

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur:	Clouds	69	35
Fri:	Sunny	68	36
Sat:	Sunny	69	34
Sun:	Sunny	71	38
Mon:	Sunny	73	43
Tue:	Cloudy	74	44
Wed:	Storms	74	45



Upstream Elevation Predicted
10/13/10
Lake Chatuge 1920.20
Lake Nottely 1766.60
Blue Ridge 1628.50

INDEX

2 Sections, 20 Pages

Arrests.....	2A
Church/Obits.....	8,9A
Classifieds.....	2B
Editorial.....	4A
Calendar.....	4A
Legals.....	3B
Sports.....	12A
Television	6A

Chamber Chronicles

Page 10A

Hiawassee sets millage rate

The Hiawassee City Council approved its 2010 millage rate during a public hearing at Hiawassee City Hall last week in downtown Hiawassee.

Mayor Barbara Mathis said the council set the millage rate at its existing levy of 2.270 mills. The city's Tax Digest for real and personal property dropped more than \$1 million from 2009, city tax records show.

The Digest for motor vehicles in the city shows that number was off by more than \$270,000.

This is the eighth consecutive year that the City of Hiawassee millage rate has remained the same or has been decreased.

The last time the city rolled back the millage rate was 2007, when the mayor and council shaved .043 mills off the rate.

The amount of total taxes levied for 2010 is down \$4,875 from a year ago, and comes in at \$211,659, city records show.



Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Pantry will hold its free food distribution on Tuesday, Oct. 19. The distribution will be held at the Towns County Food Pantry on Jack Dayton Circle from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. All that are in need of food assistance are encouraged to attend. If you are unable to pick up your food, please contact the Pantry at (706) 896-4783 prior to distribution day so that arrangements can be made to deliver your food. Clients' personal inquiries are kept confidential.



Homecoming

The 2010 Homecoming Court will take center stage at halftime during Friday's matchup between the Towns County Indians and River Ridge Knights.

Game time: 7:30 p.m. at Frank McClure Stadium.

State cuts close Towns' Forestry Commission office

By Charles Duncan
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A dry winter could put residents in Towns and Fannin counties in dire straits because of delayed fire protection.

Local firefighters will answer the call of wildfires in the event they occur. However, much needed fire-break equipment supplied by the Georgia Forestry Commission could be slow in coming to the rescue in the event of an out of control wildfire.

That's because state budget cuts have forced the closure of Georgia Forestry Commission's headquarters in Towns and Fannin counties with the rangers and firefighting equipment moved to neighboring Union County.

All calls for Forestry Commission firefighting help now will be directed to Pat Colwell Road in Union

County where rangers there are now responsible for Towns, Union and Fannin counties.

The state decision to close the Towns County Forestry Commission location near Fire Station 6 on Sunnyside came on Oct. 1.

As the state continues to stagger in economic turmoil, state lawmakers sent orders for the Georgia Forestry Commission to cut as much as 10 percent of its budget over the next two years. Headquarters have closed in Cherokee, Madison, Montgomery, Towns, Fannin, Pulaski and Clay counties, according to state records.

Headquarter closures throughout the state aren't the only casualties of the mandated state cutbacks. Since 2008, the Georgia Forestry Commission has furloughed or laid off 120 work-

See Forestry, page 3A



The Georgia Forestry Commission headquarters in Towns County is closed due to state budget cuts, leaving a gaping hole in the local wildfire firefighting scheme. Rangers must now respond from Union County to help fight wildfires in Towns and Fannin counties, according to state and local sources. Photo/James Reese

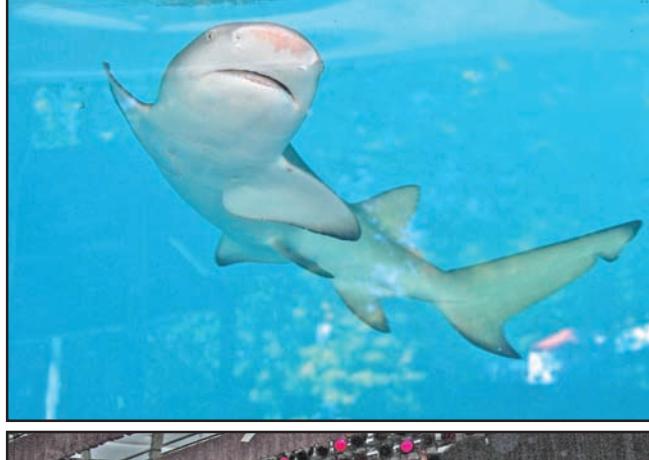
Sharks thrive at Fall Festival

By James Reese
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Color has returned to the mountain leaves as the North Georgia landscape continues to attract visitors to Towns County's borders.

The majestic, colorful leaves aren't the only attraction for tourists as music lovers are flocking to Anderson Music Hall to enjoy the sounds of some of Country Music's biggest legends.

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' Fall Festival has been an ongoing event since Oct. 8, and throughout the weekend, the event has been a complete success thanks to the many acts taking the stage at Anderson Music Hall. Those acts included Jim Wood and the Georgia Mountain Fair Band, Crystal Gayle, John Conlee, Janie Fricke, T.G. Sheppard, Connie Smith,



Sharks and music have proved a magic formula of attraction at the Fall Festival at Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

Early voting at record pace

By Charles Duncan
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More than 800 of Towns County's almost 8,000 registered voters have cast early ballots in the Nov. 2 General Election. The early voting for the Nov. 2 general election continues for the next three weeks at the Old Rock Jail.

Early voting - 809 and counting - in Towns County is running ahead of early voting in neighboring counties mainly due to the Saturday voting option in Towns County approved in 2008 by Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall.

Early ballots can be cast at the Board of Elections and Registration at 91 Berrong St. in Hiawassee, better known as the Old Rock Jail. Early voting is taking place in record numbers, again, due primarily to the Saturday voting option for Towns County residents.



Irma Nichols

On Monday, voters reveled in the beautiful weather offered by Mother Nature to continue to cast ballots early, Towns County Early Voting officials said.

The mid-term elections allow voters the chance to choose the state's next governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, Agriculture Commissioner, Insurance Commissioner, Labor Commissioner, and Secretary of State.

Also, voters must decide who will be their next

See Early Voting, page 3A

Treetops treasures locals

By Charles Duncan
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Slightly more than five years ago, Wayne Barter and his wife Linda had had enough of Florida.

They had visited the North Georgia Mountains and Western North Carolina and decided this was a place where they wanted to be.

Wayne was ready to escape the day-to-day rat race in Florida where he managed an auto parts and accessories store. The couple was ready to settle down here and live out their days together.

Together with his daughter Sandy Traina and her husband Brad Traina, the Barters pooled their money and bought the Chevron sta-



Treetops owner Wayne Barter talks with customer Rondal Lovingood on Monday at the store on Bell Creek. Photo/Charles Duncan

proximity to Lake Chatuge.

Wayne and Linda recruited their son Rob Barter to help with the family business.

"If we hadn't had our son working with us, it would have been a tough go," he said. "The goal was the family-owned country store in

See Treetops, page 7A

Allison, supporters, ready for Nov. 2 vote

By James Reese
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BLAIRSVILLE - Georgia House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison wasted no time making his message loud and clear to supporters attending his rally on Thursday at Meeks Park in Blairsville.

The freshman state representative told supporters that he would continue to be their voice in the Georgia House of Representatives.

It's an honor that Allison, a Blairsville Republican, said has made him humble over the last two years.

Allison struck home with his promise to make the right decisions regarding the state's fledgling Joint Immigration Reform Committee.

Allison told the crowd that illegal immigration costs Georgians millions of dollars each year. He promised to right the wrongs and get the job done right.

Allison, a deputy whip in the state House, represents Towns, Union, Rabun, and White counties. He defeated incumbent District 8 State Rep. Charles Jenkins in the 2008 General Election.

In his first term in office, Allison either sponsored or co-sponsored 24 legislative actions, including House Bill 667, which related to hospital acquisition and House Bill 782 which offered Towns County residents the right to cast bal-



State Rep. Stephen Allison

lots to increase their local Homestead Exemption from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

Allison has received rousing endorsements from Georgia House Speaker David Ralston, Congressman Paul Broun and U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson.

Ralston and Broun have eagerly made appearances in Towns County on Allison's behalf, both telling supporters that Allison is due a second term in the State House.

Isakson concurs.

"I'm delighted with the service of Stephen Allison in his first term in the State House, and I hope the voters send him back for a second term," Isakson said.

Also during his first term, Allison was named a member of the House Appropriations Committee that

See Allison, page 5A

Fall-A-Bration a huge success

By James Reese
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It's not every day that you find scarecrows, superheroes, and phantoms crossing paths on such benevolent conditions. That is unless you're at The Ridges Resort's annual Fall-A-Bration event.

The Ridges Resort hosted yet another incredible community experience on Sunday as hundreds of local children and their families enjoyed three-plus hours of holiday festivities.

At the Fourth Annual



Towns County FFA members hawk Southern barbecue during Sunday's Fall-A-Bration at The Ridges Resort. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

