

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Clouds	51 25
Fri: Clouds	52 26
Sat: Clouds	55 29
Sun: Clouds	55 31
Mon: Sunny	50 30
Tue: Showers	51 23
Wed: Cloudy	47 22



Upstream Elevation Predicted 12/01/10	
Lake Chatuge	1918.56
Lake Nottely	1763.53
Blue Ridge	1623.01

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Chamber Chronicles Page 8A

Tour of Homes

The Towns County Chamber of Commerce Annual Tour of Homes is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. The 2010 theme is "A Celebration of the Season Through the Arts. Tickets are on sale now for \$25 and are available at the Chamber office. A portion of the proceeds benefit the Towns County Food Pantry.

Christmas Tree lighting Friday

Mayor Andrea Gibby, the Young Harris City Council and the Enotah Garden Club invite the community to attend the annual lighting of the Christmas Tree in Young Harris.

The occasion is scheduled for Friday at 6 p.m. at 5187 Maple Street.

After the ceremony, visit the Community Room where the Garden Club will serve free refreshments.

Food Pantry

The Towns County Food Pantry will hold its free food distribution on Tuesday, Dec. 7. The distribution will be held at the Towns County Food Pantry on JackDayton 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.

Public Hearing

The Towns County 10-year Comprehensive Plan public hearing will be held Thursday, at 2 p.m. in the Towns County Courthouse, Commissioner Bill Kendall announced on Monday.

Kendall encourages the residents of Towns County to attend the public hearing and provide input on how they want to see Towns County grow over the next decade.

The Plan is state mandated and required by Georgia Law.

Towns County Schools achieve AYP again

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The Towns County School System is one of only seven school systems in the state of Georgia to make Adequate Yearly Progress for seven consecutive years, state education records show.

Also, the school system is one of 43 systems statewide with 100 percent of schools making AYP for the 2009-2010 school year.

In addition to Towns County Schools, Oconee and Fayette county schools, as well as Buford City Schools, Jefferson City Schools, Trion City Schools and Chickamauga City Schools have achieved AYP for seven consecutive years.

Statewide, 88.09 percent of elementary schools, 78.74 percent of middle schools, and 40.88 percent of high schools made AYP.

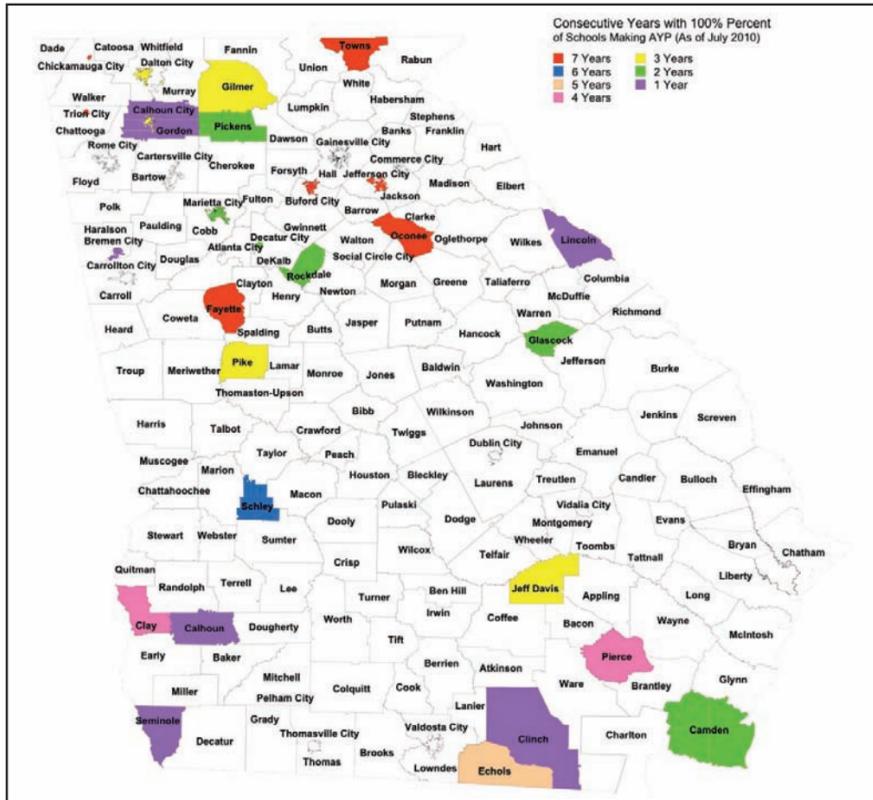


Dr. Richard Behrens

All three Towns County Schools met the criteria for AYP during the 2009-2010 school year marking a record seventh consecutive year to achieve this accomplishment.

AYP is one of the cornerstones of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is an annual measure of student participation and achievement of state-

See AYP success, page 5A



Santa arrives in Downtown

By Charles Duncan
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The 2010 Christmas Season is officially underway following the eventful happening in Downtown Hiawassee on Saturday.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton's annual Christmas Parade brought in the holiday season and helped collect toys for needy girls and boys throughout the county.

The Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund remains a needy community project as locals and businesses continue to recover from the hard times of economic recession.

The program got a small boost from Saturday's Annual Christmas Parade.

For the most part, Saturday's event helped Christmas get a head start in Hiawassee. The crowd began to gather around 5 p.m. in anticipation of a 5:30



Santa and his helpers arrive in Downtown Hiawassee on Saturday to take part in the Sheriff's Christmas Parade. Photo/Lowell Nicholson p.m. start. However, the parade didn't make it Downtown until the 6:15 p.m. mark.

Even before the parade came down Highway 76, the Towns County High School Indians' Raider Marching Band was heard playing from a distance. It wasn't long before the blue

lights from Sheriff Clinton's patrol vehicle lit up the skyline.

Floats sponsored by Bank of Hiawassee, McConnell Baptist Church, Turpin's Wrecker Service, Perkins Towing, Towns County Lions Club,

See Parade, page 3A

Towns seeks 'hiker friendly' status

By Charles Duncan
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The Appalachian Trail is 2,179 miles long between Springer Mountain in Gilmer County and Mount Katahdin in Maine.

The AT as it is called by the many that frequent it, was explicitly designed to be hiked, it includes resources to aid hikers. Some are common to trails throughout North America, while some are unique to the Appalachian Trail. The Trail is much more frequently hiked south to north - Georgia to Maine - than vice versa. Hikers typically begin in March or April and finish in late summer or early to late fall of the year.

Jerry Carnes, of Hiawassee, an avid hiker and member of the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, believes



Jerry Carnes

that the portion of the trail that goes through Towns County can become an economic asset to the local community.

"Hikers aren't an intrusion," he said. "They're somebody that we should be welcoming into our community."

Carnes estimates that about 500 or so AT hikers come through Towns

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All eyes on KOM tournament

By Charles Duncan
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An action packed sports weekend could have local cash registers ringing early and often Friday and Saturday.

On Friday, the seventh annual King of the Mountain wrestling tournament brings 15 teams and 224 wrestlers to Towns County. That event spills over into Saturday and is augmented by the traditional rivalry game between the Towns and Union basketball teams at Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium.

"Each team has 14 wrestlers, they've all got parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins. You never know how many people will be here," Indians' Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers said.

"We're expecting more than 1,000 people, most of which will be spending the night," Coach Stowers said.

In basketball action, the rivalry includes four games: two junior varsity and two varsity.

To make the equation simpler, there will be an additional 80 athletes in the basketball gymnasium, complete with relatives.

All-in-all, it makes for an exciting weekend of amateur sporting events.

In wrestling action, the Indians have a returning KOM heavyweight champion, Josh Barnes, and two returning silver medalists, Tim Collier and Zach Stroud.

Also returning for the



Senior Josh Barnes hopes to repeat as KOM Heavyweight Champion at this weekend's wrestling tournament. Photo/James Reese

Indians, Max Updike, who finished fourth last year at 171 pounds and Wesley Bloodworth, who finished fourth last year at 215 pounds.

"You can count on seeing some solid wrestling this weekend," Coach Stowers said.

Last year, the Indians did the impossible, finishing fourth in a 15-team field despite forfeiting three weight classes, 103, 112 and 119. The Indians finished behind Lumpkin, Franklin and Dawson counties in that order.

In 2010, the only weight class that might be forfeited by the Indians is the 103-pound class.

"We definitely have a hard time finding the lightweights to wrestle," Coach

Stowers said. Freshmen Vonya Baldwin and Harrison Hobbs will fill the 112-pound and 119-pound slots respectively.

From 135 pounds to heavyweight, the Indians are a veteran squad and will look to improve on their all-time best fourth-place finish from 2009.

"We've got to stay focused and come out ready to wrestle from the get-go," Coach Stowers said.

Barnes, a senior leader on the Indians' wrestling team is confident in the 2010 wrestling squad.

"If we really work hard, I think we can make it to state for the first time," Barnes said.

Gatlin Brothers concert tickets still available

By Charles Duncan
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The pride of Seminole, Texas is coming to Anderson Music Hall.

Larry Gatlin and The Gatlin Brothers (aka Steve and Rudy) will play The Hall Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.

Over the years, the Brothers Gatlin have forged a musical standard for vocal harmony, raw talent and showmanship while topping the music charts with one hit after another.

Larry Gatlin and brothers Steve and Rudy are the featured 2010 Christmas Show at Anderson Music Hall.

Larry Gatlin, a former wide receiver at the University of Houston, was discovered by Country Music Legend Dottie West in 1971 while attending the *Jimmy Dean Las Vegas Revue*.

The Gatlin Brothers made the music scene in 1979 with their first gold album *Straight Ahead*. The album included the iconic No. 1 hit *All the Gold in California*, which became a signature work for the brothers.

It's a don't miss show and to make sure you don't miss it, the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds has a special offer for all church groups of 10 or more: half price tickets to the event. Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said it's rare to get to see a pro-



The Gatlin Brothers

fessional concert of the stature of Larry Gatlin and the Gatlin Brothers for just \$15 plus \$2 handling.

For those who know their Country Music, it is common knowledge that the Gatlin Brothers broke into the professional music business as Gospel singers, recording their first album on the *Sword and Shield* record label.

Ticket prices for groups of less than 10 are \$30 each, plus \$2 handling, Thomason said.

For more details about this special Christmas Show offer, call the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds at (706) 896-4191 or visit the Fairgrounds on the Web at georgiamountainfairgrounds.com for more details about this incredible offer.

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