

# Towns County Herald

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## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Sunny	66 39
Fri: Sunny	70 42
Sat: Cloudy	65 45
Sun: Stormy	67 47
Mon: Clouds/Sun	68 40
Tue: Showers	66 40
Wed: Sunny	68 44



Upstream Elevation Predicted 4/13/09	
Lake Chatuge	1922.48
Lake Nottely	1769.27
Blue Ridge	1682.37

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## Pounds for the Pantry

The Towns County School FFA is holding a Pounds for the Pantry Fundraiser for the Towns County Food Pantry from Apr. 14 thru Apr. 24 in the elementary and middle schools. The class that raises the most money will be treated to a pizza party.

## Fire Corps meets Apr. 20

Towns County Fire Corps board members will have a meeting at the courthouse in Hiwassee on Monday, Apr. 20 at 6 p.m. If the courtroom is taken, we will meet in the upstairs jury room. All fire Corps members or those interested in becoming members will meet at the same location at 7 p.m. Important meeting!

## Plant Affair

The Hiwassee Garden Club has its annual Plant Affair on the Square Apr. 18 from 8:30 am - 2:00 pm on the square in downtown Hiwassee.

## Read a Book

Pages in the Park will be held rain or shine in the Mayor's Park in Young Harris on Saturday, Apr. 25 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. There is no fee for admission or parking. This will be a wonderful opportunity to spend the day with your child or grandchild and support childhood literacy. For more information, call Candace Lee at 706-379-3121 ext. 127.

## Job Fair

If your business is interested in participating in a Job Fair at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church in Young Harris for potential employees, the church is offering the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, May 2 from 9:30 am to noon at no charge. Contact Sharp Memorial Church office at sharpumc@brmcmc.net or call 706-379-3210.

## Easter egg hunters brave weather

By David Seckinger  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

The Great Creator in His infinite wisdom blessed this year's Easter Sunday with absolutely beautiful weather—warm with hardly a cloud in the sky. However, the Good Lord also blessed Saturday's Easter egg hunt with wet fields and cold temperatures. As one parent said, you can never predict the weather here during the month of April.

Nonetheless, the hardest of children were poking through the grass, bundled up in coats and hats,



Darlene Moody of Hiwassee wins this year's drawing for a handmade afghan.

in search of colored eggs. The annual Easter egg hunt was co-sponsored by the Towns County Recreation Department and United Community Bank.

See Hunt, page 5



3-year-old Caleb Israel visits with the Easter Bunny.

Photos by Lowell Nicholson

## Young Harris City Council approves height variance for YHC gymnasium

By Carl Vanzura  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

The Young Harris City Council met Tuesday, April 7, 2009 for their Regular Meeting. Present for the meeting were Mayor Andrea Gibby; City Council members Matthew Miller, Terry Ingram, Jennifer Mulkey, David Sellers, John Kelley and Donald Keys.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Gibby. A moment of silence was held in memory of Hazel Coker Nichols, who served as a council member for over 20 years and was a beloved member of the community.

John Walter Kelley, who won the March 17 city election, was sworn in by City Clerk Shirley Jarrard to fill the Council Post 6 position.

Young Harris College has applied for a variance pursuant to height restrictions set forth in Section 7.9 of Appendix A of the Zoning Code of Young Harris. They are asking that a variance be given allowing them to build a 59 foot high building instead of the 35 foot limit that is in the building ordinance. Young Harris College has complied with the



Council members Ingram and Mulkey

Photo by David Seckinger

requirement of presenting the city with complete plans so that the city knows exactly why they are requesting the variance. YHC President Cathy Cox presented the mayor and council with information obtained from the Department of Community Affairs about the difference in the building requirements between that and a residential building. She also noted that the building will be inspected by the State Fire Marshall.

A motion was made by Donald Keys to grant the variance; Matt Miller seconded the motion and opened it for discussion which included their plans for parking and fire and res-

cue situations.

Council member Jennifer Mulkey noted that she did not think the motion was complete enough to protect the city. A motion was made by Matthew Miller to amend the original motion to incorporate the Plans dated 03/22/09, prepared by Paul Flippo of Eberly and Associates into the minutes by reference as the Plans that are to be used in association with this variance. If any change orders are issued that pertain to the height variance issued by the City of Young Harris, Young Harris College must return to the city council for approval. In

See Variance, page 5

## Bringing tourism back to Towns

By David Seckinger  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd.

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is trying to put this philosophy into practice by bringing local businesses together in hopes of building local tourism during 2009.

Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds general manager Hilda Thomason called a meeting last Thursday that was attended by Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, representatives from two banks, and local hotel managers to discuss promoting tourism in Towns County. The meeting was only the first of many to organize hotels, restaurants, banks, municipalities, the media, and all other entities that could benefit from the tourist trade locally.

One major item discussed at the meeting was a pep rally for local businesses on May 4 at 6:30 p.m.

Thomason hopes to get a good turnout at the event, so that businesses can come together to help one another.

Thomason said she wants to include everyone possible in the promotion of local tourism, including the rotary club, Ingles, the schools, and the real estate market, which many said was benefited by the fairgrounds during the develop-

ment boom.

As far as spreading the word about upcoming events, there was a lot of talk about the fairground's website, [www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com](http://www.georgiamountainfairgrounds.com), and the creation of links that would promote various hospitality services in the county. Right now the website is getting a reported 15,000 hits a month.



Thomason and Kim Farmer talk about local tourism.

Photo by David Seckinger

See Tourism, page 5



Council members Crothers and Johnson

Photo by David Seckinger

## Council ready to unveil EMA Plan

By Charles Duncan  
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

Hiwassee City Council members will get their first look at the 2009 Emergency Management Plan next month, City Manager Rick Stancil said.

Stancil said that two readings before council would be required before the EMA plan could be adopted by council members.

Emergency management planning involves preparing for disaster before it occurs.

In other business, the council voted to deny an adjustment of sewer bills for

car washes. The owner of Cash Gas, Rudy Roach had spoken with Mayor Barbara Mathis about the extravagant sewer bills imposed on car washes. According to Roach, the more water used at the business' car wash, the higher the sewer bill. He felt an adjustment of the bill was in order. The council felt otherwise.

Meanwhile, council members learned that the city could be in line for \$535,000 in federal stimulus money for sewer system rehabilitation. The local match would be 35 percent,

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## Law officers learn new tactics to combat prescription drug abuse

Drug Diversion Experts Visit Hiwassee to Educate Local Law Enforcement Officers



Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Special to the Herald

On Tuesday, April 14, thirty law enforcement officers from Towns, Union, Rabun, Habersham, White and Lumpkin Counties participated in a seminar at the Holiday Inn in Hiwassee to learn how to spot emerging trends of illegal trafficking and abuse of prescription medications.

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## Nine students make FBLA Nationals for 9th Year in a Row

By Amber Allen,  
FBLA President

Nine must be the magic number! This is the 9th year that Towns County High School FBLA will be representing the state of Georgia at National level competitions.

Georgia Future Business Leaders of America held the State Leadership Conference and Competitive Events at Atlanta Hyatt on March 27-28. Thirty one members competed in various individual, skill and performance business events. TCHS was very successful with Fifteen competitors finishing in the top 10 in their event. From those, nine will represent Georgia at the National Leadership Conference in Anaheim, California in June.

Members competing at the state level were: Meghan Herr in Business Communications, Bruce Webster in Spreadsheet (8th), The team of Hannah

Mathis, Trystan Drummond and Jade Garrison in Emerging Business Issues (1st), Bradley Swanson in Principles and Procedures (1st), Brett Bradshaw in Principles and Procedures (2nd), Chris Holloway in Principles and Procedures (3rd), The team of Nora Sutton, Rocsane Tabular and Kyle McConnell Business Presentation, Austin Arrowood in Public Speaking II (5th), Missy Conrad in Word Processing II (3rd), Eli Barrett in Public Speaking I, Elizabeth Parsons in Marketing, Paige Brewster in Marketing (7th), Amber Allen in Marketing, Parker Bradshaw in Business Law, Taylor Shook in Business

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