

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thur: Clouds	80	52
Fri: Clouds	81	53
Sat: Clouds	80	55
Sun: Storms	76	53
Mon: Storms	75	53
Tue: Storms	78	53
Wed: Sunny	79	50



Upstream Elevation
Predicted
09/12/12

Lake Chatuge	1921.21
Lake Nottely	1768.70
Blue Ridge	1670.48

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Sports Page 10

Gridiron

The Towns County lost a tough one on the road with a 17-12 loss to Fellowship Christian. This week the Indians travel to Tiger for a 7:30 p.m. meeting with the Rabun County Wildcats. The Wildcats opened the season last week with a 20-6 win over the Hayesville Yellow Jackets. This Friday will mark the renewal of the Rabun-Towns rivalry, as Towns looks to improve to 1-3 on the season.

TCMS Indians win

The Towns County Middle School Indians football team improved to 3-0 with a win over Lakeview at Frank McClure Stadium Thursday. The Indians beat the Lions by a final score of 18-6. They improved their season record to 3-0.

Youth Football

Towns County's youth football teams swept their opponents on Saturday. The 6&U team traveled to Jackson County and beat the Panthers. The 8&U and 9&U squads both faced off with the Banks County Leopards in Homer. Both won.

The Youth Teams are on fire. See Sports Page 10 for more details.

Cross Country

The Lady Indians' Cross Country team competed in a tough match in Athens last week.

Anslay Vardeman and Bradley Smith led the way for Towns.

For more details see Sports Page 10.

EMC Meeting

The 74th Annual Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Meeting, scheduled to be held at Anderson Music Hall, is slated for Saturday, Sept. 15.

Registration for door prizes begins at 8 a.m. and the business meeting is slated to begin at 10 a.m.

The entertainment this year includes the chorus teams from Towns County High School and Murphy, NC High School.

It's official: Harleys to return to Hiawassee in 2013

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
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It's official.

The Georgia State Harley Owners Group (H.O.G.) likes Hiawassee so much they voted Sunday morning to return in 2013.

That's thanks to the bid by the Towns County Tourism Association at a meeting with the H.O.G. Committee at Brasstown Valley Resort.

Among those involved were Towns County Tourism Association Chairman Hilda Thomason, Ramada Lake Chatuge Lodge Manager Katie Polstra, and The Ridges Resort General Manager Chad Hooper.

The vote was between Hiawassee and Columbus. For the third year in a row, Hiawassee once again won the bid.

It was considered unprecedented when they chose to return to Hiawassee for a second year, but a third year is unheard of according to Polstra.

This news is an incredible boost for Towns County.

Any time an event of this magnitude comes to town, everybody wins.

"Just in hotels alone, \$100,000 was brought into the community," said Polstra.

With almost 1,500 registered riders, the streets were full of bikers Thursday through Sunday.

This many visitors in one community is a huge positive economic impact on the community.

Everyone benefits when they come to town, and this year was no exception.

Local restaurants reported record sales during this 3-day event and local gas stations stayed very busy.

Thursday, the H.O.G. Rally rolled into Towns County only to be greeted by a Welcome Party at Towns County Beach.

The Towns County Tourism Association held a pig roast complete with all the trimmings.

This was their way of let-



Left, members of the Harley Owners Group catch a look at another member's bike; right, a rocking fireworks display at the Ridges Marina & Resort on Lake Chatuge. Photos/Lowell Nicholson



ting the Rally know how much they appreciated them coming back to Hiawassee for 2012.

Rita Rogers, Coordinator for the H.O.G. Rally, said

members love coming to Towns County.

"It is so beautiful and the people are so nice," she said. "You've got everything here

with the lake and the gorgeous mountains. Everyone was very excited to be coming back

See HOG, page 13

Coalition feeds the masses trout

By Joe Collins
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Blairsville - The annual Hiawassee River Watershed Coalition meeting was held at Meeks Park on Saturday, Sept. 8.

The meeting was held this year in conjunction with the annual fundraiser, which is a trout dinner complete with all the fixings.

"For years we had the meeting and the fundraiser separately and this year it just seemed more practical to combine the two and it has been wonderful. Not only were we able to hold our meeting, but having it with the fundraiser stimulated a growth in our membership which really helps," stated HRWC Coordinator Callie Moore.

The coalition is a local, non-governmental, conservation nonprofit organization whose mission is to facilitate water quality improvement in lakes and streams throughout the upper Hiawassee River watershed within Cherokee and Clay counties of North Carolina and Towns and Union counties of North Georgia.

For more than 10 years the HRWC has provided water quality education and funding for and implementation of volunteer watershed restoration projects.



Those attending the Hiawassee River Watershed Coalition's annual trout dinner weren't disappointed. Photo/Joe Collins

The HRWC believes that the best way to protect the water resources is to educate the people who live in the watershed area and help them when they undergo restorations.

The HRWC is currently working within the confines of a program known as the Lake Chatuge Watershed Action Plan, funded by a Georgia Section 319 Grant, that through five years of collected data, has determined that the two

biggest issues facing the water quality today is sediment and nutrients.

"We are attacking these problems by focusing on three major contributing factors that cause damage to the quality of the water and these are leaking and failed septic systems, storm water run-off control and agricultural management programs. We feel that if we

See HRWC, page 13

Towns County honors firefighters

By Libby Shook
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Do you recall where you were and what you were doing on September 11, 2001 when the nation was shocked and saddened by the news of the terrorist attack on the United States?

Shortly after the Twin Towers fell, the nation began to mourn, and around the country Americans began to commemorate the victims and show their patriotism.

Some flew the American flag from their front porches while others wore it on T-shirts or pinned it on their lapel.

The Towns County Fire Department and Commissioner Bill Kendall want people to be reminded of the great loss the nation suffered and to remember the more than 2,900 people who lost their lives that day.

Among those brave and heroic people that lost their lives on that tragic morning were 343 firefighters.

"This was the largest loss of firefighters in U.S. history in one single event," said Towns County Fire Chief Mitch Floyd.

While this is a time to remember and honor those who gave so selflessly with total disregard for life and safety, it is also a time to recognize and honor a group of local heroes, the Towns County Fire & Rescue Department which is made up primarily of volunteers.

The TCFRD has only three full-time employees. "We're proud of our fire department and the backbone of the Towns County Fire Department is its volunteers,"



Towns County Fire Chief Mitch Floyd and Towns County Fire Corps President Liz Ordiales. Photo/Libby Shook

said Kendall.

"Our department depends on a dedicated group of individuals who are willing to undergo several hundred hours of rigorous training to provide free fire and rescue services to our citizens and visitors to our county," said Floyd.

"Unlike other volunteer organizations, our volunteers put their lives on the line to provide these services," said Floyd.

"There is a great deal of personal commitment on their part. When a call comes in whether it's 3 p.m. or 3 a.m., they are ready to respond," Floyd said. "They sacrifice family time and personal time to ensure public safety."

Floyd also said that they assist with local events, traffic control, search and rescue, respond to accidents, and many

other activities that the general public generally are not aware of.

You may have seen them at the beach Thursday night for the H.O.G. Rally as they were assisting with parking and traffic control, or at the Ridges Marina & Resort on Saturday night as they assisted with the fireworks show and were there in the event that something didn't go as planned.

Let's remember and honor all our heroes, living and fallen, during this week of remembrance.

When you see a fireman, remember to let them know how much you appreciate their service and devotion to Towns County.

Remember the sacrifices that they make day in, day out. And remember they do it all for you.

Blackberry Smoke delights H.O.G. members at Hall

By Libby Shook
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Georgia's own Blackberry Smoke performed a private "members only" concert for the H.O.G. Rally attendees Friday night at Anderson Music Hall.

They rocked the Hall with floors and walls vibrating and Rally members rocking right along with them.

Fans were on their feet snapping pictures, clapping, dancing, waving their arms, and moving to the beat of this up and coming rock band.

They performed *Can You Love Me Like I Am* and *Sleeping Dogs* and the fans went wild.

It was obvious that this band had a huge group of Rally fans and that they had come ready to jam and party; they were not disappointed.

Lead singer Charlie Starr was definitely a 'star' Friday night and was at his finest as he, along with the other members of the band, rocked the stage and left the fans longing for more with their unique sound and amazing instrumentals.

This "blue collar band" has earned a passionate following over the past decade that continues to grow as the band itself evolves. Members include Charlie Starr guitar/lead vocalist; Richard Turner, bass/vocalist; Paul Jackson, guitar/vocalist; Brit Turner, drums; and Brandon Still, keyboard.

"I've been watching and following them for the past four years," said Rick Smith of Cumming, Georgia. "They're more Southern Rock than anything, but they play different



Blackberry Smoke

kinds of music. Anything from Rock 'n' Roll to Gospel and Bluegrass."

In a little more than a decade together, Blackberry Smoke has released three full-length albums, including their most recent *The Whippoorwill*, the band's first for Country megastar Zac Brown's Southern Ground Label.

They have performed with legends such as The Marshall Tucker Band, ZZ Top, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and even Country Music legend George Jones.

Jim Rolader of Lawrenceville describes them as, "Lynyrd Skynyrd reincarnated with their incredible guitar harmonies and powerful southern vocals."

Hiawassee's golden boy Steven Phillips said, "Blackberry Smoke is a great high energy show."

It's good to see Georgia boys doing good. Charlie Starr, the lead singer and guitar picker, was absolutely the star

See The Band, page 13

City approves HRWC stormwater ordinance

By Libby Shook
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The City of Hiawassee has made history with the adoption of the proposed 2012 Stormwater Ordinance by a unanimous vote of the City Council at their monthly meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 4th.

The action followed the second reading of the ordinance.

Present for this unprecedented event was Lake Chatuge Watershed Coordinator Scarlett Fuller.

"This is the first Stormwater Ordinance in the Hiawassee River Watershed Coalition's four-county area," said Fuller.

The HRWC is made up of Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Clay and Cherokee Counties in North Carolina.

"This is really exciting for the City and the Coalition. You guys are really ahead of the game. By enacting this stormwater ordinance you are ensuring that runoff from future developed sites will be the same quality or better



Rick Stancil

than when it flowed onto the property," said Fuller as she addressed the City Council.

"You are protecting not only Lake Chatuge, but also its tributaries, adjacent property owners, and public health," said Fuller.

Fuller and HRWC Coordinator Callie Moore provided technical assistance, as well as their knowledge and expertise, in drafting the ordinance, ac-

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