

Towns County Herald

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Thursday, Aug. 6, 2009

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Storms	87 62
Fri: Storms	86 64
Sat: T-Storms	85 64
Sun: T-Storms	85 64
Mon: T-Storms	85 63
Tue: Storms	83 62
Wed: T-Storms	84 62



Upstream Elevation Predicted 8/6/09	
Lake Chatuge	1924.30
Lake Nottely	1773.80
Blue Ridge	1684.70

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Food Distribution

The Towns County Food pantry will have a free food distribution for Towns County residents on Wednesday, August 12th. The distribution will take place at the pantry from 9am until noon. Those that are in need are encouraged to come. If you are unable to pick up your food, please call (706) 896-4783, prior to distribution day, so arrangements can be made to have your food delivered to you. All clients and inquiries are confidential.

Hoedown & BBQ

Drug Free Towns County Coalition invites everyone to attend a hoedown and barbecue on Aug. 29 at 6 p.m. at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds upper pavilion.

Tickets to the event are \$20 with children 10 and under getting in free. The event is Western style square dancing, the Virginia Reel and Line Dancing, all by caller Jim Duncan.

Come one, come all, bring a lawn chair and learn how to dance. For more details, call (706) 896-0007.

Driver Safety

An AARP Driver Safety Course at the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris is scheduled for Thursday and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. New enrollment fees are \$12 for AARP members and \$14 for nonmembers. All participants must register before Aug. 6. For more details and to enroll call (706) 379-2140 or cell (706) 781-9527.

Food Drive

The monthly mobile food distribution for families in need will be held at No. Mt. Zion Church of God on Friday, August 14th from 10 a.m. until noon. This outdoor food distribution will be held in the rear parking lot of No. Mt. Zion Church of God on Scataway, rain or shine. The church looks forward to seeing you there.

Daycare workers face unpaid furloughs

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
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The spin-off of poor economic times continues to impact Towns County.

Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall announced this week that state funding cuts for daycare have prompted his decision to increase daycare fees \$10 per week for each child enrolled and one-day-a-month unpaid leave for daycare workers.

"We received notice of funding cuts by the state eliminating supplemental funding for Towns County Daycare," Commissioner Kendall said. "I had to make an unpleasant decision this past week of either passing these cuts on to Towns County property taxpayers or to implement one-day-per-month unpaid furloughs for the daycare workers and increase fees by \$10 per

week for each child enrolled.

"With no good option to solve the budgetary problem, I made the unpleasant decision to furlough the daycare workers and increase the fees," Kendall said. "Our daycare program is an important part of our economy and is imperative to working moms. We will continue to closely monitor our spending and operate the daycare as conservatively as possible."

The weekly fee increase of \$10 brings the total per child per week cost to \$85. That cost is reduced for additional enrolled siblings.

"It's still the lowest fee of all daycare centers in the surrounding counties," Kendall said. "I want to commend our daycare employees for being very dedicated and for carrying out their duties in a professional manner. Parents, your child is left in good hands while



Commissioner Bill Kendall

you're at work."

Kendall said that as a local elected official with taxing powers, every alternative should be explored before shifting state funding cuts onto the backs of local taxpayers.

"Especially in the midst of this severe recession with decreased property values, severe job losses, record home foreclosures and many

See Furloughs, page 6

Towns teachers, administrators face three unpaid days

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
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Tough times just got tougher.

Without a doubt, the Towns County Board of Education is feeling the pinch of a flat economy.

A shortfall of revenues combined with increased financial burdens imposed by state cutbacks, increased Local Fair Share obligations and mandated salary requirements will impact the 2010 millage rate set by the BOE. How much impact remains a question only the board itself can answer.

One thing is for certain, the board has agreed to adjust the school calendar per Gov. Sonny Perdue's request to have teachers and

administrators sit out three days normally used for planning to offset state budget shortfalls.

The cost savings amounts to \$119,657.79, Towns County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard Behrens said.

The state recently cut funding to the local school system by \$125,617. The net loss to the school system is \$5,959.21 following the three days of unpaid leave.

The school system lost half a day on Monday to begin the first of the scheduled unpaid leaves for teachers and administrators. A full day of unpaid leave is scheduled for Oct. 7 and another half day is planned for Dec. 18. The final day of unpaid leave for teachers and ad-



Dr. Richard Behrens

ministrators is scheduled for Dec. 21.

Dr. Behrens said that Para-Professionals were asked to come in for a half day on Tuesday to make up for time lost on Dec. 18.

The state salary cuts

See BOE cuts, page 6

Dr. Behrens excited about 2009 school year

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
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Towns County Schools Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens is excited.

Students and teachers return to the classroom Thursday with bright expectations of an exciting school year, Behrens said.

The numbers won't be in right off the bat, but the veteran educator is expecting a slight decrease in student numbers. Projections of 20 less students at the kindergarten level could be the case, Behrens said.

"We don't know how much that's going to be, but hopefully we'll know those figures in a couple of weeks," he said. "Every year when we start school, the first thing we do is tally the numbers."

"It's likely that we'll have kids coming into the classrooms probably until September. We're expecting a slight decrease in numbers this year."

The fewer students in the classroom can be attributed to the flat economy. Families seemingly are migrating to larger cities in hopes of finding full-time employment opportunities. In the end, the numbers of local students take a hit.

The total student census for the 2009-2010 school year should fall just short of 1,200 students.

"We think that some of the younger working parents are migrating out of the county to find work," Behrens said. "That's what we think is happening."

The signs of a new school year were evident on Saturday as the Towns County Indians' football



A new school year has arrived and teachers, students and administrators are ready to get back in the classroom. The 2009-2010 school year gets underway on Thursday. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

team began practice in pads at The Refuge in Plott Town.

"It's great to be back out here with the kids," Indians' Head Coach Kyle Langford said. "We can't wait until the lights go on for real on Friday nights."

The Indians had 26 football players out on Saturday and Coach Langford

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Dexter sniffs out fugitive from justice

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
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Towns County K-9 officer Dexter led local authorities to a suspect wanted on multiple theft by receiving charges following a disturbance Sunday on Martin Road.

Towns County Chief Deputy Jeff Edge said sheriff's deputies were dispatched to a residence on Martin Road related to a disturbance involving a gun. Sheriff's deputies Doug Loyd, Mark Marshall, and an Appalachian Drug Task



Dexter and Dep. Marshall

Force Agent responded to the call and later went to a residence on Glen Road in-

See Dexter, page 2

Mountain Moonshine cruisers head to Towns

By Charles Duncan
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Robert "Rakes" Parrish has a dream of making the Georgia Mountain Moonshine Cruis-In the best event in the Southeast.

Locals will soon get a chance to see Rakes' dream unfold at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiwassee beginning Aug. 13. The three-day event, which features hundreds of hot rods, runs through Aug. 15.

Rakes' dream also includes live Mountain Music shows, a swap meet, a Mountain Moonshine Run for cold, hard cash, a folk arts show and exhibit and mountain crafts in the Pio-

neer Village. Rakes' dream also includes automotive vendors and lots of cash and prizes.

"Folks will enjoy the pioneer setting, with live mountain music, folk exhibits, local crafts, and of course hundreds of hot classic cars," Rakes said. "There will be plenty of automotive vendors on display to help folks with a hard to find part for their classic car or street rod. It's a chance to sit back and enjoy the shade trees, lakeside views, and a chance to relax in your chair beside your hotrod with a cold glass of lemonade."

On Day 2 of the Cruis-In, festival goers will dance

See Moonshine, page 2



Visitors to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds Pioneer Village on Aug. 13-15 can expect a mountain of entertaining pleasure as the first Georgia Mountains Cruis-In comes to town. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Grace of God, family stands tall

By Lois Tomas
CLAY COUNTY PROGRESS

When Sherry and Israel Rogers were wed, they probably never realized how their vows to keep each other in sickness and health would soon be tested. At least not until Sherry and young son Riley were each diagnosed with cancerous tumors.

Sherry is keeping a blog of her medical ordeal on the Web at www.caringbridge.org. She has posted her diagnosis and treatment schedule and provided glimpses into the test of faith the Rogers have had to endure.

Sherry is the daughter of Larry and Mary Hedden of Hiwassee.

"Continue to pray for



Sherry and Riley Rogers

my wonderful caretaker, Israel," Sherry wrote last week. "He continues to stand firm and in control. He has an unbelievable amount of

See Family, page 6

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