

Towns County Herald

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Publication Number 635540 Volume 86 Number 52

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Clouds	66 44
Fri: Sunny	67 46
Sat: Clouds	66 55
Sun: Rain	63 56
Mon: Rain	65 56
Tue: Rain	68 53
Wed: Clouds	71 55



Upstream Elevation Predicted 10/21/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,919.22
Lake Nottely	1,764.11
Blue Ridge	1,674.52

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TCHS Junior's Citrus Sale

Navel Oranges
Grapefruit
Tangelos

706-896-4131
ext. 1226
See Page 2A

Howl-O-Weenie Bash

Oct. 31st
Meeks Dog Pavilion
Blairsville

See Page 3A

SEE SAMPLE BALLOTS FOR CITY OF HIAWASSEE AND CITY OF YOUNG HARRIS

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SPORTS

FOOTBALL

Fri. Oct 30
vs. Providence
Senior Night

7:30 PM

CROSS COUNTRY

OCT. 29
Area 4
Championship Meet
@ Oconee River

New Homecoming royalty reigns supreme at TCHS

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The student body has spoken, and the 2015 Football Homecoming King and Queen received their crowns during Homecoming festivities last week.

Towns County High School senior Taylor Underwood was crowned by 2014 Homecoming Queen Kayla Davis at the Homecoming Football Game against the Commerce Tigers on Friday, Oct. 23.

This year's Football Homecoming King, Dalton Bradley, was announced at the annual Homecoming Bonfire in front of the school the Thursday night before the big game.

"It's amazing," said Underwood of the moment when her name was called as the next



Homecoming Queen Taylor Underwood, King Dalton Bradley and Runner Up Megan Corbin. Underwood's cousin, Shea Underwood - who is the kicker and an all-around player

Homecoming Queen. "I was so happy to be on Homecoming Court, so this is just the best.

I was not expecting to win, and I was just happy to be out there."

for the Indians football team - was also on Homecoming Court, and the two shared a special Homecoming connection.

While being announced as part of the Homecoming Court, boys and girls have historically produced a short biography that speaks to each student's high school career, their future plans and the people from which they have derived the most inspiration.

"Shea actually said that I was his most inspirational person for always being at the family reunion, so mine was also for him being at the family reunions, because we're very close," said Underwood. "Our senior quotes in the yearbook are joined together, our yearbook pictures last year were looking at each other, so we're really close."

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Treats at Hiwassee Halloween on the Square

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Oct. 31, Hiwassee is hosting its annual Halloween on the Square.

From 5:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M., the Hiwassee Square will fill with spooky ghosts, goblins, and ghouls with a hunger for Halloween candy.

Halloween on the Square is a tradition dating so far back that few people even know how many years ago it began. Recently, it's become an event to which hundreds and hundreds of people flock, but Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis recalls that it wasn't always that way.

"We didn't have many participants or anything the first year, but it has grown as the years have gone on. It's great because the kids really love it and they come out to get candy and just to have a good time. So it's turned out very successful and we're hoping this year will be great, too," she said.

Mathis was one of the original founders of Halloween on the Square.

"We've done Halloween on the Square for quite a few years, and I don't remember when it started, but me and a guy that they called Big Mike, and I don't know what Mike's last name was, we got it together in two weeks' time. We decided that we wanted to have Halloween on the Square," she said.

"Over the years, it has gotten bigger, and there's no way of telling the headcount, because there's a lot of kids that come, and we have usually two hours if the candy holds out. So we have a lot of people," she said.

As the event has grown, lots of local businesses have come over the years to make Halloween special for the little ones.

"All of the businesses have always been great to

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Halloween at the Fairgrounds

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds is doing Halloween the right way this year.

Not only is it hosting a Beatles tribute band called The Return, but it is also hosting, during the intermission of that show, a Halloween costume contest.

"It's going to be Saturday, Oct. 31, and we're going to do the contest during the intermission. We're going to give a \$200 cash prize to the winner, and audience applause counts for 50 percent," said Fairgrounds Manager Hilda Thomason.

The Return will perform 50 minutes of early Beatles music, and then the costume contest will be during the intermission. After the contest, the Return will come back with 50 minutes of the later Beatles music.

Thomason has managed

to secure two sponsors, Lake Chatuge Lodge and the Holiday Inn Express.

"I thought a Halloween costume contest would be fun, and so I called Lake Chatuge Lodge and I called the Holiday Inn Express and asked them if they could help sponsor it and give \$100 each and we could get a \$200 cash prize. And they were in agreement to do that. When we bring people in for these concerts, they help fill up the hotels, so we work together," she said.

The plans for a costume contest with a cash prize almost fell through when Thomason's concert promoter was unable to secure sponsors.

"I was talking to Mike Blackwell, the promoter in Columbus, and he said that we might could do a Halloween costume contest," said Hilda. "He was trying to raise \$500 for a prize, but he doesn't know anybody up here. He was just

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Hayesville, NC woman dies in two-car collision in Towns

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Terri Hinnant, 60, of Hayesville, died in a fatal two-car accident on Bell Creek Road near the Hiwassee Animal Hospital in Towns County on Wednesday, Oct. 21.

Towns County Dispatch received a 911 call at 4:19 p.m. that Wednesday regarding the accident, according to the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

The driver of the vehicle at fault was Terri Hinnant's son, 27-year-old Brent Brandon Hinnant, also of Hayesville, and Terri Hinnant was a passenger in that vehicle, according to the sheriff's office.

Brent Hinnant was arrested and booked into the Towns County Detention Center on the following charges: homicide by vehicle in the

first degree, one count of drug related objects, DUI, failure to maintain lane, serious injury by vehicle, and driving on an expired license.

Brent Hinnant also had warrants out of Rabun County for failure to appear, and authorities in Rabun County have placed a hold on him at the detention center, according to the sheriff's office.

The accident investigation was conducted by Georgia State Patrol, but according to TCSO deputies initially on the scene, Brent Hinnant's vehicle appeared to have been traveling south on Highway 75N/Bell Creek Road.

David Bradshaw, 30, of Hiwassee, was the driver of the second vehicle involved in the accident, and he appeared to deputies initially on the scene to have been traveling north



Brent Brandon Hinnant on Bell Creek, according to the sheriff's office.

Fortunately, Bradshaw received only minor injuries, according to the sheriff's office.

No further information was available as of press time Monday.

Hiwassee City Council sets millage

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

In a short special meeting on Thursday, Oct. 22, Hiwassee City Council passed the millage rate from last year's 2.266 to the new 2.260.

"What happens is, for the city, they come back with the tax digest. They basically figure out what's the total on the real property, the different categories. Then they calculate the rollback," said City Manager Rick Stancil.

"For our purposes, 2.26 was what they adopted. Last year's was 2.266," said Stancil.

"Based on the assessments that were given or calculated, that will bring into the city \$164,584, which is a loss in revenue of \$3,291, so it's not much, but we've been decreasing property taxes for years, so we've taken hits in prior years. For instance, in 2011, we lost right at \$19,000, and then in 2012 we lost \$15,000, but it's getting to where we're losing less money, but in the past five

years, we've lost or cut property taxes by \$50,000 if you add up those columns," he said.

Stancil said that under Mayor Barbara Mathis, the city has decreased the millage continuously.

"If you went back over Barbara's terms of office, she has decreased the millage about five times in 22 years, but we've never had an increase in millage under her being mayor. This is the second year in a row we've had an actual decrease,

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County sets new millage rate, lowers taxes

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

In the October monthly county meeting, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall set the 2015 county millage rate, and taxes are lower for the sixth year running.

The 2015 millage rate was set at 5.495 mills, down from 5.535 in 2014. This equates to a county-wide tax savings of \$69,389 over last year.

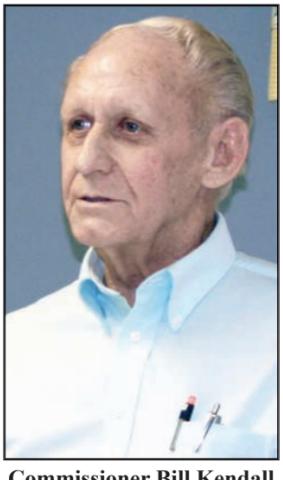
Total taxes levied for 2015, with the rate at 5.495 mills, are \$3,903,863.

Looking at the big picture, this is now the sixth year in a row that taxes have decreased in the county.

Since 2010, tax cuts made year over year add up to \$1,462,938, and when compounded out, that total is much bigger - because of the tax cuts made each year for the past six years, county residents have saved a total of \$6,717,723.

"In 2010, and this was a year or two after the crash, the gross worth of Towns County was \$1,021,466,688," said Commissioner Kendall. "If you'll come all the way across to 2015, that has diminished to \$775,077,929."

Gross property values within the county have dropped \$246,388,759 since 2010, which has resulted in the loss



Commissioner Bill Kendall

Young Harris City Election

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The City of Young Harris is holding early voting in preparation for the City Council elections on Nov. 3.

"We're actually having a general election and a special election on the same day, Nov. 3. We already had a special election that was not contested, and Angie Smith won that. And this one is contested. We have one seat that's contested. Terry Ingram's the incumbent and Jared Champion is running against him. That's the only seat that's contested," said Election Superintendent Shirley Jarrard.

Early voting is through Friday, Oct. 30, at Young Harris City Hall.

"We're not having a very good response. Most people in Young Harris prefer to come out on Election Day. We haven't had very many voters at all. And it's been in the paper for over a month, so there's been lots of notice," said Jarrard.

She noted that most people prefer to turn out on Election Day itself.

"I think they just enjoy seeing their neighbors," she said.

"A lot of people come before work and a lot of people come after work and lunchtime. So in between going to work

and lunch and after work would probably be the best time," she added.

Despite the disappointing turnout thus far, she said that there is a chance that the numbers will change.

"We usually get the most votes the last week. So we really don't know yet if the early voting is an indicator of how the rest of the election is going to go," she said.

She said that there's a chance that a large portion of the election may be decided by students at Young Harris College.

"A lot of the kids are interested in what goes on, and there are some who attend the council meetings," she said.

The general election will be held in the Community Room of City Hall from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 3.

"Just show up between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. and go through the door and fill out the paper and they'll check the list to see if you're registered. Then they'll give you a ballot and you'll vote," Jarrard said.

The same applies even if

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