

Towns County Herald

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 85 Number 32

Wednesday, June 11, 2014

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: T-Storms	75 60
Fri: T-Storms	82 61
Sat: T-Storms	83 62
Sun: T-Storms	81 62
Mon: Clouds	81 63
Tue: T-Storms	82 65
Wed: Sunny	88 65



Upstream Elevation Predicted 06/11/14	
Lake Chatuge	1,925.75
Lake Nottely	1,776.64
Blue Ridge	1,687.06

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2 sections, 16 Pages

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SPORTS

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The Towns County Board of Education Regular Board Meetings scheduled for Monday, July 14, Will be Relocated to the Towns County Board of Education Central Office.

For questions or directions, please call 706-896-2279

Vietnam Veterans



meeting June 23rd Cadence Bank

See page 5A



Boater Education becomes mandatory for some vessel operators

see page 11A

NOTICE

MAPLE STREET will be CLOSED from June 16th - July 21st AND DUCKWORTH STREET will be CLOSED from July 21st - July 28th

See page 5A

Wine and Jazz Fest debuts Friday

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Agritourism will be in the spotlight in Hiwassee on Friday and Saturday when the Appalachian Wine, Jazz and Art Festival debuts at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, General Manager Hilda Thomason said.

Approximately 15 wineries – including most of the mountain wineries – have signed up to be a part of the festival, Thomason said.

Those wineries include Crane Creek Vineyards, of Young Harris, Hightower Creek Vineyards, of Hiwassee, Odom Springs Vineyard, of Blairsville, Sharp Mountain Vineyards, of Jasper, Cartecay Vineyards, of Ellijay, and Currahee Vineyard of Toccoa.

Musical talents include Hotlanta Dixieland Jazz, of Stone Mountain, Atlanta's Kenyon Carter, North Carolina's Sarah Tucker and North Georgia's own Monica Spears, Thomason said.

The Copper Door, of Hayesville, NC, The Ridgees Resort, of Young Harris,



Hilda Thomason

The Chophouse of Hiwassee, Brother's Restaurant at Willow Ranch, of Young Harris, and Bowl of Asia have committed to the event as well, Thomason said.

"We've got plenty of good food and these restaurants will be doing special things," she said.

The event also will feature approximately 15 regional artisan booths, Thomason said.

Tickets to the event are \$30 and include a wine glass for tasting, Thomason said.

"That glass includes four tastings from each vendor," she said.

The event is the brain-storm of Thomason.

"I called Eric Seifarth at Crane Creek Vineyards and asked him if he would like to be on a committee and help me organize the festival," Thomason said. "I just thought we needed to have a Wine and Jazz Festival at the Fairgrounds because there are so many wineries in North Georgia.

"Wineries are such a big tourist attraction," she said. "I've been going to a lot of the wineries to get ideas. It just like a perfect fit for the Fairgrounds. Eric loved the idea."

Hightower Creek Vineyards, Jane Holland, Jane Graves, Faron King, Sonja McClain, Julie Payne, Daniel Nichols and Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall also are on the Wine and Jazz Festival committee, Thomason said.

"We've got the great venue of course, plenty of booths," she said. "We'll use the Anderson-Paris outdoor stage for the Jazz bands, and we'll have piped in music throughout the Fairgrounds.

"We're all just so excited about this event," Thomason said.

Trap Shoot raises more than \$5,000

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Gunfire echoed throughout the hills of Owl Creek in rural Towns County on Friday as the Sixth Annual Georgia Sheriff's Association Youth Homes' Trap Shoot at Chatuge Gun Club Shooting Range was back again in 2014.

The event, sponsored by the Towns County Sheriff's Office and Chatuge Gun Club, is the major fundraiser for the Georgia Sheriff's Association Youth Homes by the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

The range on Owl Creek was hopping and the brightly colored clay birds were flying as the event raised more than \$5,000 for the Georgia Sheriff's Association Youth Homes. Participants should pat themselves on the back for a job well done in 2014.

Chatuge Gun Club and its volunteer members were a big part of the event as they



Youthful shooters put on a show at the Sixth Annual Trap Shoot to raise money for the Georgia Sheriff's Association Youth Homes. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

donated the Clay Pigeons for targets, the launching equipment to throw the birds and the facilities and manpower to make it all happen.

The weather couldn't have been better as the shooters were treated with near perfect conditions for the shoot.

Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton met with sportsmen and outdoorsmen as well as local 4-H shooters, competing against one another in a fun and educationally spirited day.

"Typical trap match is

Locals enjoy a treat at Taste

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

It was a delicious dabbling of drinks, dressings and distinct discoveries at the Taste of the Southern Highlands as family, friends, and public officials gathered at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in Hiwassee on June 2, Tuesday evening.

Serving up baby back ribs and smoked turkey, Jim's Smokin' Que, recently voted No. 6 in the country by TripAdvisor and No. 2 in Georgia for the best barbecue. Jim's also won Best Southern Entrée that evening.

"We've been very blessed," said Jim Guess, who, with the aid of his wife and co-owner Donna, were throwing many a folk a mouthwatering bone covered in their signature sauces.

"The ribs are smoked for about 4 and a half, to 5 hours," he said. "We make our own sauce, going through about 50 gallons a week."



Crane Creek Vineyards of Young Harris and Bacchus Wine Shoppe, of Hiwassee, tied for The Best Sip. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa in Young Harris kept things light and airy with their in-house restaurant – The Dining Room's sample containers

of custard and various berries. Winning three awards that evening, including Best Gourmet

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Scottish Festival returns to Blairsville

By Todd Forrest
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Blairsville - This weekend the Clans return to Union County for the 11th Annual Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games.

With Scottish blood running deep in the mountains of Appalachia, the Blairsville festival continues to fill Meeks Park every June, and it shows no signs of slowing down.

Not only has it become one of the county's hottest attractions, it has proven itself as one of the premier events in the Southeast according to the Southeastern Tourism Society, who represents tourism interests in 12 Southeastern states.

The Southeastern Tourism Society recently designated the Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games as a Top 20 Event for the sixth consec-



utive year.

The 2014 Festival will feature more than 30 clans with Scott holding the title of the 2014 Honored Clan.

"This event has become well known and loved by both residents and visitors alike," Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce's Tour-

ism Director Tobie Chandler said. "Hotel rooms are packed, restaurants are filled and the stores are bustling.

"When you're drawing a crowd of more than 9,000 people, that proves that this is becoming the biggest event

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State Election Board to hear Towns case

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The State Election Board was scheduled to hear allegations of polling irregularities Tuesday regarding Towns County's 2012 General Election, Chief Investigator Chris Harvey told the *Towns County Herald* on Friday.

The morning meeting was scheduled at the State Capitol Building in Atlanta, Harvey said.

The alleged irregularities are in reference to the 2012 General Election, Harvey said.

"There is a State Election Board case being presented regarding complaints we've had," Harvey said. "I can't really go into specifics until after the hearing. It's still an open investigation. The board will make a decision about what to do. Depending on what the board decides to do with this case, I may or may not be able to talk with you on Wednesday about this case."



"I'll be able to talk about what the allegations are, I may not be able to talk specifics if it's bound over to the Attorney General's Office," Harvey said. "If it's closed, then I'll be able to talk with you about it."

At least one person from Towns County who will be at the hearing will be Bill Kuykendall, who lost the race for Tax Commissioner by 50 votes to Incumbent Bruce Rogers in 2012.

No further details were available at press time.

County swears in five new trained firefighters

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Five new firefighters were inducted Friday evening at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center.

As Towns County Fire Chief Mitch Floyd introduced the group, he thanked the families in attendance as they held a warm reception for their brave new inductees.

"I appreciate everyone coming out tonight for this important ceremony for these young men," said Chief Floyd. "These young men have spent six months of rigorous training and it's just the beginning for them."

"We are a little bit different than some of our neighboring departments. In the state of Georgia you can do about 30 hours to become a registered volunteer firefighter," continued Chief Floyd. "These folks have gone through about 240 hours of training to be nationally and professionally certified as firefighters. That's what we require in our department."

As the new firefighters-to-be sat waiting to be sworn



Chief Mitch Floyd

in, Chief Floyd reminded the room that the education never stops.

"We want our folks to be safe, have the best training and be able to provide the best length of service for our community," he said. "They're going to continuously train as long as they're in our department. We've got a number of people who are responsible for this."

Chief Training Officer Doug Mills is just one of the many certified training of-

See Recruits, Page 10A

Public speaking class begins in Towns County

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Mountain Movers & Shakers oversaw 11 youth who stood front and center at the Mountain Community Senior Citizen Center this past Monday evening as their first Student Public Speaking Development class meeting took place.

Each teen listened attentively to Ash Todd's strident liveliness when he and Dr. Aubry Sanford, also part of the Movers and Shakers Development Team, as each described the natural ebb and flow of speaking in front of a crowd, rooting oneself firmly with confidence to flood out fear.

"For most folks, it takes courage," Sanford said. "You don't learn to speak by having someone talk to you. There's an old saying that many of us know about that says, 'Practice makes perfect.' That's not true. Good practice makes better. And that's what we're here about."

The program adheres to a schedule every Monday evening from June 2 - July 7, participants are cultured in the fundamentals of civic representation by means of mentored dictation and professionalism.

"Each Monday night we'll let the kids talk. Then, as the weeks go along, they'll graduate from a one minute to a five and six minute talk," explained team member Sam Fullerton. "We have twenty students signed up, with about four or five on vacation, so there should be even more. Here's the deal--we're going to pay \$400, \$300, \$200, \$100 and then \$250 for the most improved student."



Adam Penland demonstrates his speaking style at the Public Speaking Development class. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

It was apparent that this group of young men were ready to share their experiences, some first-timers at hitting a hole in one, catching the biggest fish, or being musically rewarded.

"I've been dreaming about the opportunity to play guitar," said C.J. Owens when speaking about a youth conference at church. "We're about two weeks out from going Missouri. I can't stop thinking about it and I look forward to this opportunity."

Some spoke of challenges apart from sports and hobbies.

"I wanted to talk to you about a learning disorder called Dyslexia, began Colin Lynn, a bright young speaker standing confidently in front of his peers

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