

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Showers	71 42
Fri: Sunny	70 39
Sat: Sunny	70 38
Sun: Sunny	72 41
Mon: Sunny	74 43
Tue: Sunny	73 40
Wed: Sunny	68 36



Upstream Elevation Predicted 10/12/11	
Lake Chatuge	1920.44
Lake Nottely	1766.39
Blue Ridge	1672.76

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## Business After Hours

Meet New Chamber President Candace Lee on Tuesday, Oct. 18, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Business After Hours at Tower Place on the corner of Georgia 17 and 69.

Business After Hours is a great place to network with other members and share details on upcoming events.

Refreshments will be provided by event hosts, Mary's Southern Grill, Pro-Therapy, Heavenly Bake Shop, Here's to Your Health, Wine Shop and Verizon Wireless.

For more details, call (706) 896-4966.

## Deadline

The Towns County Herald deadline for classified advertising submissions has changed. The deadline is now Friday at 5 p.m.

## Reward

Recently the Tree Tops Chevron on Bell Creek Road was burglarized. The Towns County Sheriff's Office, along with the store's owner, is seeking help from the public in an effort to quickly solve this crime. Any information which leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for this crime will be treated confidentially, and a reward is offered by the owner of the store.

## Safety

AARP hosts a driver safety course at the Family Life Center at McConnell Baptist Church from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Oct. 27.

For more details see Page 3A

## Lights, camera, action!

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

Brock Cole was all smiles before and during his visit to Towns County last week.

A native of Charlotte, Mich., Cole was thrilled with the location and setting for the filming of D.J. Caruso's adaptation of his Young Adults novel *The Goats* on Lake Chatuge in Towns County.

"It's shocking, but really exciting," Cole said, referring to the opportunity to watch his novel come to life. "From watching the number of people involved, to watching the effort that goes into it, it's just hard to believe."

"I'm very much looking forward to seeing the end result," he said.

Cole said that it never occurred to him that his novel would ever become silver screen material.



Brock Cole, author of *The Goats*, shares a Towns County moment with the two people who will bring his novel to life on the silver screen, Annalise Basso and Chandler Canterbury. Photo/Marty Roberts.

"People began to show an interest shortly after it was done, but I guess I had to wait for the right cast to come along," he said.

Cole doesn't know exactly what inspired him to

become a writer, but he knows it was always something that he loved to do.

"I taught for a while, I have degrees in philosophy

See Movie, page 11A

## No millage rate increases in sight

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

Towns County residents can rest assured there will be no millage rate increases for the next year.

The Towns County Board of Education joined three other local governments on Monday night declaring that there will be no millage increase for the upcoming year.

"The board will work diligently to find additional ways to cut our expenses, conserve funds and preserve the integrity of the education we offer to our students," said Towns County BOE Chair Emily Phillips.

BOE Vice Chair Larry Kimsey said the board had to make tough decisions on cuts. However, he reiterated that every household in



BOE Chair Emily Phillips

Towns County has to do the same during the continued economic downward spiral.

"We need to make every effort possible to cut expenses before we go back to our community for additional tax revenue," Kimsey said. "Asking for additional taxes is never easy, but ex-

See Millage, page 11A

## Fall Festival numbers are strong

Blissful blend of attractions and music shows keeping numbers high

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

Solid crowds and colorful leaf action have yielded success in the early days of the Georgia Mountain Fall Festival.

Percy Sledge, Ricky Skaggs, Gene Watson and Diamond Rio have proven worthy of the test for Country Music aficionados coming to Anderson Music Hall.

Throw in some pretty nice weather and all around, the crowds have been plentiful at the annual Fall Festival.

The festival has been an ongoing event since Oct. 7, and throughout the weekend, the event has been a complete success thanks to the many acts taking the Anderson Music Hall stage, like Percy, Ricky Skaggs, Gene Watson, The Isaacs, the Chuck Wagon Gang, The Diplomats and Diamond Rio.

The festival also features many other attractions, such as "The Swampmaster," Water Treading, the Stilt Walker and the Living Statue, along with helicopter tours, showing the beauty of the changing leaves.

The fall festival season also brings out the best vendors as well. Everything from homemade woodworks to funnel cakes are present at the Pioneer Village until the event ends with the wine of the fiddle with the Georgia State Fiddler's Convention on Saturday, Oct. 15.

Fall Festival goes flocked to the Pioneer Village inside the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on

See Fall Festival, page 11A



Ricky Skaggs and Percy Sledge kept Music Hall seats full while events like Water Treading kept kids excited. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

## Two charged in interstate crime spree

Hiwassee residents charged in Georgia and North Carolina for burglaries

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

Authorities in Towns County and Clay County, NC believe that they have solved a series of interstate burglaries dating back several months.

An investigation into the alleged activities of Judith Roberts Jones, 55, of Hiwassee, and Scott Larson Jones, 63, also of Hiwassee, has yielded stolen property taken from both Lake Chatuge communities, according to authorities.

The investigation into the series of burglaries continues and more details will be made available at a later date, according to the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

Anyone with informa-



Scott Jones

tion related to these theft cases are asked to call (706) 896-4444.

According to Towns County sheriff's reports, the joint probe began when Towns County Sheriff's Investigator Pat Williams contacted Clay County Sheriff's Office investigators regarding information that their agency had discovered



Judith Jones

items with Towns County ties in the possession of a couple they had stopped during a traffic-related incident.

After further review by Towns County deputies, information surfaced regarding a trailer stolen from Towns County. TCSO de-

See Crime Spree, page 11A

## Crowded field in store for Senate District 50

Five-candidate field almost assures a runoff

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

Multiply Rick Austin and John Wilkinson by two, add one more.

Yes, the State Senate District 50 race has widened with five candidates seeking to fill the unexpired term of Jim Butterworth.

Add Curtis Burger, David Strickland, and Mary Beth Focer to the list of candidates seeking to become the next District 50 state senator.

Early voting for the Nov. 8 Special Election begins on Oct. 17, according to the Georgia Secretary of State's Office.

Burger, 40, is a Lavonia businessman; Strickland is a 51-year-old insurance agent from Royston; and Focer is a 45-year-old community volunteer from Hartwell.

The trio join Austin and Wilkinson in the race to replace Butterworth.

Austin, the former state representative from District 10 and Wilkinson, the former program manager for the agricultural education program in Georgia and



Rick Austin



John Wilkinson

State FFA Advisor, both qualified to run for the District 50 State Senate vacancy on Oct. 3rd.

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## Kendall solo 'no' vote on T-SPLOST project list

Commissioner says 'vote for it or else' approach is flawed

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

Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall was the lone 'no' vote among a 26-member Roundtable panel finalizing a projects list for a July 31 regional Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax vote.

If approved by voters throughout the 13-county region, Towns County would only what Georgia Department of Transportation officials have been promising for years along with a turning lane project on U.S. 76 paid for by the funds, while Hall and Forsyth counties would cash in on the projected \$1.26 billion estimated to be raised region-wide over a 10-year period. Both counties would collect about half of the estimated funds to be raised by the T-SPLOST.

Commissioner Kendall told fellow Roundtable panelists at the meeting last week in Clarkesville that the method of "vote for it or else" is flawed and should not be used to force voters



Commissioner Bill Kendall

into approving the plan.

"It's set up to be voted on by each region," Commissioner Kendall said. "That way if one region votes it down, another region might approve it. Well, that's flawed. The referendum is not on the statewide ballot because the Georgia General Assembly wouldn't put it on the statewide ballot."

"That alone should tell you a little something about this whole thing," Commissioner Kendall said. "DOT

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

