokee Indians, who played a significant role in local mountain history. The Towns County Historical Society sponsored a presentation about Cherokee heritage at the Senior Center in Hiwassee.

The demonstrators spoke of Cherokee art, music, farming, tool and weapon making, culture, and legend. While American history only goes back to the late 1700s, Cherokee history in this region goes back thousands of years.

"When time began, the world was very very cold," said one of the demonstrators, who passed along the legend of how the water spider captured fire for the creatures of the earth. "Fire was sacred to the Cherokee," she said.

"They believe when the smoke rises, it goes straight to Heaven."

Other legends included how disease and medicine first began, how the martin won the gourd for its bird-

See Cherokee, page 3



Towns County resident Ina Kozesky helps Kerry Marsh demonstrate how Cherokee Indians once made tools.

Broun brings "Congress on the Square" to Towns County

Meet with Representatives from Broun's Office at the Towns County Courthouse



Toccoa, GA—Representative Paul Broun, M.D. (GA-10) announced that he will bring the services of his congressional office directly to the people he serves through "Congress on the Square." Dr. Broun will set up a mobile office on Tuesday, March 24 in the Towns County Courthouse Grand Jury Room. Two representatives will be present from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. to answer questions and help residents who have concerns regarding federal issues, including obtaining a passport or U.S. visa and securing benefits through Social Security and

Veterans Affairs.

"I understand that it may be difficult for some people to make the drive to my office in Toccoa, so I am bringing my office to the people," said Dr. Broun. "I invite anyone who has a question, comment, or concern to come and meet with my staff members at the Towns County Courthouse on Tuesday, March 24, and my office will do its best to assist you."

The "Congress on the Square" mobile office will also make the following stops: Habersham County Courthouse on the Monday, March 23, Banks County's First Georgia Bank on Wednesday, March 25, and the Rabun County Courthouse on March 31. Additionally, there will be mobile offices set up in Putnam, Wilkes, Lincoln, and Elbert Counties. Broun has district offices in Toccoa, Athens, and Augusta which are open from 8:30am-5:30pm Monday through Friday.

Rep. Stephen Allison announces town hall meetings on March 21

Representative Stephen Allison announces his Town Hall Meeting schedule for Towns, Rabun, and White Counties. The schedule is:

Towns County
Saturday, March 21, 2009 at 9:00 AM, Mountain Regional Library – Young Harris, 698 Miller Street; Young Harris, Georgia

Rabun County
Saturday, March 21, 2009 at noon, Community Bank and Trust Community Room, 174 Highway 441 North; Clayton, Georgia

White County
Saturday, March 21, 2009 at 3 pm, Sautee Nacoochee Community Center – Theatre, 283 Highway 255 North; Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia

Under the Gold Dome

A weekly report by State Representative of Georgia's 8th District Stephen Allison



This Thursday marked the 30th legislative day of the 2009 session. Known as "Crossover Day," it marked the deadline for legislation to pass at least the House or Senate. Any legislation that did not pass either body will be considered again next session. Because of the "Crossover Day Deadline," this week was filled with long days full of key votes as we deliberated different bills that would cut taxes, stimulate the economy, fund trauma care or even offer our students greater educational opportunities. Some of the more noteworthy legislation passed this week includes:

-House Bills 481 and 482, the Jobs, Opportunity, and Business Success (JOBS) Act of 2009.

HB 481 provides tax credits to employers for each unemployed person hired, suspends business "start-up" fees for one year, and eliminates the state sales tax deposit. HB 482 will eliminate the state ad valorem tax on business inventory through a statewide referendum. This legislation will allow small businesses to create, expand and attract jobs for Georgians.

-House Bill 400, the Building Resourceful Individuals to Develop Georgia's Economy (BRIDGE) Bill. This legislation ensures that all students will have a personalized graduation plan as well as the opportunity for dual

enrollment. The bill also seeks to increase student interest by creating programs that combine real world experience with increased academic rigor.

-HB 261 creates a six month window during which anyone purchasing one single-family residence will receive a tax credit of up to \$3,600.

This short tax window will immediately improve Georgia's real estate market by creating an incentive to buy homes now rather than later. The positive affects of increasing home sales will ripple out to many other areas of Georgia's economy, including construction and manufacturing.

-HB 480 removes all ad valorem and sales taxes from automobiles purchased in Georgia after December 31, 2009.

Instead, these vehicles will be subject to a one-time seven percent title fee based upon the value of the automobile being purchased, with a maximum fee of \$2,000. This measure will make cars more affordable for Georgians and provide needed funding for trauma care in Georgia.

As you can see, this week was marked by the legislative race to beat the Crossover Day Deadline, but we passed some great legislation that will help Georgians. It is important for me to hear from my constituents on matters that come before the House.

See Allison, page 3

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD



9 771947 523308