

Housing...continued from page 1A

The local economy will benefit in the short-term via revenue increase to local suppliers, restaurants, hotels, gas stations, as well as rental equipment.

The city will benefit in the long-term with a new investment of \$4 million dollars added to the tax base with the addition of 52 new households using water and sewer services," said Stancil.

JT Development, Inc. is the developer of Mountain View Apartments and is owned by Mary T. Johnson and James L. Dewar, Jr., who have been in the housing industry for a combined 65 years and have jointly developed more than 70 housing properties.

JT Builders, Inc. is the contractor of Mountain View Apartments. They also are

owned by Mary T. Johnson and James L. Dewar, Jr.

JT Builders has built or completely renovated approximately 70 housing properties since its inception.

Dewar Properties, Inc., owned by the same principles as the builder and developer, is the management company for Mountain View Apartments.

They currently manage 3,522 multifamily units.

The principals still own 95 percent of all the affiliate company has developed, built or renovated over the last 40 years.

"For further details please contact me at the Hiwassee City Hall or telephone (706) 896-2202. I'll be glad to talk with any interested parties," said Stancil.

EMS...continued from page 1A

to the needed level," Edwards explained.

Towns County EMS and NGMC are also partners in the Northeast Georgia Regional STEMI Program.

This is a collaborative effort between NGMC and EMS in fifteen counties across the region to provide fast and efficient treatment to patients suffering severe heart attacks known as STEMI

(Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction).

"The reality is, these donations and collaborations are making a tremendous difference in the level of care we provide in Towns County. If you have a heart attack, the induced hypothermia protocol performed by our paramedics or transmission of EKGs from the field may very well save your life," said Mathis.

Ordinances...continued from page 1A

Authorizing the Imposition of Curfews During Times of Emergency or Disaster: This ordinance allows the Commissioner's Office to set a curfew following a declaration of a state of emergency by the governor or following the existence of an emergency/disaster as determined by the Commissioner's Office.

The curfew does not apply to individuals rendering emergency services and may also exempt other individuals including regular employees of local industry, news media, and building and repair contractors.

Ordinance Authorizing the Disposition of the Code of

Ordinance and other Formalities During a State of Emergency: This ordinance allows the Commissioner's Office to waive certain formalities during a state of emergency. Commission meetings may be held at places other than the regular meeting place, even outside of the county.

Regular purchasing procedures, such as placing a notice or bidding a project in the legal organ and at the courthouse for four weeks prior to the acceptance of a contract or letting out contracts only to the lowest bidder may be suspended.

Enforcement of certain portions of the Code of

Ordinances may be suspended when normal application of the code would be inconsistent with public health, safety, and welfare.

The Commissioner's Office may suspend or reduce permit fees and application fees to encourage the rebuilding of the area impacted by the disaster.

Ordinance to Prohibit Overcharging of Goods, Materials, Services, and Housing During a State of Emergency: This ordinance prohibits price gouging during a state of emergency and up to 6 months following the emergency declaration. Ordinance to Require

Registration of Building and Repair Contractors During a State of Emergency: This ordinance requires individuals and businesses providing construction, repair, and renovation to register and receive certification from the county during a state of emergency.

"Everything contained in these ordinances is for the continuation of local government services and the protection of our citizens," said Kendall. "Without these ordinances in place, we would not be authorized to act in the event of an actual state of emergency," said Kendall.

Robbery... continued from page 1

Authorities believe the man weighs between 165 to 175 pounds.

Citizens South has a sign in its foyer asking customers to please remove all hats and sunglasses before entering the bank.

The suspect did not comply, and according to video surveillance photos, entered the bank looking at a

newspaper, apparently trying to walk in under the guise of a captivated customer.

The bank was swarming with law enforcement presence immediately after the robbery. K-9s were brought in to track the grounds outside the bank.

Authorities declined to release if the man is believed to have left on foot or was seen leaving the scene in a vehicle.

Chief Deputy Edge said that details will be released as they become available.

No additional details were available at press time regarding the robbery.

The case is currently under investigation by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Towns County Sheriff's Office and the Hiwassee Police Department. Should anyone have any

information regarding the robbery, they are encouraged to call (800) GBI-TIPS, or (706) 348-4866.

Herald Staff Writer Libby Shook contributed to this breaking news report. Read the Towns County Herald online for updates. Also, see next week's edition for more information about the robbery and whether the suspect is in custody.

Bark...continued from page 1A

legged family members.

There was a great deal of excitement and anticipation in the air as people strutted their dogs before the judges hoping to walk away with a blue ribbon.

The kids seemed to enjoy the face painting and petting the adoptable pets. Those that left home without eating breakfast had no worries as sandwiches, snack items, and drinks were available for purchase. Raffle tickets were available if you were feeling lucky, but considering that the money was going to help support the animals, it was a win-win situation for everybody.

Castaway Critters' mission is to save the lives of and provide new beginnings for lost, sick, and abandoned animals through rescue, rehabilitation, adoptions, and spay/neuter programs. They are the hope these animals would not otherwise have.

They have a very unique philosophy regarding the animals they take in. "This organization has a no-kill policy. They take in animals and provide them with the care they need. All their animals are fully vetted. This is all done with volunteers. They receive no funding from any governmental agency. They ship animals to various places that have shortages of adoptable animals and make sure they go to a good home," said Volunteer Mark Ratchford.

"All these animals are looking for a forever home."

Castaway Critters believes that every animal is worth saving.

They provide professional veterinary care, emergency care and spay and neuter their animals prior to adoption. The cost of this high quality care if often overwhelming and excessive.

They depend on the fundraisers and the generosity of folks who also care about animals and want to see them taken care of.

There were 10 Blue Ribbons awarded for various categories and each category had a second and third place winner as well. The judges certainly had their work cut out for them as there were many beautiful and well trained animals in the running.

Best of Show went to Noko, a beautiful Siberian Husky.

Ann Bitting, Organizer/Fundraiser for this event, said, "I'd like to thank everyone for attending. We had a great turnout. Remember to spay and neuter your pets." "If you are interested in adopting a pet, you can view them online at castaway-critters.org. If you are interested in volunteering, fostering, or making a donation, you can call me at (706) 986-0604," said Bitting.

BOE...continued from page 1A

created by retiring teachers. "We have also reduced some system paid employee benefits, and have set a maximum class size increase up to an additional five students at all grade levels and in every funded program," said Williams.

"When your tax digest decreases, 1 mill doesn't bring in what it used to. Five mills is bringing in only about 4 mills due to property value reduction statewide. When property value decreases, the value of a mill decreases," explained Finance Director Myra Underwood.

Williams said it's her job, with the help of Myra Underwood, to give the board every piece of information available to her.

"They make the best possible decisions based on that information," said Williams.

Towns County Schools have taken quite a hit due to Austerity Reduction Cuts which has cost Towns County more than \$400,000 annually over the past three years.

That, combined with a decreased tax digest, decreased state funding due to reduction in student enrollment, and increased cost of health insurance and retirement, has left the school board struggling

to reduce expenditures while maintaining the instructional integrity and legacy citizens have come to expect from the schools of Towns County, Williams said.

In the previous two years, Towns County School employees have had eight calendar reduction days.

"The school board has graciously allowed us to give back two days to all school employees giving them only a six-day calendar reduction for next year," said Williams.

Towns County Schools will continue to operate on a reduced calendar for the 2012-2013 school year. Students will attend school 178 days and teachers will work 184 days.

"It is a challenge to explore every avenue possible to maximize our revenue and cut our expenses without jeopardizing the instructional opportunities we make available to our students," said Williams.

At a time when the country's economy is in a downward spiral, Towns County Schools, despite a tremendous budget deficit continue to operate at an exceptional level as evidenced by this year's high-ranking CRCT scores.

the Vet", radio show Dr. Hilty Burr of Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital & Officer Paul Petty of Union County Animal Control.

Festivities will be from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. There will be balloons, candy, prizes, games, and refreshments. All of our large pets are half off! There will also be discount spay/neuter coupons available from Linda with the North Georgia SPCA. Mark your calendars, lots of fun for kids and parents; you don't want to miss this!

Vince Gill electrifies Anderson Music Hall

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
libby.tcheard@windstream.net

Country music legend Vince Gill performed before a near packed out house at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' Anderson Music Hall in Hiwassee Saturday night.

After nearly 20 albums, 29 Grammys, and a pick-up load of Country Music Association Awards, he's back playing Bluegrass music again.

Gill, whose Bluegrass roots run as deep as his country ones, is a master at establishing a quick connection with his fans with his quick wit and a masterful technique that his hero, Earl Scruggs, brought to the stage.

Gill has the ability to draw in a crowd regardless of where he is performing.

The real excitement began when Gill took center stage and wowed the almost twenty-five hundred fans that came out to hear this country music icon that has won the heart of millions with his Bluegrass/country/contemporary rock style of music.



Vince Gill performed Saturday at Anderson Music Hall. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Gill was accompanied by a band made up of some of the most acclaimed pickers in contemporary music, fiddler Aubrie Haynie, guitarist Jeff White, bassist Dennis Crouch, and banjoist Jimmy Mills.

"We thought it would be fun to just spend a couple of weeks out on the road playing some blue grass music.

I got my start in Bluegrass back when I was just a teen-ager, back before I got started in country music and contemporary rock," said Gill.

"One of the best things about Bluegrass music is the

instrumentals. We lost a legend when we lost Earl Scruggs. We're going to do one for Earl. It's called Earl's Breakdown," Gill said.

When the picking began, the audience went wild and they showed their enthusiasm and love for Gill and his Bluegrass style with hand clapping, foot tapping, and a continual round of applause, whistling, and shouting. Opening for Gill was acoustic musician Sarah Jarosz.

Jarosz plays not just one instrument, but enough of them to be a one-woman

band as she performed on a mandolin, banjo, and guitar.

She sings in rich tones that transcend the boundaries between folk and pop music.

She opened with Run Away from her latest album, Follow Me Down, released May 2011. Jarosz admirably demonstrated the ability to enthrall an audience all by herself.

"Vince has been one of my heroes for as long as I can remember, and it's a great honor for me to be able to open for him," said Jarosz.

Library budget could cause service woes

By Janice Boling
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer



Donna Howell

years. These staff members have not had raises in those years and have had to absorb these costs.

The lowest paid staff members makes \$7.25 per hour, and the highest paid (with 22 years of experience) makes \$15.30 per hour.

If the library system is forced to cut the number of hours they work per week, it will be a double hit.

This comes at a terrible time for libraries. Local funding agencies (counties and cities) have already set their calendar year budgets for 2012 and probably will not be able to provide additional funding until January 2013, if at all.

If local funding agencies are not able to fund these increases, libraries will literally have no choice except to cut hours for those currently working.

If that happens, the local libraries will have to cut the number of hours that they are open to the public.

In the past several years of budget shortfalls, libraries have cut many services and the library staff that provided them.

Services eliminated include the bookmobile, cuts in regional staff providing children's services, technology services, regional reference, and materials processing.

The system has cut every area of the budget—the regional budget other than personnel

is less than 60 percent of the amount it was just five years ago.

All four of the state-paid librarians have taken pay cuts in the form of at least 12 furlough days each per year for the last three years, and will do so again in FY2013.

The library has made every effort to keep the cuts from impacting library users—many of whom are also suffering financial reverses in their own lives.

Library services are critical at this time for job searching, using internet services, checking out books and DVDs, and taking classes to become qualified for employment.

The library system is beyond the point where it can make additional cuts without significantly impacting users.

Union County Public Library is by far the busiest library in the Mountain

Regional Library System and this summer, since moving back into the expanded building, usage has increased dramatically.

The number of people using the library has increased almost 50 percent since last year. During the month of May 2012, library staff served 12,367 library users. That is almost as many as the system served during the entire April—June quarter in 2011.

Cuts to library hours will have a significant impact in terms of the number of people who are using the library at these levels, but there may be no other way to cut expenses.

Mountain Regional Library System staff members have already contacted state elected representatives and senators to ask for their help. They will not know the exact impact of changes until the regional budget meeting on Wednesday.



Pet-A-Pet Day

Our pets here at the Mountain Shelter keep asking us to have a party! Saturday June 30, we are having a Pet-A-Pet day! Come on down and meet all of our awesome dogs and cats. We also have some very special guests, from "Ask