

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur:	Cloudy	70	54
Fri:	Showers	66	52
Sat:	Showers	55	40
Sun:	Sunny	56	40
Mon:	Showers	62	44
Tue:	Showers	64	44
Wed:	Sunny	63	46



Upstream Elevation Predicted 10/21/09	
Lake Chatuge	1920.70
Lake Nottely	1767.00
Blue Ridge	1676.90

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Charter Bus to Glascock Co.

The Towns County Athletics Booster Club is working to charter a bus to take Indians' fans to the season finale in Glascock County on Nov. 6. Seats are available for \$24 each. Contact Sandy Foster or Nancy Noblet to let them know if you're interested in a bus seat to Glascock County. Hurry, first come, first served.

Halloween on the Square

It's that time of year again. Halloween on the Square will be held Oct. 30 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Preparations are in progress.

Space is at a premium so it's important to let folks know who wants to set up a table this year. Please reply ASAP.

For those not wishing to set up a table this year, donations of candy, money or prizes for the costume contest are appreciated.

Also, this year a new tradition begins. Everyone who can, please bring a can of food to donate to the Towns County Food Pantry. There will be bins set up around the Square to collect canned goods. For more details, call (706) 896-2202.

National Library Week

The Mountain Regional Library and Young Harris College's Duckworth Library will present a special program in celebration of National Friends of the Library Week. The event features renowned Georgia author Terry Kay on Tuesday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. in Wilson Lecture Hall at Young Harris College.

As a special treat, Kay also will attend the Friends of the Libraries of Towns County's Book Bunch discussion on Wednesday, Oct. 21 at noon at the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris.

For more details, call (706) 379-3732. Both programs are free and open to the public.

McDowell a 'King' at 16

By Matthew Jarrard
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Bryan McDowell made Canton, NC proud during his weekend visit to the Fall Festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiwassee.

When the dust settled close to midnight on Saturday, McDowell was on cloud nine celebrating his new claim to fame, Georgia Mountain Fiddle King.

McDowell, 16, has been a regular at the Georgia Fiddlers' Convention since he was 9 years old. He won the mandolin competition last year, but not in his wildest dreams did he expect to earn the title of "Fiddle King."

As Saturday turned to Sunday, McDowell had accumulated an impressive number of First Place plaques in three categories:



Fall Festival goers flocked to the Georgia Fiddlers Convention at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds on Friday and Saturday. Canton, NC's Bryan McDowell upended the older and more experienced Richard Bain to claim the title of Georgia Mountain Fiddle King.

Mandolin, Flat-Pick Guitar, and Junior Fiddler.

By the end of the night, even Charlie Daniels would have been proud.

"This is amazing. I've been coming here since I was 9 or 10 years old and I won the mandolin competition last year. I think that's

the only competition I've ever won," he said. "I came close in the Beginners' Fiddling one year and my sister Emma beat me out for that. "After coming here all these years, to walk away with all this, it's just a great

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Vardeman, Hogsed reign begins

By Matthew Jarrard
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Towns County High School has a new Homecoming King and Queen.

During Friday's Pep Rally at TCHS, it was revealed that senior football standout Mat Hogsed would wear the title of 2009 Homecoming King.

With much more pomp and circumstance, senior Amy Vardeman was chosen from among a group of 10 beautiful TCHS seniors, to begin a one-year reign as Indians' Football Homecoming Queen. The choice of Vardeman, an elite runner for Coach Jeannie Ledford's Cross Country Ladies, came at halftime of the Indians' matchup with Georgia Military at Towns County Stadium.

Soon after the moment sank in, Vardeman was joined at her side by the other half of royalty for the evening, Hogsed, who was



Senior Amy Vardeman gets a kiss from her King Mat Hogsed after she was crowned the 2009 Towns County High Homecoming Queen Friday night at Towns County Stadium.

Photo/Jim and Lisa Bryant

crowned earlier that day during a spirited pep rally.

Vardeman, along with her fellow senior classmates, both beautiful and talented homecoming hopefuls, braved the cold just as well as the players on the field. The newly crowned Queen was all smiles as she

gave recognition to her fellow nominees.

"It's been really exciting. I've had a lot of fun with all of the girls," Vardeman said. "It really isn't about winning. It's to represent our school and show support for tonight's theme."

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Keller named school's top educator



Towns County High School Principal Roy Perren and Towns County School Superintendent Dr. Richard Behrens are presenting the 2009 System Teacher of the Year Award to Stephanie Keller. Standing with Stephanie are her husband Brett and daughters Morgan and Madison.

'Anderson Music Hall was rocking'

By Jessica Keaton
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Throughout the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' entire Fall Festival event, musical acts took the center stage at Anderson Music Hall.

Big names such as Crystal Gayle, Aaron Tippin, Marty Stuart, Patty Loveless, and Earl Thomas Conley brought life to the stage at 'the Hall' during the week of arts, crafts, and the change in leaf color.

Crystal Gayle sang some of her biggest hits, including "Don't It Make My Brown Eyes Blue" and "Talking In Your Sleep." Her sister, Peggy, cracked jokes, sang her rendition of "Coal Miner's Daughter," and



Crystal Gayle

paired up with Gayle for a few numbers. Perhaps one of the most unique characteristics of Gayle is her almost floor-length hair, and it seemed to give a show of its own by swaying and blowing with the music and fans overhead.

Aaron Tippin's show was one of flash and spunk. Promoting his new album, *In*

Overdrive, the show consisted of trucker songs from the album and some of his legendary hits from the past. The crowd cheered as Tippin built the first bicycle to be donated to the Toys For Tots charity. However, the moment that got the most cheers is when the crowd stood for Tippin's performance of his biggest hit, "Stars and Stripes." After the show, many flocked to the stage, in hopes of shaking Tippin's hand.

Marty Stuart's show was a lively one as well. His hits including "Tempted," "Farmer's Blues," and "Hillbilly Rock" all were big crowd pleasers. Although he made fun of the requesters

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City's millage rate remains unchanged

By Charles Duncan
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The Hiwassee City Council has scheduled a public hearing for 3 p.m. on Nov. 3 to discuss the proposed 2009 millage rate.

Mayor Barbara Mathis said that the City Council will set the rate after the hearing at its regular meeting scheduled for 4 p.m. During the public hearing, City Manager Rick Stancil will present the 2009 Tax Digest and the City's Five Year History of Levy to Mayor Mathis and the Council.

Mayor Mathis has proposed that the 2009 Millage for the City of Hiwassee remain the same as the 2008 Levy of 2.270. If approved, it would be the seventh consecutive year that the City of Hiwassee



Mayor Barbara Mathis

millage rate has remained the same or has been decreased.

"During these difficult economic times, now is not the time for the millage to increase," Mayor Mathis said. "The City Council, City Manager and employees want to do our part in holding down all costs to our taxpayers.

Kendall holds the line

By Charles Duncan
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Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall is sincere in his attempt to keep taxpayers financially solvent.

Kendall kept his promise to lower the county government's millage rate last week during the October monthly meeting.

Kendall elected to lower the millage rate for maintenance and operation from 5.582 mills to 5.580 mills.

He also kept the millage rate for the Fire Department at .455 mills. Combined with the Board of Education's 4.784 mills, Towns County continues to have one of the lowest millage rates statewide.

"And I mean what I said that when times get better and this economy turns around, this millage rate will come back down," Kendall told those attending the county budget hearing at the Towns County Courthouse.

The county's 2010 budget calls for \$9.428 million for the purpose of maintenance and operation.

Kendall said the county will continue to keep

a tight lid on spending as the local economy continues to recover from the worst economic times in decades.

"Basically, we're going to hold the line," Kendall said. "We'll go into 2010 with basically the same budget as 2009. We can't afford to do anything else."

The \$9.428 million budget includes \$1.1 million for the Towns County Sheriff's Office, \$900,000 to operate the jail facilities, slightly more than \$1 million for Emergency Services, \$410,000-plus for Fire Services and \$921,600 for roads.

The county uses local option sales tax proceeds to roll back taxes. To date, those tax collections are down hundreds of thousands of dollars as the economy continues to flat line.

The county's proposed millage rate follows a proposed increase of 1.24 mills for the 2009-2010 fiscal year.

The board of education met Oct. 8 and approved the five-year tax digest and voted to raise the education millage rate by 1.24 mills. The BOE budget for 2010 is set at \$11.6 million, down from \$12 million in the current fiscal year.

Schools get ready for H1N1 vaccines

By Charles Duncan
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Dr. Richard Behrens wants parents to know that he wants the best for their children.

The superintendent of Towns County Schools will leave any decision regarding vaccination for the H1N1 virus up to parents, the veteran educator said on Monday.

According to Behrens, the local health department only has the nasal spray vaccination available. The nasal spray actually contains the live virus, while the shots which will be available at a later date do not.

"We've been taking a very careful approach to this," Dr. Behrens said. "If we have children that are coughing and have a fever, we isolate them, put masks on them and we send them home immediately.

"We're asking parents not to send them to school until they've been fever-free for 24 hours," he said. "To be honest, we had some absences before fall break, but that has gone back down. "The biggest question



Dr. Richard Behrens

I have is when we are going to get the vaccine," Dr. Behrens said. "As soon as we know something about it, we'll let parents know about it."

The school system has ample information on its Web site about H1N1.

Dr. David Westfall, director of District 2 Public Health said that there is no vaccine available yet to protect people from catching

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