

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, December 5, 2012

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Clouds	53 38
Fri: Clouds	56 41
Sat: Clouds	64 44
Sun: Clouds	69 42
Mon: Rain	62 36
Tue: Sunny	55 33
Wed: Clouds	50 30



Upstream Elevation Predicted 12/05/12	
Lake Chatuge	1916.59
Lake Nottely	1758.92
Blue Ridge	1669.63

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Empty Stocking Fund at December 7th Games See Page 9A



Shop with a Cop Needs Your Help See Page 3A



Towns County Historical Society Annual Christmas Party



Reminder to Members: Mon., Dec. 10 • 5:30 p.m. Senior Center across from the Courthouse Bring Finger Food & Enjoy the Fellowship Anyone wishing to become a member is welcome, membership is \$15/year.

City of Young Harris Annual Christmas Tree Lighting



Friday, December 7 6 p.m. Young Harris Mayor's Park Located at 51 Irene Berry Dr.

Towns remembers Pearl

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
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On Thursday, Nov. 29th, a group of dedicated Veterans met at the VFW Post 7807 in remembrance of the upcoming 71st anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Dec. 7th is the recognized day of remembrance and 90-year-young C.E. "Bud" Johnson has dedicated himself to this remembrance.

Johnson has a Pearl Harbor Memorabilia notebook that he has compiled made up of facts, stories, and pictures.

These dedicated war heroes were not bashful when it came to talking about Pearl Harbor, the Korean War, and World War II.

Those involved in this remembrance include: Vince Miller, U.S. Air Force, Bill Wendel, U.S. Public Health Services/U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Marine Corps, C. E. "Bud" Johnson, U.S. Navy Retired, Walt Scott, Marine Corps League, Bobby Jarrard, Marine



Towns County veterans still remember Pearl Harbor.

Corps League, Steve Sutherlin, U.S. Navy, and Gary Kuchinski, Marine Corps League.

While Towns County no longer has any surviving Pearl Harbor Veterans living here, these gentlemen wanted to make sure that everyone knows that they will not allow their memory or their service to this great country to be forgotten.

"Although I was not at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, but serving aboard my second tour on the U.S.

See Pearl, page 9A

GSP awaits Crime Lab ID of Tate City crash victim

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
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Tate City - The Georgia State Patrol is awaiting positive identification of a crash victim who died Nov. 26th in a one-vehicle accident in Tate City, patrol officials said Monday.

The accident occurred on Tallulah River Road about 10 p.m., patrol officials said. The driver of the northbound vehicle, a 2009 Chevy Silverado, lost control, left the roadway and the vehicle overturned, patrol officials said.

The vehicle burst into flames, Towns County Fire and Rescue responded to the crash scene, patrol officials said.

Firefighters from neighboring Rabun County also responded to the crash, patrol officials said.

The victim, burned beyond recognition, was pronounced dead at the crash scene, patrol officials said.



The victim's remains were sent to the Georgia State Crime Lab for positive identification, patrol officials said.

As of Monday afternoon, no positive identification had been determined, patrol officials said.

The patrol knows the name of the vehicle's owner, but can't confirm that the vehicle's owner was the individual

See Crash, page 9A

Making a holiday difference this year

The Gold Academy hosts its first Empty Stocking Fund fundraiser

By Libby Shook
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The public is invited to attend a fundraiser for the Towns County Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund, Sunday, Dec. 9th, from 4-7 p.m.

The fundraiser will be held at The Gold Academy in Young Harris.

The Towns County Empty Stocking Fund provides toys, clothing, and other gifts for children in Town's County for Christmas.

Academy Owners Bob and Vickie Levy would love for you to come out and eat, drink, and be merry while participating in a very worthy cause.

Guests will be treated to food, beverages, and live music.

"It will basically be a Christmas Party and the only price of admission will be a new toy," says Vickie Levy of The Gold Academy.

You will be able to browse art in the Art of Gold Gallery and bid on the many silent auction items and services donated by local businesses in the community.

Raffle tickets will also be sold for chances to win extrava-



Vicki Ellis, left, and Heather Whitaker, of the Towns County Sheriff's Office hope that the community will turn out for the Empty Stocking Fund event. Photo/Libby Shook

gant prizes including Romance and Leisure Packages which will include hotel stays and restaurant meals.

"The Gold Academy is also encouraging guests to bring any unwanted gold and silver jewelry or other items to

the event to sell," says Vickie Levy.

This is a way for the folks of Towns and surrounding counties to donate to the fundraiser, without spending a penny.

See Fundraiser, page 9A

Oak Ridge Boys headline at The Hall

By Libby Shook
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The first snowfall of the season occurred Saturday night, Dec. 1st, at the Anderson Music Hall as the Oak Ridge Boys brought their 23rd Annual Holiday Show, *Christmas Time's A-Coming*, to Hiawassee.

The scene was set as the stage was decked out in Christmas trees and the feeling of Christmas was in the air.

As the Oak Ridge Boys walked out on stage, the lights on the stage were turned off and they went right into a beautiful rendition of *Christmas Time's A-Coming* from their new Christmas CD by the same name. (Gaither Gospel Series).

The lights went on and the fans went wild. This opening act set the tone for the remainder of the evening as the fans were on their feet, clapping, screaming, whooping, and snapping photos throughout



The Oak Ridge Boys were rocking the crowd at Anderson Music Hall on Saturday. Photo/Libby Shook

the show.

"We've been coming here for a lot of years, but this is our first time here at Christmas. We are real glad to be here in Hiawassee, Georgia and very excited to be performing our

Christmas show for you," said tenor Joe Basall.

"This song was just a taste of what's to come in our Christmas show, but first we're

See The Oaks, page 9A

Marine Corps League toy drive is on

By Libby Shook
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Christmas is all about the children or at least that's the motto of the Marine Corps League, Unicoi Detachment 783.

The group of dedicated veterans are going about the business of collecting toys at Christmas time to be distributed to families with children who may not otherwise have toys under the Christmas tree.

All toys collected stay in the area and are distributed to the children of Towns County



Toy distribution will be held on Dec. 15th and Dec. 22nd.

Kendall cuts county taxes again for 2013

By Libby Shook
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In a special called Commissioner's meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 28th, Commissioner Bill Kendall announced that he will cut county property taxes \$275,000 for a 6.32 percent tax decrease on the county portion of Towns County residents' tax bills.

Figures presented to Towns County Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers via a letter sent by the Commissioner's office and signed by the Commissioner, read, "This is to confirm that on Nov. 28, 2012, Towns County set the millage rate for the 2012 tax digest at 5.27 mills for maintenance and operation for Towns County."

The figures presented included the 5.270 mills levied on the 2012 tax digest which resulted from the 6.812 mills of revenue needed less the 1.862 mills anticipated from the 1 percent local option sales tax.

He also included the set millage rate for the operation of the Towns County Fire Department which was .497.

This will bring in the same revenue for 2013 with no anticipated changes.

Kendall also presented the millage rate set by the Towns County Board of Education on Nov. 21, 2012.

The school board set the rate at 6 net mills levied on the 2012 Tax Digest for school maintenance and operation.

Rogers, who was also present at the meeting to address residents' concerns and answer questions regarding their 2012 taxes, said that he would be "submitting the digest to the state on Thursday, November 29th for approval."

"Tax bills should be on the streets by the 10th of December and citizens will have until Feb. 20, 2013 before they are due," said Rogers.

He also said that bills



Commissioner Bill Kendall

paid by Dec. 31st would qualify for a tax exemption on 2012 income tax returns.

According to Kendall, "This tax decrease will result from a combined reduced tax digest due to recession related decrease in property values and reduced property tax assessments."

Kendall's cut in tax mills levied to 5.270 mills, which according to Kendall is "one of the lowest county tax mill rates in the state, if not the lowest."

Due to a decrease in the tax digest, the "roll back" millage rate would be 5.629 to bring in the same amount of tax revenue in 2013 as was brought in for the 2012 budget.

Kendall is cutting the tax mills by the "roll back" amount of .309 plus an additional .050 for a total tax millage cut of .359 or \$275,050.

This good news comes at a time when many folks in Towns County are facing economic hardships and will help lessen the burden on their pocketbooks.

Kendall said, "I am committed to continue to closely monitor spending during this ongoing recession in which citizens are facing financial hardships."

"I will adopt a 2013 budget that will hold the line on reoccurring general fund expenses at the 2012 budget level. Any revenue shortfall as a result of this tax reduction on the county portion of citizens' tax bills will be made up from the county's 'rainy day' operating reserve," said Kendall.

TCES kids shine at art show

By Libby Shook
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Towns County Elementary School has some budding artists with a great deal of potential as evidenced by their participation in a coloring contests for the Juried Arts and Crafts Holiday Show at Brasstown Valley Resort with the winning pictures being displayed along with the other artists during the three-day show, Nov. 9th-11th.

The participants of the coloring contest were the kindergarten and first Grade students who spent a lot of time on their "art work" and took the task very seriously according to Towns County Elementary School Principal Dr. Sandra Page.

"On behalf of the elementary school, I would like



Dr. Sandra Page

to say thank you to Brasstown Valley Resort for their continued support of our students and teachers. Our younger students loved this art activity. Knowing their work would be hanging

See Show page 9A

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