

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Rain	76 64
Fri: Rain	80 64
Sat: Rain	82 63
Sun: Rain	86 64
Mon: Clouds	86 65
Tue: Clouds	87 67
Wed: Clouds	86 66



Upstream Elevation Predicted 07/01/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,924.79
Lake Nottely	1,775.52
Blue Ridge	1,685.88

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Celebrate a SAFE & HAPPY JULY 4TH!

Fireworks display at the Fairgrounds

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

For millions of Americans, the time has come again to mix red, white and blue with high-flying, kaleidoscopic eruptions in the sky in grand gestures of Independence that will sweep the country after dark this Saturday, July 4.

Residents of Towns County and abroad will celebrate Independence Day in style with a family fun affair at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

The annual Fireworks at the Fairgrounds will cap an evening of music and entertainment, as the fairgrounds plays host to the 239th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Festivities begin at 6 p.m., when Raven and Red



will offer live music alongside a mini carnival brought to the fairgrounds by North Mt. Zion Church of God.

The carnival will run until 9 p.m. near the fairgrounds office area, and will feature a bounce house, tons of cotton

candy, an inflatable obstacle course, snow cones, a free TV giveaway, face painting and games.

Atlanta Pyrotechnics out of Marietta will be responsible

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Harrah's hosts Valley River job fair

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Hayesville, NC – Hundreds of area job hunters lined up for a job fair at the Clay County Government Building on Tuesday, June 23, hoping to double down for a chance to fill a position at Harrah's Cherokee Valley River Casino & Hotel.

Valley River is expected to open its doors in Murphy, NC, in late summer, early fall of this year, and 280 of the 495 attendees who applied that Tuesday were identified for positions, with still more applications under review.

"We're looking for the best folks that we can find to deliver the best service to our guests," said Valley River Human Resources Manager Nancy Rosenbury to those gathered



People from all over Northeast Georgia and Western Carolina are hopeful of gaining employment with the new casino being built in Murphy, NC. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

just before the start of the fair. "So, that's what we hope we have in all of you."

Available positions varied widely, from surveillance to

food and beverage, from table games and slots to marketing. Hourly wages ran between \$5.25 for tipped positions up

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Relay For Life goal closing in on \$30,000

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Saturday, June 27, the Hiwassee Downtown Square was home to the annual Relay For Life. Despite the stormy skies, an excess of 30 people showed up for the Survivor's Brunch and Survivor's Lap.

It was one of more than 5,200 community Relay For Life events that the American Cancer Society hosts annually across the country. The Relay For Life movement is the world's largest support group for survivors and caregivers, and the event itself is a chance for survivors to meet other survivors and to thank their caregivers.

However, storm clouds threatened.

"We're very thankful it hasn't rained yet," said Martha Cunningham, looking up at the sky. "We're still having people show up so I hope in a few hours we're going to have a larger crowd here. I think probably the threat of rain has made people not show up yet. But we do have survivors here,



and that's what it's all about, is the survivors."

The Relay event took place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. around the square. First the survivors took a lap around the square to celebrate their victory over cancer. Following that, the caregivers took a lap. Anyone who wanted to walk in memory or honor of somebody was welcome.

"We'll have the Survi-

vors Lap to kick it off, and then we ask the caregivers to join in with the survivors on that second lap," said Cameron Lopez, Relay organizer. "And then after that, anybody can be on the lap after that. It's not restricted to survivors or a certain group of people. And we like to keep somebody on the track at all times."

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Leadership focus of stakeholders

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Chamber of Commerce has been working closely with the University of Georgia's J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, and the union brought forth the first fruits of its labor on Monday, June 22.

Chamber directors invited various community stakeholders – members of the Towns County Lions Club, civic leaders, business owners, school representatives, BRMEMC leadership, concerned citizens in the Mountain Movers and Shakers group and others – to take part in the Community Input Session.

Participation was geared toward the enhancement of economic vitality of the county with an emphasis on attracting and expanding leadership roles within the communities of Towns County, especially among youth.

Towns is part of a 10 community, two region pilot program called Georgia-LEADS, which is being developed through a partnership between the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the J.W. Fanning Institute.

"The program will ulti-



mately ensure a continuum of leadership development opportunities at the youth, adult and regional levels of our state," according to the institute's website.

This input session took place at The Ridges, and featured tables set up with paper for written responses, as well as shared computers to allow for the sharing of input.

Participants sat in groups at the different tables to answer a series of questions about leadership, for example: "What leadership skills are needed to address the trends, forces and factors facing Towns County?"

Answers were first written by individuals, then entered into computers at the tables after group consensus and conversation to allow for a live streaming of ideas that all tables could view in progress.

Rather than holding open conversation around the room, the idea was to get as much feedback as possible from the community stakeholders around each table, to then be collated and presented back to participants in a more final form at a later date.

"About right at the turn of the year, we were ap-

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EMC Board disqualifies Henson from Board of Directors

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors has disqualified board member Danny Henson because of a business partnership with fellow board member Greg Owenby.

Henson, who was recently appointed to replace Union County board member Bob Ensley, because of Ensley's failing health, said he made the board aware of his business relationship with Owenby before he was appointed.

"I didn't try to hide anything," Henson said. "I guess the board members thought that everyone had done their due diligence. The ball was dropped somewhere however."

Board members Chris Logan and Steven Phillips brought it to the attention of the board of directors last week that Henson and Owenby were



Danny Henson

partners in the Union Station strip mall on the Jack C. Lance Memorial Highway.

The EMC by-laws prohibit incorporated partnerships among board members, Phillips said.

"When Danny was being appointed to the board of directors we thought all the 'i's' had been dotted, and the 't's' crossed," Phillips said. "We thought the entire appointment process had been vetted. Myself, I voted for Danny Henson"

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Volunteers needed for GMF

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

With the 65th Annual Georgia Mountain Fair just around the corner, Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason and the Towns County Lions Club are asking for community volunteers.

The Fair starts on Friday, July 17, and runs through Saturday, July 25, and is geared toward providing safe, wholesome fun for the entire family.

"We need volunteers to help during the Georgia Mountain Fair working in several of the food booths on the grounds as well as in Anderson Music Hall," said Thomason. "We also could use some volunteers to help with the gates."

Each year, thousands of tourists flock to the fairgrounds to take part in the festivities made available by the Fair. From music to rides, arts and crafts to Southern cultural tradition come alive, the Fair is a unique offering of Towns County to its residents, as well as the surrounding areas.



Hilda Thomason

"We appreciate all the support and all the volunteers that have helped in the past," said Thomason. "Without them, we wouldn't be successful at the Georgia Mountain Fair, and it's just a great way for them to meet people in the community and get involved in the community. So, if they'd like to help, we'd love to have them."

Smokey Mountain Amusements Midway will feature carnival rides starting

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Mountain Fling succeeds again

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

This weekend offered a chance for artists and crafters to show off their work. On Saturday and Sunday, June 27-28, North Georgia Technical College's Blairsville campus hosted the Mountain Fling Arts and Crafts Fair.

"Our mission is to promote the arts and keep them alive, and our show's mostly made up of local artisans throughout North Georgia and North Carolina," said Wendy Holden, who helped organize the event.

The artists are mostly from the area, but sometimes come from as far away as Cleveland and Gainesville. No matter where they come from, however, they must exhibit a certain degree of professionalism.

"We have a jurying process that we go through," said Holden. "The jury process is they have to send us pictures of their work, before during and after. We have specific guidelines that they need to follow. If it's quilting, you want nice



points and edges. If it's wood-working, you want it finished nicely. Artwork needs to be framed and presentable."

Holden comes from the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild.

"We have a store over in Hiwassee called Artworks where members can sell their items. It's self-supporting, so the income we get from the store goes right back out in rent."

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Penland returns from D.C.

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Adam Penland came to speak at the weekly Mountain Movers and Shakers meeting on Friday, June 26.

The topic was his recent trip to Washington D.C.

In previous years, Penland placed first in the Movers and Shakers speaking contest. "I actually did not want to get into public speaking whenever I first started in it," he said. "I was helping one of my friends. He had to memorize the Future Farmers of America Creed. So we practiced for two weeks I knew more of the speech than my friend did."

Penland is President of the Future Farmers of America organization in Towns County. He credits the Movers and



Adam Penland

Shakers with encouraging his many leadership roles and his affinity for public speaking.

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