

Towns County Herald

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Cities, county to honor fallen with program on 9/11 anniversary

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist hijackers flew three planes full of people into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, and a fourth plane headed for Washington, D.C. was forced to the ground by American heroes who prevented further death and destruction.

The mode of attack and resultant loss of life that day – 2,977 innocent people at the hands of 19 terrorists – caused a global shift in the way America and her allies think about security. At home, the attacks caused a wound that will never fully heal.

Since that day, many Americans have promised to “Never Forget.” In an effort to live up to that promise, the City of Hiwassee, City of Young Harris and Towns

County Government will be hosting their second annual 9/11 remembrance for everyone to attend.

The remembrance program will take place on the Hiwassee Town Square Friday starting at 9:45 a.m. Social distancing for COVID-19 will be easily accommodated due to the outdoor venue.

Serving as Master of Ceremonies for the event will be Hiwassee Mayor Liz Ordiales. Appalachian Saint Andrew’s Pipes & Drums will perform patriotic music at 9:45, and Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby will offer welcoming remarks.

McConnell Baptist Church Pastor Danny Byers will give the invocation; the North Georgia Honor Guard will present the colors for the occasion; Ordiales will lead the Pledge of Allegiance; and Bill Renaldo will perform the

National Anthem.

Continuing, local Firefighter Tyler Keyes will deliver the meaning of 9/11, and there will be a memorial bell ringing for the fallen.

Sheriff-elect Kenneth “Ode” Henderson will be the guest speaker for the event, after which the North Georgia Honor Guard will perform “Taps” on brass horn, and Appalachian Saint Andrew’s Pipes & Drums will play “Amazing Grace.”

Ordiales will also introduce the new Heroes Banners on the square, to include: Scott Drummond, U.S. Coast Guard; Chuck Frisk, U.S. Marines; Bill Lyon, USM; Bart Rodgers, U.S. Army; Lydia Moss, U.S. Air Force; Brody Graper, Army National Guard; Tyler Guss, USAF; and Walker Guss, USAF.

“It’s important to continue to honor our veterans as much See 9/11 Program, Page 8A



The New York skyline filled with smoke prior to the Twin Towers collapsing on Sept. 11, 2001. Photo Courtesy of the Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Bo Hatchett declared winner in District 50 State Race recount

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

Bo Hatchett has been declared the official winner of the Aug. 11 Republican Primary Runoff for District 50 State Senate following last week’s districtwide recount.

Hatchett defeated Stacy Hall to clinch the Republican nomination, and he will face Democrat Dee Daley in the General Election Nov. 3 to see who will be elected to the 50th District seat.

District 50 consists of Towns, Rabun, Stephens,

Franklin, Banks, Habersham, and portions of Jackson and Hall counties.

The margin between Hatchett and Hall was 38 votes, up slightly from the 37-vote lead Hatchett had before the recount, in an election featuring 24,950 cast ballots.

Part of the reason the margin changed was the allocation of two additional votes for Hatchett in Towns County, where ballot scanning equipment had been set to a lower sensitivity in the Aug. 11 General Primary Runoff See Hatchett, Page 8A



Bo Hatchett

Church represents hometown in prestigious Chick-fil-A program

New Special
Towns County Herald

A young lady from Towns County, a star in the making, is presently in Pine Mountain, Georgia, participating in the prestigious Chick-fil-A Impact 360 Fellows Program.

Having received a complete scholarship, including room, board and tuition, this young teen is immersed in a rigorous two-semester college preparation program.

The Fellows Program prepares students to succeed in college and life while helping

them develop confidence and intellectual integrity. It also assists them in growing their relationship with God and discerning God’s call in their lives.

This star in the making is Samantha Morgan Church.

It all began on the family farm, where she was put in charge of such chores as milking, collecting eggs and baling hay. Eventually, upon reaching her teen years, Church began running the entire farm operation, becoming

See Church, Page 8A



Samantha Church

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC names Brinke interim general manager

New Special
Towns County Herald

YOUNG HARRIS – The Board of Directors of Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation announced last week that it had named Erik C. Brinke as Interim General Manager of the co-op.

Brinke will succeed outgoing General Manager Jeremy Nelms, who has accepted a position as CEO of Flint Energies in Warner Robins, Nelms’ last day with BRMEMC is Friday, Sept. 25, and Brinke will serve in the interim position while the board develops a plan for naming a permanent replacement.

“I am encouraged that we have been able to call on one of our own to continue the co-op’s important work while the board develops a plan for hiring a new general manager,” BRMEMC Board President Ray Cook said. “We are confident that Mr. Brinke’s extensive co-op

experience will afford us the time we need to make the best choice for our co-op’s future leader.”

An 18-year employee of BRMEMC, Brinke was hired by the co-op to establish its first formal economic development department, and to support broadband deployment across the region.

More recently, he has served as Director of Administrative Services and External Relations, managing the co-op’s fleet, garage, facilities and maintenance, information systems/IT, communications and economic development efforts.

“I feel blessed that the board has placed its confidence in me for this interim role,” Interim General Manager Brinke said. “My hope is that I lead the co-op well in its critically important work, while allowing the board the time needed to ensure a smooth and efficient transition to our next



Erik Brinke

permanent manager.” A graduate of Murphy High School in North Carolina, Brinke holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is an NRECA Certified Key Account Executive, and serves his community on numerous boards and commissions.

He resides in Murphy with his wife, Paige, and their two children, Asher and Anna.

Increasingly popular Friday Night Market grows in second month

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The City of Hiwassee put together its second Friday Night Market on Sept. 4, welcoming area vendors and attendees to liven up the town square.

Vendors were happy for the chance to sell their products, too, since most craft shows and similar events have been canceled due to concerns over COVID-19.

Janet Smith of Jasper’s Axcents Pottery attended the Night Market to sell her art that she has been perfecting over years of practice.

“This is about honoring women,” Smith said of her wares. “It is a lot about giving messages about life, and this is a great way for me to share it.”

“It is all mixed media for the most part. I am creating my work from found objects, then I find the message that I want to go with it. I just let each piece come out when I find something I want to mold out



The Friday Night Market takes place the first Friday of every month through December from 5-10 p.m. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

of the clay.”

Added Smith, “I have been doing pottery for 20 years. I was an apprentice for an artist that did women’s faces. When she passed away, I decided that I wanted to take on her work. Of course, I created my own work, but I stayed with the

message. “I find the quotes and messages that I want after I finish the work mostly, then I find whatever best suits the piece.”

Sisters Marta Izquierdo and Sylvia Blanco attended. See Night Market, Page 8A

TCSO continues to arrest drug suspects in Towns County

New Special
Towns County Herald

The Towns County Sheriff’s Office has arrested 11 more suspects on drug-related charges over the last two weeks, making good on its promise to pursue those possessing or dealing in illegal drugs locally.

As part of these most recent arrests, the Sheriff’s Office seized over \$22,000 worth of methamphetamine and See Drug Arrests, Page 8A



Steve Harper



Paris Nichols



Xavier Segar



Salador Villagomez



Duane Stamps

Community remains preoccupied with national news headlines

By Jarrett Whitener
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

With fall and the November General Election just around the corner, it seems negative national headlines are burning brightly in the minds of many in the community.

Some people, like Towns County resident Eloise Marie, have been hearing less about COVID-19 and how it is impacting the country, especially since its precipitous decline in the state and nation over the last month.

“While I haven’t seen the numbers lately, I feel like they have dwindled some,” Marie said at Mary’s Southern Grill Friday. “I haven’t seen a lot of news on COVID either and I’m not sure what to make of that. Last I heard, the numbers were going down in the area, and I think that is great.”

“I think COVID has been on our minds too long and is driving us crazy. People need



Ingles shoppers mask up before heading into the store Friday, Sept. 4. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

to get out of the house and try to live a little. I still have some friends that haven’t come out since the thing started because they are afraid of it.”

“If this is like any other virus, it won’t be gone soon, and hiding and living in fear is no way to live. I’m not saying

go out and crowd places and breathe on each other, but do get out a little.”

Gail Rockinbough of Forsyth County said she feels there’s been a disconnect between the national media and the truth, as competing See Community, Page 8A

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Lake Levels	
Blue Ridge	1,680.53
Chatuge	1,922.58
Nottely	1,770.57

Barcode: 0487919315

SPORTS
FOOTBALL
9/11 vs. Bethlehem 7:30 PM
SOFTBALL
9/11 vs. Lincoln Co. 5:30 PM
9/12 @ Providence (DH)

Constitution Week
Sept. 17-23
See page 5A

9/11 Memorial Ride
Sept. 26
See page 1B

Hamilton Gardens Final Lecture
Sept. 18
See page 3A