

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, March 30, 2011

Local Weather and Lake Levels

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Thur: Rainy | 55 39 |
| Fri: Rainy | 58 37 |
| Sat: Rain | 47 39 |
| Sun: Sunny | 67 48 |
| Mon: Cloudy | 68 46 |
| Tue: Cloudy | 66 39 |
| Wed: Sunny | 65 39 |



| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Upstream Elevation Predicted 03/30/11 | |
| Lake Chatuge | 1921.64 |
| Lake Nottely | 1777.05 |
| Blue Ridge | 1638.06 |

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Chamber Chronicles

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Meeting

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall has called a special meeting for 11 a.m. on Friday, April 1st at the Towns County Courthouse to open sealed bids for fire hydrants and other firefighting related sealed bids.

The commissioner will open bids on fire hydrant tapping sleeves and related materials as well as bids on a tap mate lateral tapping machine.

Cruiz-In Meeting

The Towns County Tourism Association and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds will once again sponsor the Third Annual Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruiz-In Car Show. The 2011 event is scheduled for Aug. 11-13 at the Fairgrounds.

Promoter Rakes Parrish will speak at the Annual Cruiz-In Community Meeting on Monday, April 11 at 5:30 p.m. at Anderson Music Hall at the Fairgrounds. The Tourism Association is looking for all area businesses to be apart of this event, please make plans to attend.

For more details, please contact Jane Holland at (706) 896-4966.

Kendall unsure about Transportation Investment Act

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

At 11 a.m. on Friday in the Towns County Courthouse, Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall will discuss something a lot of county residents probably aren't aware existed.

The Transportation Investment Act of 2010 or HB 277 from the previous legislative session is moving forward.

The Transportation Investment Act was signed into law in June 2010 by then Gov. Sonny Perdue. The legislation will put the fate of future state transportation projects in the hands of Georgia voters possibly by the 2012 Primary to decide a region-wide 1 cent sales tax referendum for funding regional transportation projects.

The proposal isn't a statewide vote; rather, it will be a regional vote of resi-

dents in the 12 regions that make up the state's Regional Commissions that oversee charting the state's future growth.

Towns County is a part of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, one of 13 counties that will decide if a region-wide 1 cent sales tax is the solution to solving the state's transportation funding crisis on a regional level.

Should the tax pass within a region, all revenue collected there would stay in that region. Local governments would share 25 percent of the revenues to be spent on any projects they choose. The other 75 percent would be used to fund a list of projects created by each region's Transportation Roundtable.

The proposed regional transportation sales tax has come under extreme scrutiny because neither Towns



Commissioner Bill Kendall

County nor any of the other 158 counties in Georgia can opt out. Should the vote be approved region-wide by voters from the 13 GMRC counties, it will be implemented over the course of a decade.

If it's not approved, state transportation funding for each county within the region would dry up completely.

The Transportation Investment Act requires each of the regions to have a roundtable of elected officials that will develop a priority list that will be avail-

able to voters before they go to the polls in the summer of 2012.

The roundtables include the chairperson of each county commission in the region and one mayor from each county in the region.

The priority list represents each county's request for regional funding through the proposed region-wide 1 cent sales tax that will be voted on by voters throughout the 13-county region.

Should the regional tax pass, the local sales tax rate would increase to 8 percent.

Currently, more than 30 percent of funding for state transportation projects comes from the state's gas tax, which hasn't been increased in years.

Commissioner Kendall is a bit upset that the required list of projects for each county must be turned in by Thursday.

"We learned last week

that the date the list of road projects were due changed from August (2011) to March 30," Commissioner Kendall said. "We'll talk about that list on Friday."

GMRC has until April 13 to submit the lists to GDOT, Stephanie Harmon, regional planner for GMRC told Commissioner Kendall on Monday.

Over the years, GDOT has repeated struggled to fund five bridge projects in Towns County. Each was subsequently put on the proverbial back burner.

"The main projects (submitted by Kendall) are those five bridges and the widening of Highway 69 at the light going toward Hayesville," Commissioner Kendall said. "It's about a mile or so project. We put

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Sutton takes Speech Contest

TCHS senior claims \$1,000 scholarship for next level

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

Nora Sutton woke up nervous on Saturday morning. Early morning jitters aren't her usual Saturday morning routine, but this day was special. She had worked hard preparing for the annual Youth Leadership Development Speech Contest scheduled for 10 a.m. at Young Harris College.

Sutton, along with eight other students were vying for a \$1,000 scholarship award for finishing first in the annual event sponsored by the Towns County Republican Party.

Having chosen the topic of "capitalism versus socialism" from a list of 16 speech topics, Sutton went to work on a speech with as much fervor as she does in her studies at Towns County High School. That's one of



Superior Court Judge David Barrett, left, and State Sen. Jim Butterworth, far right, congratulate the winners of Saturday's Youth Leadership Development Speech Contest. Photo/James Reese

the reasons behind Sutton's success as Towns County's STAR Student.

She didn't think she had a chance to win, with TCHS junior Jeannie Bradley among the other competitors. Bradley was the state's top Future Farmers of America extemporaneous speaker in 2010 and she finished sixth in the nation in a competition in held in Indianapolis, IN.

Sutton told the crowd attending the competition that socialism was purely based on the redistribution of wealth, a matter of evening out the social classes, thus eliminating the haves and the have nots, reminiscent of *Robin Hoodism*.

"Socialism eliminates the desire to work hard and

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TCSO investigates property crimes

Sheriff: patrols doubled in affected areas

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

The Towns County Sheriff's Office is investigating property crimes that occurred during the month of March, sheriff's reports show.

Three of the thefts involved prescription medication taken from homes, three involved the theft of items of value, including jewelry, electronics and precious metals, a seventh crime was an unsuccessful attempted burglary, sheriff's reports show.

Towns County sheriff's Investigator, Lt. Brian Wilson, said that the department has at least one suspect related to one of the crimes.

"That's all I can tell you at this point," Lt. Wilson said. "We don't release the names of suspects. We wait until we actually have some-



Sheriff Chris Clinton

one in custody before we release names."

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports, property crimes in Towns County are actually down from this time a year ago. By the end of March 2010, 15 burglaries had been reported in Towns County. This year,

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Don Williams packs The Hall

Country Music Hall of Famer brings down the house

By James Reese
Towns County Herald
tcherald@windstream.net

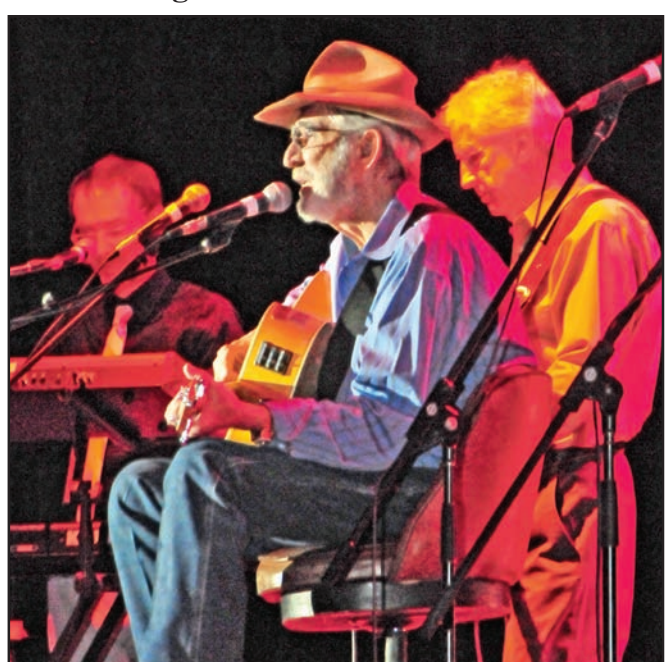
Don Williams delivered on his promise to return to Hiawassee.

The silk-voiced Country Music Hall of Famer packed Anderson Music Hall on Saturday singing his legendary tunes and inspiring an Atlanta man to propose to his fiancée on stage.

Williams led off with his 1973 hit single, *Amanda*, the song with the classic lyrics "they should have made you a gentleman's wife." He was joined by the audience as he made his way through the hit's chorus.

Williams followed the

See Don Williams, page 16



The Gentle Giant was incredible. Don Williams brought his blend of soft Country classics to Anderson Music Hall. Photo/James Reese

Vince Gill comes to Hiawassee

The stars still shine for Amy Grant's Country Music husband

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

Vince Gill has done it all from Bluegrass to Pop Rock to becoming a Country Music sensation.

On May 6th, he'll stand center stage at Anderson Music Hall and bring many of his more than 40 career hits as a solo artist to Hiawassee.

Gill, who began his career in Bluegrass in the 1970s, and later became a pop star as a member of Pure



Vince Gill will play Anderson Music Hall on May 6th in Hiawassee. Gill was once lead vocals for Pure Prairie League and performed with Ricky Skaggs before finding solo stardom.

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'All working together'

By State Sen. Jim Butterworth
For Towns County Herald
tcherald@windstream.net

Not one of Georgia's 56 state senators or 180 representatives was elected for his or her ability to make deals or play politics. We were blessed with this opportunity because of our values and determination to do what is right. You elected me because I am committed to working with my colleagues in the Senate and the House of Representatives to create sustainable solutions to the critical issues facing our state.

We have less than ten legislative days left in this year's legislative session, which means it is crunch time. These last few weeks are packed with hurried changes to finalize legislation. It's often during this crunch time under the Gold Dome that public servants start to play politics. They get caught up in the deal making and promises that are often an unfortunate part of the last few days of session. Sadly, these public servants lose sight of their true objective - to make Georgia a better place for the people they represent.

This is the perfect opportunity to remember that we must work together in a collaborative spirit to accomplish our top priorities. We must ensure that personal agendas don't hamper the business of Georgia.

Our friends in the House are a vital resource



State Sen. Jim Butterworth

that we can tap during these times. A good working relationship is the only way to accomplish what needs to get done. We must be able to compromise and make sure legislation we pass will improve on the status quo and is an efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." We are in pursuit of success and nothing short of it. Henry Ford was one of the most remarkable American industrialists in our country's history. His words still hold a message for all to adhere to and take to heart. As your Senator, I promise to work in concert with the House while maintaining the same moral fiber I ran for office with.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding current legislation at (404) 651-7738.

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

