

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Thu: Rain | 58 37 |
| Fri: Clouds | 48 30 |
| Sat: Sunny | 55 34 |
| Sun: Clouds | 48 30 |
| Mon: Sunny | 58 38 |
| Tue: Clouds | 57 35 |
| Wed: Clouds | 51 32 |



| | |
|---|----------|
| Upstream Elevation Predicted 11/05/2014 | |
| Lake Chatuge | 1,916.43 |
| Lake Nottely | 1,762.00 |
| Blue Ridge | 1,670.59 |

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SPORTS

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Fire Department Education Day Saturday, Nov 8th 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on the Square See Page 2A

Love Light Tree Scholarship Fund



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Sponsor a Foster Child for Christmas

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CROSS COUNTRY STATE MEET

Carrollton High School
Boys - 4:15 p.m.
Girls - 4:55 p.m.

Indians, Lady Indians take Area Titles



A first for Towns County Schools - area championships for the Indians and Lady Indians Cross Country teams. The Indians seek their first state title; the Ladies seek their third straight. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Athens - Towns County's Cross Country Indians and Lady Indians are the 2014-2015 Class A Area Champs, and are headed to the State Championship.

Both teams won first place in the Area Champion-

ship held Thursday, Oct. 30, at Athens Academy, and Coach Jeannie Ledford couldn't be more proud.

"This has never been done," said Coach Ledford. "They've never both come in first. The boys usually fight just to have an opportunity to go to state."

The Lady Indians have

been state champs two years running, and will be shooting for a three-peat victory this year, while the Indians are looking to win it for the first time in school history.

The State Meet will take place at Carrollton High School on Saturday, Nov. 8, where the Indians will run

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Clean sweep for GOP statewide

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

With just seven counties yet to post final numbers, the electorate of the state of Georgia made it a clean sweep for the Grand Old Party.

Gov. Nathan Deal, U.S. Sen. Elect David Perdue, Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, 9th District Congressman Doug Collins, Attorney Gen. Sam Olens, Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens, Secretary of State Brian Kemp, Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, State School Superintendent Elect Richard Woods, and Labor Commissioner Mark Butler - all GOP - all were elected on Tuesday.

GOP Public Service Commissioners Lauren Bubba McDonald and Doug Everett also claimed victory on Election Day.

The Republican wave took root in the final weeks of the campaign as televised debates and road trips throughout the North Georgia Mountains took its toll on Democrats.



Gov. Nathan Deal

While Fulton, DeKalb, and Clayton counties went solid Democrat, the North Georgia Mountains went solid Republican.

All GOP candidates also swept Towns County, as Republicans ruled almost the entire state.

Towns County boasted a 52.91 percent voter turnout for a midterm election year.

More than half of the county's 8,085 registered voters took to the polls and helped continue the two-decade long Republican Revolution in the

Peach State. Republicans took Towns County 3-1 en route to a statewide sweep.

Gov. Deal claimed 74 percent of the Towns County vote to 24 percent for Democrat Jason Carter.

U.S. Sen.-Elect Perdue took 73 percent of the Towns County vote to 26 percent for Democrat Michelle Nunn.

In the U.S. Senate, Perdue's victory over Nunn helped Republicans gain control of the United States Senate and keep a choke-hold on the U.S. House of Representatives.

Lt. Gov. Cagle, the likely heir apparent to be Georgia's next governor, took 79 percent of the Towns County vote.

U.S. Rep. Collins won his second term in the House of Representatives. He took Democrat David Vogel to the woodshed, taking more than 80 percent of the 9th District vote.

U.S. Rep. Collins had almost 146,000 votes at press time, with Vogel collecting

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Mother Nature takes toll on Halloween

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Residents of Towns County braved the elements for Hiwassee's annual Halloween on the Square event Saturday, even as temperatures dipped into the low 30s.

"Even though it was cold, it was well worth it," said Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis. "We feel honored to be able to help these kids have a good time."

The event culminated in a costume contest, with ages grouped 0-2, 3-5, 6 and 7, and 8-10. Prizes were awarded to first, second and third places, at \$15, \$10 and \$5 respectively.

In the first age group, Aaron Dyer won first place for his imaginative gnome costume. Adrienne Collins



took second place as a fanciful mermaid, and Cooper Kell won third place dressed as a cute little monkey.

Ages 3-5 saw Audrey Magers take first as Strawberry Shortcake, and Annie Collins

won second place, also dressed as a mermaid, like her sister. Connor Kell, Cooper's brother, won third place as a buccaneering pirate.

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There's no place like home for Alejandro

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Given a list of his accomplishments, one might not guess that Towns County High School senior Alejandro Lemus-Gomez has only been in town for about a year and a half.

Lemus-Gomez was voted Homecoming King this year by his peers, is headed to the Cross Country State Championship to compete in the big show, has been a member of the Indian Raider Band, starred in a high school play and is enrolled for a couple of classes at Young Harris College for their Accel Program.

But up until last summer, Lemus-Gomez called Miami home. His parents, who are both Cuban immigrants and have spent many years working in the journalism industry, met in a Miami news station where they both worked.

"One of the reasons we



Alejandro Lemus-Gomez is having a banner senior year at Towns County High School. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

the mountains; when you see him, he's like a mountain man at heart, even though he was born in Cuba."

Lemus-Gomez left behind lifelong friends in Miami, but he feels right at home with his family's decision to move

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TCSO looks for suspect

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

The Towns County Sheriff's Office wants to know if you recognize the person in the GBI artistic sketch of a man believed to have been involved in an aggravated assault on Oct. 14 near Georgia 288 and Highway 76.

The incident occurred around 7:15 a.m. on that date, according to sheriff's investigators.

Anyone with information about the identity of this individual, contact the Towns County Sheriff's Office, (706) 896-4444.



Aggravated Assault Suspect

Veterans Day services Nov. 11

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

The 30th Anniversary of Towns County Veterans Park comes Nov. 11th as the Annual Veterans Day Service begins at 11 a.m.

All veterans and families and friends are welcome to the event, said U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer (retired) Bud Johnson.

Groups and supporters of this celebration include VFW Post 7807, VFW Post 7807 Ladies Auxillary, American Legion Post 23, American Legion Post 23 Ladies Auxillary, Sons of American Legion, Marine

Corps League Unicoi Detachment 783, Army-Navy Squadron 66, and U.S. Coast Guard Auxillary, Flotilla 23.

A special ceremony will add new names to the Towns County Deceased Veterans. Their names will be added to the Monument Wall at the Towns County Veterans Park.

Ten names will be added to the wall, two U.S. Marines, three members of the U.S. Army, four members of the U.S. Navy, and one member of the U.S. Air Force.

Remember, the service is scheduled for the 11 a.m. Nov. 11th at Towns County Veterans Park.

MRLS continues search for new library director



By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Blairsville - The top candidate to fill the position as director of the Mountain Regional Library System declined the position after considering the offer over the weekend.

The candidate was selected in a vote on Thursday, Oct. 30, when the MRLS Board of Trustees held a called meeting at the Union County Public Library to discuss the next director.

Current Director Donna Howell is set to retire at the end of December, following a one-month paid leave starting Dec. 1, with a new director hopefully taking over Jan. 1.

The director search committee consists of Teresa Moore, Chair of the MRLS Board of Trustees; Dr. Jounida Bradley, Chair of the Towns County Library Board; Ed Reed, Chair of the Union County Library Board; and Ron Bolin, Chair of the Fannin County Library Board.

Howell served as a facilitator to the committee, but had no vote in the process.

"The committee also asked for input from all the library staff in all the branches," said Howell.

And while the current situation is certainly a setback, the board still has options.

"The committee will have to get together again to decide whether to offer to another of the current candidates or re-advertise the position and try again," said Howell.

The MRLS comprises the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris, and public libraries in Towns County, Union County, and Fannin County. These libraries have benefited from Howell's leadership for 25 years, as she has served 15 years as assistant director, followed by the last 10 years as director.

Howell has worked hard over the years amid shrinking staff and state-mandated furlough days, and as such has given up more than 200 days of authorized leave time to keep things running smoothly. Even now, as she retires, she can only be paid out a maximum annual leave of 30 days.

"One of the issues that I raise is that the way the state does the budget, the difference between my salary and the new person coming in goes back to the state - we don't get to keep any of it," said Howell. "So, if your new person starts in December, then my payout for my unused annual leave will have to come out of local money because the state will not pay a person to fill a position and the unused leave of a person who's leaving, even though I earned every bit of that leave as a state-paid person."

Howell, who is "unwilling to put the board in the position of having to furlough locally paid staff in order to pay out" her annual leave, presented a compromise to the board that would allow her to retain 30 days of her unpaid leave and keep things running at the same time.

Since her retirement is set for Dec. 1, she is not legally able to work for the month of December. Should a new director be selected before the New Year, she proposed that this person start on Jan. 1, which would leave the library system without a director for December.

"My recommendation is that Wilma Ash, who has been with the library system over 40 years - she actually retired with 40 years and she still works part-time for us when we need her as a fill-in person," said Howell. "But she used to be bookkeeper for the system. I would recommend that we allow Wilma to do the review of the vendor checks to reconcile the invoices and everything, and approve the payouts."

Ash is currently on payroll as a part-time accounting assistant, and would be able to handle the financial matters of the library system for December, such as payroll and fiscal responsibilities.

"We're already closed most of the last week or so on that month, and typically our library usage is down during that month because so many

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