

# Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, March 19, 2014

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Sunny 62 34  
 Fri: Sunny 68 45  
 Sat: Rain 62 34  
 Sun: Sunny 56 30  
 Mon: Clouds 54 32  
 Tue: Sunny 53 29  
 Wed: Clouds 56 33



Upstream Elevation Predicted 03/19/14  
 Lake Chatuge 1,919.29  
 Lake Nottely 1,764.52  
 Blue Ridge 1,677.11

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### Have you seen the Bicycle Signs?

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## Food Distribution

North Mt. Zion  
 Thurs. Mar 20th  
 10 AM - Noon  
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## Veteran's Park Monument Committee Notice

## T-Ball and Farm League Registration at Rec center

see page 8



## BASEBALL:

Tues Mar 18 vs. Commerce 5 PM  
 Thurs Mar 20 vs. Hebron 5 PM  
 Fri Mar 21 @ Hebron 4:30 PM

## SOCCER:

Fri. Mar 21 Vs. Hebron 5 & 7 PM

## TENNIS:

Wed. Mar 19 vs. Lakeview 4 PM

# Fire destroys Towns County home

### Family of five displaced; two go to hospital; home a total loss and family pet dies

By Charles Duncan  
 Towns County Herald  
 cduncan.tch@windstream.net

A Towns County family of five lost their home and family pet as fire ravaged the residence on John Deer Lane, according to Towns County Fire and Rescue.

Firefighters received a call at 10:38 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12 regarding a structure fire at 1582 John Deer Lane in Upper Hightower.

Towns County Assistant Fire Chief Harold Copeland said the three-story home was fully engulfed in flames as firefighters Station 4 Tanker arrived on scene.

Heavy north winds and near freezing temperatures hampered firefighting efforts Towns County Fire & Rescue Capt. David Sellers said.

Tanker trucks from Station 2 and 3, and Engine 1 from Station 1, arrived on scene to set up for shuttling water from a nearby hydrant on Highway 76 East.

Firefighters struggled to lay 3" lines up the steep, 100-foot driveway to feed the engine positioned near the home.

Five people were in the home preparing to go to bed for



Fire destroyed this three-story home on John Deer Lane in Towns County's Hightower Community on March 12. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

the evening when fire was noticed engulfing the back porch, Capt. Sellers said.

The occupants escaped through the basement, having no other available option.

A 33-year old male family member returned inside the home to search for the family dog, was overcome by smoke, and retreated to the exterior of the burning building.

He was taken by ambulance to Chatuge Regional Hospital with possible smoke inhalation, along with another family member complaining of chest pains, Capt. Sellers said.

Eighteen firefighters from Towns County were on scene to fight the wind driven fire, along with mutual aid from

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## Fifth Annual Bass Tourney a success

By Todd Forrest  
 Towns County Herald  
 Staff Writer

The Fifth Annual Lake Chatuge Bass Tournament sponsored by the Towns County Touchdown Club was held under perfect weather conditions on Saturday afternoon.

Nineteen teams took part in the all day tournament that departed from the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds Boat Ramp at 7 a.m. and met back at the same location for weigh-in, just after 4 p.m.

The team of Butch Hoover and Jeremy Cross took home first prize with a total catch of 26.28 pounds, more than a pound heavier than second place, and 4.15 pounds ahead of the third place team of Bit Ledford and Jack Suits.

The duo of Cross and Hoover had an idea of what to expect in late winter/early fall so they had a total to shoot for.

They also had a pretty good idea of what locations they needed to hit, but they didn't know for sure if their game plan would put them atop the leader board until they returned to the fairgrounds to see how things would shake down at the weigh in.

"This time of year, you never know what to expect," Cross said. "We had an idea that we would need to catch somewhere in the 20-30 pound range, so we thought our total would have us in the mix."

"We wanted to fish the mouth of creeks because places like that is where the fish are starting to move to spawn, so those were the locations we were trying to find," Cross said. "After we started catching some fish, I didn't know if we'd have enough to win it, but I knew we'd be in the running."

The real winners on Saturday were Towns County football players and although this was his first Touchdown



Jeremy Cross and Butch Hoover, of Hayesville, NC returned as champions of the Towns County Touchdown Club Bass Tourney on Lake Chatuge on Saturday. The duo combined for 26.28 pounds to claim top prize of \$500. They also claimed Big Fish with a largemouth catch of 7.70 pounds. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

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## Hobbs takes third in District in Patriots Pen



Sara Beth Hobbs, left, and her English Language Arts teacher Julie Thompson proudly display her high Patriots Pen honors.

By Charles Duncan  
 Towns County Herald  
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Sara Beth Hobbs' essay about her great-grandfather who served in World War II will now be judged at the state level of the Patriots Pen Essay Contest.

Hobbs, an eighth grad-

er at Towns County Middle School, placed third in the District Patriots Pen Essay Contest.

In December, Hobbs learned that she had placed second in the contest at her school. First and second place

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## Kendall declares Saturday Wildfire Preparedness Day



Commissioner Kendall signed the Wildfire Preparedness proclamation last week. RC&D Executive Director Frank Riley looks on as Kendall signs the proclamation. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Charles Duncan  
 Towns County Herald  
 cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Spring Wildfire Season is alive in the North Georgia Mountains.

And no one knows that more than Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall.

Kendall has signed a proclamation declaring Saturday, March 22 as Towns County Wildfire Preparedness Day.

As Spring lurks around the corner, all of the conditions are right to have an uncontrolled wildfire right here in the Towns County community.

Fuel has built up around homes with leaves left from the Fall season.

"The grass is dead and dry, the March winds can quickly fan a small fire into a

large inferno," said RC&D Executive Director and Firewise coordinator Frank Riley.

"And the humidity is usually low, and with this combination it only takes one careless match and a small fire can suddenly become a raging, out of control wildfire devouring anything in its path," Riley said. "To reduce your risk of wildfire join us to learn more about becoming Firewise around your home and neighborhood."

It's easy, fee, and it

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

## Derrick Whittle Memorial Golf Tournament on April 25

By Charles Duncan  
 Towns County Herald  
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Save the date, April 25.

That's when the First Derrick Whittle Memorial Golf Tournament takes place at Butternut Creek Golf Course in Blairsville.

Registration is at 7 a.m. and Shotgun Start begins at 8 a.m., the Whittle Family announced this week.

The golf tournament supports the Derrick Whittle Memorial Fund.

The entry fee is \$300 per team, or \$75 per person. You don't have to take part in the tournament to help.

Donations can be made by contacting Jim or Sharon Whittle at gemandsharon@yahoo.com, or call (706)



Derrick Whittle 781-7581.

Derrick Whittle was a 38-year-old Union County Sheriff's deputy who died in the line of duty in 2011.

The golf tournament is the family's way of keeping Derrick Whittle's memory alive through community

support.

"Because of Derrick's love of children and his community, the Memorial Fund was established in 2012 to support and encourage Union County High School seniors with scholarship money," Whittle's mother, Sharon Whittle said. "To date, six seniors have been awarded scholarships to assist with their college education."

Derrick Whittle sustained life-threatening injuries in a Sept. 15, 2011 on-duty crash.

Three days after the crash Deputy Whittle succumbed to his injuries. He died at Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Deputy Whittle was responding to a domestic dis-

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