

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Sunny	74 48
Fri: Rainy	68 48
Sat: Cloudy	62 35
Sun: Sunny	60 37
Mon: Rainy	66 44
Tue: Rainy	70 50
Wed: Rainy	75 55



Upstream Elevation Predicted 04/13/11	
Lake Chatuge	1922.03
Lake Nottely	1777.20
Blue Ridge	1647.31

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Fish Fry

VFW Post 7807 will host its a fish fry on Friday, April 8 and Friday, April 22 from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

All you can eat fish, curly fries, baked beans, hush puppies, cole slaw and iced tea. All this at a cost of \$9 per person. Now with a non-smoking dining room.

Fish fries will be held the second and 4th Fridays of each month.

Happy BDay Towns County

The annual Arts & Heritage Festival will celebrate the county's 155th year on Saturday, May 14, on the square in Hiawassee, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., sponsored by the Towns County Historical Society.

Come celebrate with us with live music, square dancing, food and fun. Many historical pictures of schools and school children, buildings, and events will be on display, plus tours of the old Presley Post Office. Mark your calendars now—you don't want to miss it. An agenda of events will be in future articles in this paper.

For more details visit the Web at townshistory.org, or call (706) 896-1060.

Plant Affair

Shop area nurseries all on the square for your spring planting. April 16 from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Lawn accessories and Barbeque also will be available. Come to shop and please stay for lunch!

The event is sponsored by the Hiawassee Garden Club.

This is our big annual fundraiser and we are trying to make sure that the public is aware of this important event.

Everyone is invited to attend this annual special occasion on the Downtown Square.

County to learn if grant sanctions lifted this week

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Towns County government has filed petition for mandatory mediation of a service delivery strategy agreement between the county and its municipalities.

Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall also seeks the appointment of a senior judge from outside the Enotah Judicial Circuit to lift sanctions against the local governments while the mediation process is ongoing.

Senior Judge Robert Struble has been appointed to hear the county's argument that sanctions be lifted to allow for the continuous flow of grant dollars to the three municipalities while mediation of the Service Delivery Strategy Agreement can be achieved.

County Attorney Robb Kiker filed the paperwork in

Towns County Superior Court last week seeking mandatory mediation of the Service Delivery Strategy Agreement.

Towns County, the city of Hiawassee 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 Hiawassee, the city of Young Harris, and the Towns County Water Authority," Commissioner Kendall said.

"These meetings were an attempt at reaching service area agreements. At this time, an agreement is still not in place."

The county has reached an agreement with the City of Hiawassee, but



Commissioner Bill Kendall

an agreement with the City of Young Harris remains an ambitious goal.

According to Towns County Superior Court records, the lack of agreement with the City of Young Harris is because of the failure of that city to submit a clear and concise outline of the boundaries of a proposed Service Delivery Area and to define which services would be provided in specific areas within Towns County and how those services would be

funded.

Towns County seeks to have the court order a prepared Service Delivery map showing the boundaries of the City of Young Harris' proposed Service Delivery Area, a clear and concise statement as to the proposed services provided in the subject areas and plans for funding of the services.

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 County Water Authority has served the Young Harris Watershed for three decades. The city of Young Harris has said that the Young Harris Watershed is not negotiable.

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

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Storms packed a wallop in Towns

Two homes hit hard in April 4th storms; tree damage extensive

By Charles Duncan
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It may have been the most damaging storm in Towns County since the remnants of Hurricane Opal passed through the county in the fall of 1995.

That's what emergency officials are saying today as the county continues to clean up from a violent storm system that damaged at least two homes and took down countless trees and power lines early last week.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton's home on Hog Creek and Mandy Rogers Mitchell's home on Streak Hill at Jim Watson Road both were severely damaged during the storm that hit the county early last week.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said that he's paying close

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Storm damage on Jim Watson Road was extreme. The Mitchell Family home was damaged extensively. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Weaker storm front hits Towns Monday night

By Charles Duncan
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It was another long night for Towns County emergency workers.

A series of storms out of Alabama collided with a rapidly moving cold front and generated heavy rains, wind gusts of up to 60 mph, and lots of thunder and lightning.

The storms hit around midnight with trees and some power lines being reported down in different locations within the county.

The good news, it was nothing compared to the spring storm that did extensive damage to two homes and put more than 50 trees across local roads last week. Towns County was originally under a tornado watch until 3 a.m. on Tuesday.

That watch was canceled shortly before 1 a.m. on Tuesday.

Towns County emergency workers were more at ease in the aftermath of this storm system than the wicked storms from last week.

Also unlike last Monday night, the police band radio was rather quiet after the storm system moved through and dropped temperatures into the low 60s.

There were reports of a downed power line across the road in the Macedonia area and a reported damaged transformer on Bell Creek Road.

Rain began falling shortly before midnight and continued, heavy at times, until the bursts of wind raced through the county after midnight.

Power outages were reported in neighboring Union County in the Canal Lake area, where the

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Blaze destroys antiques storage

By Charles Duncan
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An 800 square foot storage building on Georgia 288, destroyed by fire last week, was determined to be set ablaze by two teenagers smoking in the building, Towns County fire reports show.

The blaze, reported last Thursday afternoon, was an orange fireball when Towns County fire units arrived on the scene, Assistant Fire Chief Harold Copeland said.

A huge plume of smoke could be seen for miles.

"It was one hot fire," he said. "It was fully involved when firefighters arrived on the scene. It was

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Towns County firefighters got a quick knockdown on this blaze last Thursday as a plume of thick black smoke filled the air on GA 288 in the Sunnyside Community. Photo/Jim Davis

Cruise-In returns

Community pledges support for 3rd annual event

By James Reese
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Chad Hooper is excited again with good reason.

The Third Annual Mountain Moonshine Cruise-In is just four months away. The event is scheduled for August 11-13 at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Promoter Rakes Parrish came to town on Monday filmed a local television show and brought his family with him. He says the 2011 event is going to be bigger and better than last year. More cars, more enthusiasm and most businesses owners are banking on more money than they brought in during the 2010 event.

The 2011 event will feature increased shuttles to make sure everyone gets where they want to go, said Hooper, a Tourism Association board member.

"I can't even begin to imagine how many people and cars we'll have this year. They're a lot of folks already signed up and getting booked for this year's event," he said. "We want to get everyone behind this."

"The number of people that come depends on the number of people we can accommodate," Parrish said. "We'll have plenty of food vendors to accommodate hungry folks."

"They'll eat in your restaurants at breakfast and supper," he said.



Chad Hooper, Rakes Parrish

The Ridges Resort hosted the inaugural kickoff party in August 2009 and 2010. They'll do it again in 2011. Hooper said the last two years have been incredible.

"We're here tonight at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, to get better organized and better prepared for what should be another solid year for the Cruise-In," he said.

Tourism Association Chair Hilda Thomason, who also serves as general manager of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, said she too was excited about the prospects for 2011.

"Tonight, we hope to capitalize on those past experiences as we prepare for the 2011 event," she said. "This is an exciting event for Towns County. It's going to

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Banker's Hour 17 'sails' to success

By James Reese
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Anderson Music Hall took its audience on the voyage of voyages as United Community Bank pulled out all the stops in its 17th Annual Banker's Hour variety express.

"Entertainment on the High Seas" was the choice of entertainment for the 17th annual event that was the brain child of UCB's Gayle Day 17 years ago.

The event helps support the bank's charities throughout its many banking communities.

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UCB Hiawassee's Janice Smith gave a Broadway performance on Saturday at Anderson Music Hall. Photo/James Reese

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