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Flood Insurance Plan.

The ordinance is required before locals with homes in the flood plain can utilize reduced flood insurance rates offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"It's just one of those things that we've got to do to guarantee that our local residents get a chance to purchase reduced rate flood insurance," Commissioner Kendall said. "Flood insurance on properties inside the flood plain is required by lenders."

The move follows a public hearing earlier this month with state and federal officials announcing that high-tech digital data used to develop a new flood plain map had saved Towns County taxpayers living along the lake area a ton of money in flood insurance.

The LiDAR topographical data from a flyover by the U.S. Geological Survey used to develop the new map pulled 117 homes in Hiawassee out of Lake Chatuge's historical flood plain. All told, the new map using the high-tech data removed 300 homes from Lake Chatuge's historical

flood plain in Towns County.

A proposed flood plain map for Chatuge was due in September. FEMA granted Commissioner Kendall's request for a delay to allow for the acquisition of more accurate topographical data to determine the actual flood zone for Chatuge.

"They gave us a July 1 deadline to gather the data we needed and we met that deadline," he said. "Accurate LiDAR data was imperative in the preparation of a revised Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map for Towns County."

"It's believe that this is the first time the local, state and federal governments have ever worked together to accomplish something of this magnitude," Commissioner Kendall said. "The most important thing was that we wanted flood plain maps that accurately reflected Lake Chatuge's flood zone in Towns County."

Towns County Deputy Clerk Andrea Anderson read aloud the 20 pages contained in the proposed ordinance. She'll repeat the process at the first meeting in

November for the second reading.

Earlier this year, after determining that the historical flood map used by FEMA was based on inaccurate geographical data, Commissioner Kendall requested the use of high-tech LiDAR technology to develop a more accurate flood plain map for Lake Chatuge.

Before Commissioner Kendall's request, FEMA was prepared to move forward with inaccurate information to prepare a flood plain map for the lake shared by Towns County in Georgia and Clay County in North Carolina.

Earlier this year, FEMA admitted that the flood plain maps prepared for Lake Chatuge were just a best estimate and not highly accurate.

"We certainly believe that this more accurate map will save local homeowners with property on the lake millions of dollars over the long haul," Commissioner Kendall said.

A copy of the proposed Flood Plain Map is available at the Towns County Courthouse in Commissioner Kendall's office.

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Commissioner Kendall said.

Commissioner Kendall reminded residents in unincorporated Towns County that they will receive the \$8,000 Homestead Exemption approved overwhelming (98 percent) by local voters last year.

"You won't see that on the taxes for schools and local municipalities this year because of an error in the state legislation this last session," Commissioner Kendall said. "We don't know what the future holds,

so we have to be as conservative with the millage rate as we possibly can.

"We understand people are having a hard time paying their taxes, so I cut the millage rate a bit," he said. "It's important that we do all we can to help folks through these tough times."

The county will continue to keep a tight lid on spending as the local economy continues to recover from the worst economic times since 1933,

Commissioner Kendall said.

"Basically, we're going to hold the line again," Kendall said. "We'll go into 2011 with basically the same budget as 2010. We can't afford to do anything else."

The current \$9.42 million county 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.

Meet Janice Moore, teacher and poet

By Paula Canup

The area in which we live is blessed, not only with natural beauty, but with a wealth of literary, musical, and artistic talent. Music has always been a part of these mountains. Now writers and artists come here to find inspiration and solitude for their work.

Janice Moore is one of those writers who moved here from Atlanta many years ago. She is now a full-time English professor at Young Harris College. In her spare time, she writes poems inspired by family, childhood, and life in the mountains. Her work has appeared in such prestigious publications as *The Georgia Review*, *Shenandoah*, and *The Prairie Schooner*. Her poetry chapbook, *Teaching the Robins*, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2005.

Janice began writing poetry as an English major in college. Friends and fellow writers offered support for her work. She also attended workshops at the Callanwolde Fine Arts Center in Atlanta where guest poets offered helpful advice.

Her greatest challenge as a writer is finding time to write! Her job at YHC keeps her busy, but she often finds inspiration for a poem in the classroom.

What is Janice's best advice for aspiring writers? "Do not get discouraged by rejection slips!" Every writer experiences them. She says that writers should just keep sending and sending to various publications, and eventually they will find one that will publish their work.

Today, Janice finds encouragement as a member of the North Carolina Writers Network West, better known as Netwest. This group sponsors monthly critique groups for both poetry and prose. Janice finds that the critique group, which she facilitates, motivates her to have at least one new poem ready each month to share with the group.

Recently, Janice's poetry was included in a Netwest anthology, *Echoes Across the Blue Ridge, Stories, Essays and Poems by Writers Living in and Inspired by the Southern Appalachian Mountains*, edited by Nancy Simpson and published by Winding Path Publishing. Contributors to this anthology will read their work and sign books at Moss Library in Clay County on November 20th. More information about the book, NCWN West and its members can be found at www.netwestwriters.blogspot.com. NT10s27.M1JSH