

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Clouds	89	66
Fri: Rain	85	65
Sat: Rain	86	63
Sun: Sunny	87	62
Mon: Clouds	87	64
Tue: Rain	86	64
Wed: Rain	84	63



Upstream Elevation Predicted 07/25/12	
Lake Chatuge	1923.54
Lake Nottely	1772.56
Blue Ridge	1673.48

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Sports

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Cruise-In

The Third Annual Mountain Moonshine Cruise-In Classic Car Show is just around the corner. The event that attracts thousands to Towns County is scheduled for Aug. 9-11 at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. The annual kickoff event is scheduled once again at the Ridges Resort on Aug. 9 in the afternoon. Call Towns County Tourism Executive Director Jane Holland for more details. The number to call is (706) 896-4966.

Head Start

Towns County Pre-K Program will begin classes on Monday, Aug. 13th. Pre-K Parent Orientation will be Thursday, Aug. 9th in the Towns County Elementary School Cafeteria at 4 p.m.

Training

There will be a lot of action on Lake Chatuge at the end of the month. The action includes water and land traffic as emergency vessels and vehicles, both rescue and law enforcement, from Georgia and North Carolina operate on and around the western area of the lake in late afternoon on Tuesday, July 31. The emergency workers and law enforcement officers will be performing a training exercise. This will be a test of local Emergency Response plans and procedures as well as their equipment and responder training dealing with water rescue and recovery operations on Chatuge. It will occur from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on and near the Chatuge Woods Public Boat Ramp. Members of the Towns County Fire and Rescue's Water Rescue and Recovery Team have spent the last hours in training over the many months. They have attended classes and exercises covering such things as Underwater Crime Scene Investigation, surface and underwater body recoveries, and advanced SCUBA. Towns County Sheriff's Office and Towns Fire and Rescue will now put their training to the test. The exercise is a joint venture with Clay County, NC emergency personnel.

Georgia Mountain Fair honors Towns veterans

By Libby Shook
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Saturday marked a new era in county history as residents celebrated the very first World War II Veterans' Day in Towns County. Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall signed a Proclamation on July 16th in recognition of these war heroes' courage, dedication, and valor as they fought so bravely, "to preserve, our freedom, liberty, and way of life." "On Dec. 7, 1941, the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by the Japanese which plunged our great country into WWII, and the young men of fighting age gallantly came to the defense of our nation in this great time of peril serving the United States Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard, and these young men that came to the defense of their country 71 years ago are now reaching the age of 90, and with their ranks rapidly declining,

Towns County and the Georgia Mountain Fair officials wish to recognize, honor, and express admiration and gratitude of the people of this county to WWII veterans," reads a portion of the Proclamation that changed Towns County's history forever. "Thank you for answering that call," Kendall said. "I am honored today to be a part of honoring ya'll. I'm just proud to be a part of recognizing you for all you've done." Towns County's WWII Vets were honored with a breakfast Saturday morning at the Senior Center before lining up to serve as Grand Marshals for the Georgia Mountain Fair Parade. Kendall, Bud Johnson, and Walter Scott, Marine Corps League, have been coordinating this event for weeks. WWII Veterans walked into a room with a banner provided by Morris Phillips which read, "Towns County Salutes our Grand Marshal WWII Veterans." "We thank you for your service to this great nation of



These 26 Towns County veterans were named Grand Marshals of the 62nd Annual Georgia Mountain Fair Parade. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

ours. We are still the greatest nation in the world. Freedom isn't free; it comes with a price," said WWII Iwo Jima Vet Bud Johnson who served 36 years in the U.S. Navy. Johnson recognized the following and thanked them for their support: Com-

missioner Kendall, Hiawassee Mayor Barbara Mathis, Hiawassee Chief of Police Jimmy Wright, and Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton. "Hilda Thomason and the Georgia Mountain Fair have been instrumental in coordinating this event. Bud Johnson

has also spent many hours coordinating this event. I want to thank them for all they have done to put everything in place to make sure it went smoothly," Kendall said. Johnson then addressed Kendall. "I want to

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WWII Vets honored in Fair parade

By Joe Collins
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The 62nd Georgia Mountain Fair had its parade on Saturday with the special addition of a certain group of honored men serving as the Grand Marshals. This group consisted of several of the World War II veterans of Towns County. Parade coordinators should get a big pat on the back for having the foresight to honor these men and their service to our country in this very special way. Everyone in Towns County was affected by what they did in the early 1940s when their nation called and they answered. Leaving behind family, these brave men and women were willing to risk it all to preserve our freedom with some making the ultimate sacrifice and never returning to the beautiful mountains of their beloved home. Others suffered physical and emotional damage that has haunted them since their return to civilian life. This parade, and the honor they deserve, was a way for Towns County to say "thank you." Leading the parade was Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton. A very nice original 1942 Willis Jeep, on loan for the parade by Tim Shook, was next, and of course WWII veterans were at the wheel. Who better to drive a work-



Towns County honored their WWII vets by naming them Grand Marshals for Saturday's annual Georgia Mountain Fair Parade in Downtown Hiawassee. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

horse straight from the actual conflict? Several veterans had the jeep's "back" and were traveling in golf carts from Brassstown Valley Resort and The Ridges Resort. Next were the big Army trucks, that carried troops and supplies into combat, and the veterans would like to thank Gary Caines for his loan of these vehicles. The rest of the veterans rode in wagons supplied by Frank Riley. Morris Phillips honored these great men with banners that recognized them as the heroes they are. The veterans say thank you to all who made their participation possible. Parades just don't seem complete without fire trucks, floats, antique cars and of course horses. This parade was no exception as it had all the bases covered. An original Towns County fire truck was near the lead, complete with its original wooden ladders. Candy was being tossed from the floats as they went by and the kids just went crazy gathering up the tasty sweets. The atmosphere was kind as the children in the front of the crowd shared candy with the kids in the back who were unable to get to the treats before they were snatched up. Seeing these generous actions would have made the veterans realize that their service was not in vein. Towns County should be proud.

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BOE races, T-SPLOST top local ballot for voters

By Charles Duncan
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Towns County voters have some decisions to make. The must choose between Incumbent Board of Education member Donna Hedden and Penny Ledford for the Post 5 BOE seat. They also must choose whether to return Bob Gibby to the BOE or whether political newcomer Rodney Thomas is the man for the job in Post 4. It's expected that locals will reject approval of a 1-cent sales tax for regional transportation projects. And, they must decide who will represent the Republican Party in the 9th District Congressional race against Gainesville Democrat Jody Cooley. Early voting has been brisk, with 780 locals already casting ballots since the process began July 9th. More than 600 cast ballots in the first two weeks of early voting, said Jonni Marie Shook of Towns County Board of Elections. The Board of Education races are non-partisan and are on all ballots. Gibby did not seek re-



Commissioner Bill Kendall

election in 2010 after having served 12 years on the board. In an interview with the Towns County Herald, he said that he believed his longevity on the board was the direct result of not having an agenda, rather, having the best interests of the county's school system at heart. Thomas is seeking his first term on the board. Either Gibby or Thomas will fill the seat vacated by outgoing BOE member Larry Kimsey, who did not seek reelection. Originally, Hedden and Ledford had another opponent seeking the Post 5 seat. However, Laura Diehl has withdrawn from the race, Shook said. The July 31st Primary will decide the BOE races. As for TSPLOST, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said he would not seek re-

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Townsend electrifies The Hall

By Joe Collins
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The Georgia Mountain Fair continued its concert series Friday night with local favorite Tommy Townsend and Waymore's Outlaws followed by a great American patriot and Nashville recording artist Lee Greenwood. These stars were on hand to open the 62nd Annual Georgia Mountain Fair. Both absolutely brought the house down. First, Townsend and the Outlaws hit the stage and delivered a show worthy of being labeled a world-class Country Music show. Their brand of Outlaw Country is dipped in the roots of country music; which is almost a dying art in this day and time. "Most Country Music now-a-days is about girls in the back of pick-up trucks drinking beer and that is just not our style," said Townsend. Townsend and the Outlaws play a more traditional form of Country that originated with Townsend's idol, Waylon Jennings. The songs Jennings wrote and the songs Townsend sings describe how life can really be and the emotions that come from living a life that inspired such soul touching lyrics. From the first beat of *I've Always Been Crazy* to the melodic rhythm of *Amanda*, one can feel the passion in Townsend's voice as he tears your heart out and brings your soul to the point of collapse. It seems to be that Townsend and the Outlaws are just one good song away from being a top Nashville group.



North Georgia native Tommy Townsend plays for the fair crowd as he opened the 62nd Annual Georgia Mountain Fair. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Next, Nashville recording icon Lee Greenwood brought his unbelievably smooth voice on stage to the roar of nearly 2,000 fans. Greenwood is known for his patriotism and love for his country. He writes and sings a more flavorful brand of Country Music that can be described as a mix of pop and country. He is a regular on the U.S.O. circuit and believes in the sacrifice of our nation's veterans, so much that his greatest hit honor's both God and Country. Greenwood is a very romantic singer and a lot of his hits deal with love and relationships. From *Ring On Her Finger*, *Time On Her Hand* to *It Turns Me Inside Out*, you can feel the passion that stimulates such great songs. *I.O.U.* is a song that any loving husband can relate too when they think about how important a good wife and mother can be. That kind of emotion can't be bottled or bagged, but can only be found in the hearts of loved ones. Greenwood strayed from his own music when he and his band played a version of *Rocky-Top* so flawlessly that one would have thought that some of the mountain folk in the audience would have starting "buck" dancing. A couple of songs on the sax ended this interlude and Greenwood then proceeded to finish the show with his classic *God Bless the U.S.A.* "I still believe in the old Red, White and Blue and I still believe that our country should be considered a Christian country. If we hold on to these two aspects, then we will make it as

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Georgia Mountain Fair's big weekend



The Midway was a popular destination in the first week of the 62nd Annual Georgia Mountain Fair. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

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The 62nd Georgia Mountain Fair opened its gates on Thursday July 19th at 5 p.m. with a sneak peek as the "Giant Midway" was opened to the public with no admission fee. While Mother Nature threatened Towns County with thunderstorms and rain, she fully cooperated Thursday night as the Midway was up and running and the sound of children screaming with delight and excitement was abundant as they enjoyed the numerous rides to choose from. Friday morning the excitement continued as the Fair officially opened its gates to the public at 10 a.m. with a very affordable \$5 admission fee. Virtually thousands of people passed through the his-

toric GMF during its opening weekend. But how do visitors to the Fair decide where to start? With so many trails to choose from, it can be a very difficult choice especially if you had kids with you. The kids all seemed to be leaning toward the trail that leads to the fabulous and fun Robinson's Racing Pigs and Paddling Porkers event as well as the pony rides. It was not an uncommon site to see kids walking around with an ice cream cone and working an ice hard to make it disappear as

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