

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, August 20, 2014

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Clouds	90 66
Fri: Clouds	92 68
Sat: T-Storms	90 67
Sun: T-Storms	88 65
Mon: Sunny	89 64
Tue: Sunny	91 65
Wed: T-Storms	88 64



Upstream Elevation Predicted 08/20/2014	
Lake Chatuge	1,922.84
Lake Nottely	1,771.23
Blue Ridge	1,681.98

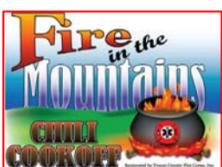
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SPORTS

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Fire in the Mountains Chili Cook Off

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Food Distribution

N. Mt. Zion Church of God

Aug 21st 10AM-Noon

Senator Isakason to host Town Hall Meeting

Young Harris Friday Aug 29th 1 PM

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Softball

Tues 8/19 vs. Lakeview 4:45 PM

Thurs 8/21 vs. Hebron 4:45 PM

Sat 8/23 @ Commerce Tournament 10 AM

Football

Fri 8/22 @ Hayesville 7:30 PM SCRIMMAGE

Williams leaving Towns; headed to Rabun

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The woman known in Towns County as a mother to every student, is headed to Tiger.

Towns County Superintendent of Schools Melissa Williams is resigning from her position after having been named sole finalist for superintendent of Rabun County Schools.

The Towns County Board of Education held a called board meeting Tuesday night in which they accepted Williams' letter of resignation.

"The Rabun Board has actually been conducting the search for a while, but they've just narrowed down their search possibilities and actually began serious conversations with me a couple of weeks ago," said Williams.

When a sole finalist is announced at the end of a search, the selection must lay on the table for 14 days, meaning that voting on the matter is suspended pending public inspection.



Melissa Williams

"They've announced that I'm the sole finalist with the intent to be named superintendent at the end of the 14-day waiting period. It will not be an official or done deal until around the 26th of this month (August)," said Williams.

The Towns County Board of Education held another called meeting Thursday at 7 p.m., presumably to discuss the search for Williams' replacement.

The BOE met in executive session, with nothing voted on.

However, the discussion focused on personnel, Williams said.

Williams, the first female superintendent in the history of Towns County Schools, is in her fourth year leading Towns County Schools. She sees the transition to Rabun County as an opportunity for professional growth.

"It is the biggest system that I've been given the opportunity to lead in," said Williams. "There are challenges there that I haven't faced anywhere else, and to be given the opportunity to lead a larger system seems appealing right now."

Her decision to resign has come with a mix of emotions.

"I'm very excited and humbled by the opportunity to lead and to serve over in Rabun County," she said. "But at the same time, I'm a little saddened about having to leave over here. Towns County has been

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Board of Education names interim superintendent

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

He's back!

Dr. Richard Behrens returns to the helm of Towns County Schools, slightly four years after his retirement.

The Towns County Board of Education approved Dr. Behrens' return, as he will serve as Interim Superintendent in the wake of Melissa Williams' departure to Rabun County Schools as superintendent.

BOE members Donna Hedden, Bob Gibby, Emily Phillips, Michael Anderson, and Jerry Taylor approved the nomination in a called meeting Tuesday night after a 45-minute executive session for discussion of personnel.

Dr. Behrens is to begin his tenure as Interim Superintendent Sept. 10, and the Board welcomed him aboard.

"Good to be back," said Dr. Behrens. "It always feels good to come back. It's a good organization and good school



Dr. Richard Behrens

system, and the community is great."

Dr. Behrens is the current Superintendent for Mountain Education Charter High School, and plans on working part-time there in the evenings, and here in Towns County during the day. He will remain with MECHS after completing his post as Interim Superintendent in Towns County, which could be in December.

Outgoing Towns County

See Superintendent, Page 10

Cannoy reveals his family's past

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Jim Loyd fled Hiwassee with his family in 1928 after escaping a chain gang, and spent the next 34 years in fear of the law.

Or was it Jim Hooper? Hooper's harrowing tale, from his arrest for selling moonshine in '28 to being ultimately cleared of all charges in 1962, follows a journey through the Carolinas and into Virginia, where his legacy carries on to this day through grandson Jimmy Cannoy.

Cannoy, of Martinsville, VA, recently recounted his grandfather's story at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' Moonshine Cruiz-In, where he won best in show two years running for his original moonshine car.

After leaving Hiwassee, Hooper, who was sentenced to three months on the Chain Gang, and his wife, who was pregnant with Cannoy's mother, took their two children



Moonshiner James Cannoy shows off his Ridge Runner Moonshine car. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

across the state line to North Carolina. But the family didn't stay in one place for long.

"They ended up in Spartanburg, SC, for a while, and that's where my mom was born," said Cannoy. "And then

they made their way on up to Martinsville because that's where most all the factories were."

Jim Loyd assumed the

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Law Enforcement Academy graduates 18

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Black polo shirts and smiling faces filled the meeting room at the Holiday Inn Express in Hiwassee Tuesday night, Aug. 12th.

The Towns County Sheriff's Office produced its first Citizen's Law Enforcement Academy.

The class gathered with Sheriff Chris Clinton to hold a special graduation ceremony for its 18 class members.

Emblazoned on each shirt was the CLEA logo, setting the graduates apart from friends and family. The camaraderie was palpable.

The CLEA program is designed to bring the community together with the Sheriff's Office to create a mutual awareness of concerns facing both.

In signing up for the course, residents of Towns County experienced the everyday working life of the Sheriff and his deputies. Class mem-



Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton greets the first graduating class of the Citizens Law Enforcement Academy. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

bers learned the history of the office of the sheriff, rode along with deputies on patrol, went to the gun range to learn firearm training and safety, toured the jail, and even met the department's K-9s and witnessed firsthand the search and rescue dive team.

"It really gives them an

idea of what's happening and what should be happening," said Sheriff Clinton. "It gives them an opportunity to input with us, and ask us really good questions. And one of the deals we make with them when they come in with this class, and

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Dick Paris remembers Georgia Mountain Fair



Dick Paris

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Dick Paris remembered the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

For those who knew him well, understandably, it would be hard for Mr. Paris to forget the jewel that has put Towns County on the map for more than six decades.



Dan Paris, left, presents Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason with a \$20,000 check from his late father's estate. Photo/Charles Duncan

Dick Paris, who loved Hiwassee, left \$20,000 dollars in his will to the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Distribution of the gift

means \$15,000 goes to the Fairgrounds, and the remaining \$5,000 to the Hamilton Rhododendron Gardens.

See Paris, Page 10

Potential conflict of interest between Taylor, BRMEMC uncovered

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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The *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald* have uncovered a potential conflict of interest regarding Taylor and Taylor Construction and the development of the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC headquarters.

In a letter obtained by the newspapers dated Sept. 15, 2010, Taylor and Taylor Construction, owned by then EMC President of the cooperative's Board of Directors, Terry Taylor, was named a contractor on the new EMC headquarters project by Atlanta-based Evergreen Construction.

Taylor and Taylor were named a member of the local contractor list according to a letter from William McCorkie and carbon copied to Robin Millard and EMC General Manager Matthew Akins to Mylan Anderson of Millard Inc., a Roswell-based architectural firm.

The letter indicates that Taylor and Taylor were among a list of local contractors being used on the headquarters' construction project.

"Taylor and Taylor Con-



Terry Taylor

struction - this is a local supplier of stone and sand who we understand is also furnishing material to the Phase 1 project," according to McCorkie's letter.

Taylor and Taylor Construction never paid for some of the stone used on the project, the newspapers have learned.

According to Towns County Probate Court, Chester White Quarry has been awarded a \$9,728 judgment against Taylor and Taylor Construction for materials purchased for the

See EMC, Page 10

DA reaffirms GBI, Attorney General involvement in BRMEMC inquiry

By Charles Duncan
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A news story by the *Clay County Progress* in North Carolina has prompted the Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley to reaffirm a Georgia Bureau of Investigation inquiry into the debt of former Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board President Terry Taylor.

The *Progress* was unable to confirm information already published by the *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald*. Seemingly, that story cast doubt on the news reports by the *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald*.

That doubt was lifted as Langley confirmed his statements to the *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald*.

"The newspaper (*North Georgia News/Towns County Herald*) contacted me and asked if it was true that the GBI and the Attorney General's Office were involved, because the paper had received information that they had become involved," Langley said. "I confirmed that the GBI had been contacted and that I had called the Attorney General's Office."

"I knew the GBI had conducted at least one interview," Langley said. "The GBI was requested to gather information about the situation. That's not



Jeff Langley

an open criminal investigation.

"That prompted the GBI response that there was no criminal investigation on the matter," Langley said. "Technically, no there is no investigation, but they are examining the documents they received."

"Your story last week was accurate, I just think some folks were taking it a little differently and that's why I wanted to clarify this," he said.

Langley also wanted to clarify that everything to date

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

