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Moore talks water, laments lack of rainfall

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

BLAIRSVILLE – The Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition hosted its Sixth Annual State of the Water presentation at the Union County Community Center on Tuesday, Oct. 25.

In the meeting, HRWC Executive Director Callie Moore spoke on the state of the rivers and lakes within the Upper Hiwassee River Basin, sharing data concerning the water properties that had been accumulated over the previous

year.

While the Tennessee Valley Project has not yet released new data for the four major lakes within the basin, Moore did identify areas of concern for certain streams running through the basin that could cause problems for the future of the lakes.

However, significant improvement in Lake Chatuge has been documented, which is partly due to the efforts of the City of Hiwassee and the newly implemented nutrient reduction system at the Hiwassee Wastewater Plant.

“This summer, nutrient

reduction technology came online that essentially wiped out the City of Hiwassee’s wastewater treatment plant into Lake Chatuge,” said Moore.

“They aren’t required to treat nutrients, so this is a voluntary action that took place to remove that nutrient loading and prevent algae blooms in the future and, hopefully, to prevent a situation that could possibly interfere with water treatment for drinking. It’s very exciting.”

Moore also pointed out that Union County had also taken precautionary measures

to ensure the safety of Nottely Lake, and that government officials with both Towns and Union have worked with the coalition to provide safe waters for residents to enjoy.

For all those in attendance, Moore shared a map highlighting waterways and streams located in the Upper Hiwassee River Basin that had been identified by the state’s 303(d) list of impaired and threatened waters, a list that is updated every two years.

One such waterway added to the list this past year, for example, is Rapier Mill

Creek in North Carolina.

Waters can be regarded as impaired for a multitude of reasons, such as pathogen contamination, excess nutrients within the water, excess sediment and the unstable oxygen environments that can cause harm to natural ecosystems.

“We also include the natural habitat and biological communities that are associated with our rivers, lakes and streams,” said Moore. “So, when we talk about water quality, or the body of water being impaired, it could be a fish and aquatic life impairment.”

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HRWC Executive Director Callie Moore delivered the 2016 State of the Water address on Tuesday, Oct. 25, at the Union County Community Center.

Wildfire contained; caution urged during drought

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

CHIMNEYTOP – U.S. Forest Service officials discovered a wildfire last Wednesday afternoon that is visible from the Brasstown Bald Visitor Center, covering about 3 acres some 4,000 feet up on Chimneytop Mountain near the Arkaquah Trail in neighboring Union County.

The Arkaquah Trail has been temporarily closed due to its proximity to the fire, the cause of which is still under investigation.

USFS firefighters fought the fire all that Wednesday, Oct. 26, and work continued the next day to establish a control line around the fire.

Since then, 95 percent of the fire has been contained by a control line. The remaining



Here is a view of the Chimneytop wildfire from Brasstown Bald’s southern webcam. Smoke from the fire can be seen billowing leftward in the middle of the picture.

5 percent of the 3 acres is in a rocky area where firefighters have been unable to establish a control line, though they don’t expect the fire to be a problem there because there’s not much to burn in that particular area,

according to Judy Toppins, public affairs officer with the U.S. Forest Service out of Gainesville.

“Basically, there’s a line

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Nonprofit hosts ‘Spooky’ benefit for Hamilton Gardens

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Between now and Thanksgiving, the Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge will feature special spooky Halloween decorations that should be considered a can’t-miss sight for county residents.

Skulls, festooning spider webs, fake gravestones hanging in trees, the Grim Reaper himself, plus plenty of other fun festive offerings are currently on display throughout the garden grounds.

And no, the Halloween decorations didn’t just appear one night after a spectral fog crept slowly through the rhododendrons – they arrived thanks to the hard work of



More than 175 people attended the successful “Spooktacular Evening in the Gardens” on Saturday, Oct. 29, hosted by Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge.

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Commissioner shares words of wisdom with residents

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall spoke on his time in office at the Mountain Movers and Shakers weekly meeting at Mary’s Southern Grill on Friday, Oct. 28.

As a tribute to the beloved commissioner, Towns County Elementary School fourth-grader Kaylee Hamilton began the meeting by singing a moving rendition of Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the U.S.A.”

Hamilton was followed by Commissioner Kendall’s grandson, Kendall Floyd, who introduced his grandfather to the group with a brief recounting of the commissioner’s legacy before and during his time as Towns County’s sole



Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall spent the morning of Friday, Oct. 28, with the Mountain Movers and Shakers.

Local convenience stores burgled

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Investigators with the Towns County Sheriff’s Office believe that the early Sunday morning burglary of the Marathon Station on Bell Creek Road could be connected to a series of burglaries across much of North Georgia.

If this is the case, then the Oct. 30 Marathon Station burglary was likely perpetrated by the same individuals who committed the double burglaries of Sept. 11, when the Sunoco and the

BP Station were broken into in Young Harris near the Junction leading to Hayesville.

Authorities in Union County are investigating a Sunday burglary of their own, which also occurred in the early morning hours, only several miles away at the Food Heaven convenience store located just past the Towns County line on GA 515.

It is believed that the Union County burglary is possibly connected to the one in Towns County, and that these burglaries are connected to a series of burglaries this year north of Interstate 20,

including in neighboring Fannin, Gilmer and Pickens counties.

The Union County Sheriff’s Office has connected an Aug. 31 burglary of the Marathon Station up Murphree Highway near the Georgia/North Carolina state line with this current string of burglaries.

Residents and businesses should exercise caution until this burglary group, suspected to be based out of Atlanta, is apprehended.

Furthermore, residents

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Hiwassee Special Election continues alongside General Election



By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Early voting for the Hiwassee Special Election continues this week through Friday, Nov. 4, ahead of the Nov. 8 Special Election at the Hiwassee City Hall.

Hiwassee registered voters are being asked to decide who will take the long vacant fifth seat on the Hiwassee City Council, as well as whether or not they want Sunday alcohol sales of beer and wine, and/or liquor by the drink sales both during the week and on Sundays.

Those Hiwassee voters looking to vote in both the Hiwassee Special Election and the General Election will

need to cast separate ballots for each election.

In order to vote in the General Election – i.e. for federal, state and countywide offices – Hiwassee voters will need to vote with all other Towns County voters at the Old Rock Jail during early voting, and at their assigned voting precinct on Nov. 8.

In order to vote in the Hiwassee Special Election, Hiwassee voters will need to vote at Hiwassee City Hall, located right next to the Hiwassee Town Square.

Voters will be supplied voting forms to fill out at the polling places for both the General Election and the Hiwassee Special Election.

Hiwassee Special Election early voting will occur between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at city hall, from now through Friday.

On Tuesday, Nov. 8, Hiwassee City Hall will be holding its special municipal election from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

to fill the city council seat vacated by Stephen Smith earlier this year.

The candidates running for this Hiwassee City Council seat are John Holmes and Rayette Ross.

Hiwassee voters will be deciding on several alcohol-related referendums as well, including: the selling of liquor by the drink, both during the week and on Sundays; and beer and wine Sunday sales in retail settings.

Sis Jarrard was appointed election superintendent for the Hiwassee Special Election a couple of months back, and she is surrounded by excellent help in the following poll workers: Patricia Hanks, Richard Patrick, Linda Reed-Smith, with alternates Joe Varao and Milinda Thomas.

Jarrard has 15 years of elections experience, and many will know her as the former manager of the Macedonia Precinct.

Last week to vote early ahead of Election Day

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Well over 3,000 of Towns County’s 8,598 active registered voters have already cast ballots during the three-week early voting period, which continues through Friday, Nov. 4, ahead of Election Day on Tuesday, Nov. 8.

Between now and Friday, during the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., registered Towns County voters can head over to the Towns County Board of Elections to cast their votes early.

The board of elections is located within the Old Rock Jail next to the Towns County Courthouse in Hiwassee, and the board office will remain open to voters even during lunchtime hours.

Nov. 8 Election Day voting will not occur at the board of elections office. On Election Day, between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., voters will need to vote at their assigned voting precincts, of which there are four: Hiwassee, Young Harris, Macedonia and



This sign hangs across from the Old Rock Jail, clearly pointing the way for would-be early voters.

Tate City.

Those voting in person during early voting and on Election Day will need to present a valid photo ID in order to vote. According to the Secretary of State’s website at sos.ga.gov, a valid ID can be any one of the following:

“Any valid state or federal government issued

photo ID, including a free ID Card issued by your county registrar’s office or the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS); a Georgia Driver’s License, even if expired; valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency or entity of the U.S. Government,

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Lake Levels	
Blue Ridge	1,667.22
Chatuge	1,916.65
Nottely	1,760.61



Election Results Newspaper will be available on Wednesday, November 9th after 11 AM

See our special election results insert for all

the details and results from the General Election.

Results will also be available at www.townscountyherald.net

