

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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75 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 91 Number 43

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

Commissioner encourages census participation, COVID vigilance

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw emphasized the importance of completing the 2020 census in his Aug. 18 regular meeting in the courthouse, encouraging everyone in the community to participate if they had not already.

Joining Bradshaw for the effort was Patrick Malone of the local Complete Count Committee, and he offered a summary of census participation in the state and county.

"The response rate for the entire United States is right at 64 percent right now," Malone said. "Georgia is at 59.5

percent, and Towns County is at 46.3 percent. That is a little misleading, though, because these percentages are against the number of residents in the county.

"For Towns County, about 40 percent of your residents are actually rental cabins and second homes, which will be vacant. If you factor those out, the number for Towns County would be around 79 percent."

To respond to the 2020 census, which will help determine local share of federal tax dollars, as well as state and federal elective representation and more, visit 2020census.gov.

Bradshaw also provided

some COVID-19 updates in the meeting, reading part of an email from Gov. Brian Kemp concerning the reduction of case numbers in the state.

"While those are encouraging numbers, I also want to encourage the citizens of Towns County, and they are doing a good job overall," Bradshaw said. "We have a lot of visitors here, and we are encouraging everybody.

"We can't really control everything everybody does, but our folks are doing a good job here in the county."

The commissioner also signed a resolution involving the county spending money on a new dump truck and upcoming courthouse renovations, with

the resolution specifying that funds will be reimbursed to the county after SPLOST collections begin.

"We had the SPLOST tax, and it passed, and we start collections in October," Bradshaw said. "We need to order a dump truck now to have it when the cold weather comes in and we have snow and ice. We are going to go ahead and take bids on the dump truck and then order it, so we will be putting it out to bid.

"Our county attorney said that if we have to order the dump truck before our collections come in, then we can pay for it and then, when the SPLOST tax comes in, we

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Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw in his Aug. 18 regular county meeting. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Announcements for runoff election recounts coming to voters this week



The Towns County Board of Elections & Registration is located in Suite A of 67 Lakeview Circle in Hiwassee next to the courthouse.

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

People hoping for clarity on two local runoff races will get some answers soon, as recount announcements for the republican nominations for Towns County Sheriff and District 50 State Senator are expected this week.

For background, Kenneth "Ode" Henderson was certified the victor in the sheriff's race the week of the Aug. 11 General Primary Runoff Elections.

However, his opponent, Daren "Bear" Osborn, filed for a recount. Osborn also filed a number of challenges to voter registrations.

The final certified race results featured 10 provisional ballots – 6 for Osborn and 4 for Henderson – bringing Henderson's lead to 38.

Towns County Elections Board Chair Janet Oliva said her office would be looking into each of the more than two dozen voter registration challenges, though no votes

would be affected for the Aug. 11 runoff.

When it comes to a recount, Oliva said that's being addressed by the county attorney via guidance from the Secretary of State's Office, and that a decision should be announced this week.

As it stands, Henderson is the official winner of the Aug. 11 runoff election, the results of which would only be overturned if a recount is both granted and reflects a different

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Schools enjoy successful first week; students following guidelines



Students and teachers mask up for the first week back at Towns County Schools. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County Schools started back for the year on Monday, Aug. 17, putting in place new guidelines to keep students and staff members safe amid COVID-19.

And Middle School Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs said she felt the first week served as a good start to what everyone is hoping will be a good year.

"The week has gone by great and very smooth,"

Hobbs said. "I am amazed that the middle school students came with their masks and are continuing to wear them every day. They are doing their job, and they seem thrilled to be back on campus. I went door to door today just to go over some handbook items with them.

"Nobody likes wearing these (masks), but I feel like if we do it for a month or two, then we can get back to some sort of normal, and all 225 students can be on campus at the end of the year. We haven't had anyone say they

were sick or any cases in the middle school.

"The entire staff has been here all week. I think it was a good idea that we pushed school back a little bit, and we learned from the mistakes of other school systems."

According to High School Principal Roy Perren, students are adapting well to the new guidelines, which makes for overall positive experiences.

"I think this is going awesome," Perren said. "The

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Dating show in production at The Ridges Resort on Lake Chatuge

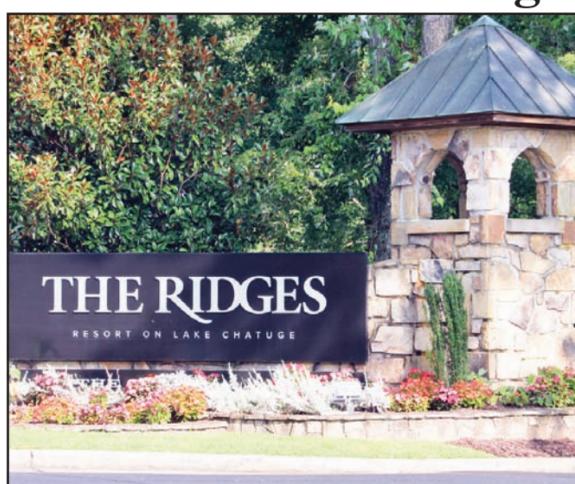
By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

People will likely have heard by now that a production company is filming at The Ridges Resort on Lake Chatuge.

What they won't have heard is what show is filming. That's because everything about the project is currently hush-hush, as the production has yet to be officially announced.

Executive Producer Jeff Spangler of Lighthearted Entertainment did say, however, that the project is a dating show that will be filmed exclusively at The Ridges.

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Residents, visitors express concern over conflict amid coronavirus

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

After nearly half a year of COVID-19 mitigation efforts and a July surge in hospitalizations and deaths, many people in the area are wondering just how much longer the pandemic will last.

People have reason to be optimistic, however, as new hospitalizations have been declining for weeks in Georgia, and deaths are showing a downward trend, too, which is to be expected with fewer hospitalizations.

Of course, people should

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The Hiwassee Fruit & Vegetable Market is a popular destination for fresh produce during the week.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Warren presents 'Cherokee Cures' to guests at Civic Center

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge hosted Mark Warren Friday at the Towns County Civic Center, where he gave an insightful presentation on "Cherokee Cures," featuring local plants and their medicinal properties.

2020 marks the second year that Warren has done a presentation for the volunteer organization, with attendees enjoying the information he shared as usual.

"This is a part of our Summer (Lecture) Series," Gardens Executive Director Grace Howard said. "(Warren) is a known entity in the area, and we wanted people to be

able to see him this year. This is a part of our educational series for the community. We do this all summer, and we do two a month.

"We have two more to go this year, on the first and third Fridays of September. We are thankful for having Mark here and those that came out to enjoy their time with us to learn more about plants."

Warren operates a school in Dahlonega called Medicine Bow, and in his presentations, he shares information he has learned after years of studying nature.

"I have been teaching 50 years the survival skills, as they are called today," Warren said. "Basically, it was the everyday life of primitive people.

"That is sort of my vehicle that Medicine Bow has become known for, but my secret agenda has become a try and help people forge a better relationship with nature by becoming more intimate with it through use and knowledge."

Attendees of the event took notes and asked questions during the lecture, making it an interactive event wherein people learned more about the plants in their own backyards.

One plant that Warren made an example of was jewelweed, which can be used for rashes and other skin irritations.

"Jewelweed is an instant cure from the itch of anything that is caused by your immune system," Warren said. "Poison

ivy – did you know that those bumps were caused by your immune system and have nothing to do with the chemical that was put on you?"

"When a chigger bites you, it swells and itches because your immune system is sending white blood cells to the bite. Your skin starts stretching and itching because the chigger puts a chemical in you that forms a tube so it can suck out what it wants.

"It is a lot like a spider in that way. Chiggers do not bore into your skin and wiggle to make you itch."

Warren offers classes throughout the year in which he teaches more about plants and nature in the North Georgia

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Mark Warren gave a special presentation on Friday, Aug. 21, as part of the Hamilton Gardens' Summer Lecture Series. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

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