

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Sunny	80 56
Fri: Rain	82 50
Sat: Sunny	83 60
Sun: Rain	83 61
Mon: Rain	83 62
Tue: Rain	81 57
Wed: Sunny	81 58



Upstream Elevation Predicted	
05/06/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,924.48
Lake Nottely	1,773.74
Blue Ridge	1,686.05

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SPORTS

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National

Day of Prayer Breakfast
May 7th • 7:00 AM

See Page 6



Towns Co Food Pantry
May 12th
2-5 PM

See Page 2



\$10,000 Rotary Reverse Raffle!

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BIG GREEN EGG FEST

May 16th

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Historical Society Meeting
May 11th

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Malone, Rich to seek Union EMC director seat

EMC Board appoints Danny Henson to fill Bob Ensley's vacated seat

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

There is a new director on the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors.

The EMC Board recently appointed Danny Henson to fill the vacancy of Director Bob Ensley, BRMEMC Director Steven Phillips said.

Ensley resigned from the board due to health reasons, Director Phillips said.

Ensley died early Monday, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Funeral arrangements for Ensley were not available at press time.

Also, Blairsville businessman Patrick Malone has announced he will petition to get his name on the BRMEMC



Patrick Malone

ballot for election as a director from Union County.

If successful, Malone would vie to replace Henson on the BRMEMC Board of Directors.

"I'm running because I believe the existing board failed in their fiduciary responsibilities to the members," Malone



Charles Rich

said. "That caused a lack of trust. I think that new blood on the board would reestablish that trust with the membership."

"I believe I'm qualified because I've got 40-plus years of business experience. I've served on a number of boards

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Manto receives national honors



The National Center for Women & Information Technology selected Towns County High School senior Mia Manto as a winner of the NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing in Georgia.

This award honors young women for their computing-related achievements and interests, leadership ability, and academic proficiency.

Kathy Pham, Google project manager, presented Manto with the award at a dinner and ceremony at Georgia Tech.

Ms. Pham, a health data and data warehousing expert, is currently "on loan" from Google to the White House to help with government health care program problems

Shortfall expected for Health Department

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Board of Health met Thursday, April 23, in the 911 Conference Room for its Annual Budget Meeting.

One of the more important topics discussed in the meeting was a potential budget shortfall of nearly \$50,000 to meet the minimum level of reserves for the Towns County Health Department's 2015-2016 fiscal year.

If all things remain the same at the health department, the board will potentially be facing a 1.3 month fund balance by the end of the next fiscal year, on June 30, 2016.

"Once you drop below about 1.5, you have cash flow problems, and you might not be able to, say, make payroll if



receipts haven't come in yet," said District 2 Public Health Director Dr. David Westfall.

"That's why having a little bit more fund balance gives you more latitude in being able to make your payments on time. But once you drop past a certain

point, and 1.5 is kind of that margin, then there's a potential for not being able to have the cash flow that you need."

Longtime nursing employee of the Towns County

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Rabies Clinic a success in 2015

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Saturday, May 2, multiple rabies clinics were held at the Old Young Harris Elementary School, Hiawassee Animal Hospital, Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital, and Towns County Comprehensive School.

The doctors were administering not only rabies vaccines but vaccines for distemper, which mostly affects felines, and parvo, which is for dogs.

Feline distemper, according to Dr. Kirk Vardeman, D.V.M. is "a respiratory virus that is contagious and causes a lot of runny nose, runny eyes, and sometime pneumonia in the chest." Parvo is equally unpleasant and causes ex-



sive vomit and voiding of the bowels.

The rabies clinic takes place every year in May, and Dr. Vardeman said that it's safest if pets are vaccinated once

a year.

"The dogs that have the best longevity of lifespan, not get sick a lot, and not have a lot

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Prom Night a special one for everyone

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Saturday, May 2, was prom night for the Towns County High School.

For the graduating seniors and juniors, it was a night to remember.

The theme this year was *The Great Gatsby*, a novel about the American Dream, a wealthy gentleman, and the extravagant parties he threw to woo the woman he loved.

Decorative 1920s style chandeliers hung from the ceiling over the heads of the dancers.

A mural depicting America in the "Roaring Twenties" blacked out the windows.

Throwing a gala like this takes a lot of work. The efforts of the prom committee and the junior and senior sponsors ensured that everything went according to plan.

"I enjoy working with the kids and the other sponsors," said Sarah Vardo, a junior sponsor. "It was fun."

Vardo has been a health science teacher in the high school for two years. Before that, she was working in her field at Murphy medical center. She switched careers because she wanted to be able to teach and share her experiences in the medical field.

"We do a lot of fundraising," she went on. "We have actually raised enough money that we have a company coming in called jB JAMS out of Gainesville. They are going to set up and take down everything."

Last year, the sponsors and the kids had to work to set



Towns County High School Prom King and Queen, Zach Sewell and Karlie Albach. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

up and decorate everything, which led to a frazzled and stressful prom night for some. "This year they don't have to do that, so they can sit back and relax," said Vardo.

The sponsors and the prom committee had to fundraise hard to afford the extravagance of prom. "We did candle sales, where they had this little sheet and they went around and they sold candles from Heritage Candles," said Vardo. "And then we had a company from Florida that came in, and we just sold boxes of fruit around Christmas time. So it was really nice. We raised probably about 2,000 dollars off of that."

The best sellers of fruit and candles got to be on the prom committee, and the prom committee chose the theme. "We gave them some themes, and they chose the theme that they liked the best. And they

liked the Great Gatsby," said Vardo.

The theme might have been based off of 1920's aesthetic, but the music and the dancing were very modern. From 7:30 onward the crowd on the dance floor grew from a few brave souls to nearly everyone who attended, couples and groups of friends alike.

Junior Savannah Dyer and her boyfriend, sophomore Adam Barrett, agreed that the best thing about prom was getting dressed up. "I like to get snazzed up," said Dyer. "It probably took me a few hours. It took me a good while to get ready for prom."

Not all couples were romantic. Boone Moss and Mia Manto, both seniors, have been best friends since pre-K. "People assume we date," said

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Waites sue Hiawassee, county, mayor and city manager

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The City of Hiawassee, Mayor Barbara Mathis, City Manager Rick Stancil, Hiawassee landowner Kenneth Stines and Towns County have been listed as defendants in a lawsuit filed by Jan and Noel Waite on April 10 at the Superior Court of Towns County.

The lawsuit contends that the City of Hiawassee failed to honor its intergovernmental agreement signed into law in November 2000, which granted the county "full authority ... to implement the Towns County Revised Subdivision Regulations" within Hiawassee City Limits.

According to the lawsuit, this became evident to the Waites when, in 2014, defendant Stines sought to build mobile home/RV pads on a .64-acre lot of land adjacent to the Waites' home that was under construction.

This, however, would have been in violation of the County Ordinances, which would require at least five acres for a mobile home/RV park, according to the lawsuit.

Stines approached Stancil, according to the lawsuit, and instead of honoring County Ordinances, the city granted water and sewer services for "four sites for trailer/recreational vehicles/manufactured/mobile units to be sited on the real property you recently purchased" in exchange for an exorbitant fee of \$12,500.

Furthermore, according to the suit, there was "no authority in any ordinance or

resolution or fee schedule for the imposition of such a fee as of Aug. 5, 2014."

And "on or about Nov. 17, 2014, Towns County issued a stop work order to Defendant Stines," an agreement neither party has honored, according to the suit.

The Waites have spoken previously to city council over their concerns in regular meetings, and Jan Waite was even escorted out of the Dec. 2, 2014, meeting by city police after a misunderstanding of council rules regarding presentations.

"The City of Hiawassee has taken the position in various statements to the public that the proper ordinance to be followed by persons seeking to develop land within the city limits of Hiawassee is a document entitled the Hiawassee 2010 Comprehensive Planning Ordinance," according to the suit.

But even then, the Waites contend that the city failed to follow the requirements for land use permits found in its own 2010 Comprehensive Planning Ordinance.

"The defendants' flagrant behavior has reduced the plaintiff's property value and, should Defendant Stines not be ordered to cease his development, will result in a loss of significant property value in the future," according to the lawsuit.

Towns County is listed as a defendant, but the suit specifically claims that the county is "guilty of no wrongdoing, its

See Law Suit, Page 12

Movers & Shakers honored



By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

District 50 State Sen. John Wilkinson presented the Mountain Movers and Shakers with a special Senate Resolution 142, proclaiming and commending the good deeds of the group, during the weekly meeting at Mary's Southern Grill on Friday, May 1.

The resolution was put forth by Georgia State Sens. Wilkinson, Steve Gooch, Butch Miller, Frank Ginn and Jeff Mullis, and was adopted in the Senate on Feb. 4.

"The Mountain Movers and Shakers, founded in 2011, is a conservative group of men and women who reach out to the needs of the Towns County community," according to the resolution. "They are advocates of voter awareness, and they also play a large part in educating the county politically."

The resolution also recognized the Movers and Shakers for their contributions to the children of Towns County School System.

"Specifically, the group leads the 'Student Public Speaking Development' seminars in Towns County, which help students learn how to begin their speeches, hold the attention of the audience, and ultimately deliver their messages effectively to their audience," according to the resolution.

This would not be the first time the Movers and Shakers have garnered acclaim for their endeavors, as in July of last year, Gov. Nathan Deal

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