

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County  
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Thursday, April 23, 2009

## Local Weather and Lake Levels

**Thur:** Sunny 74 45  
**Fri:** Sunny 79 50  
**Sat:** Cloudy 78 52  
**Sun:** Cloudy 80 50  
**Mon:** Sunny 78 48  
**Tue:** Cloudy 76 52  
**Wed:** Cloudy 76 49



Upstream Elevation Predicted 4/20/09  
Lake Chatuge 1922.75  
Lake Nottely 1770.04  
Blue Ridge 1682.16

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## May Job Fair

Looking for employment? Job Fair at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church in Young Harris in the Fellowship Hall on Saturday, May 2, beginning at 9:30 and ending at noon. Local businesses are participating. Contact Sharp Memorial Methodist Church Office at 706-379-3210 or sharpumc@brmemc.net.

## Health Dept.

The Towns County Health Department will hold its annually budget meeting on Thursday, Apr. 23 at 11 am at the Board of Education in Hiwassee.

## Book Sale

Friends of the Libraries of Towns County is celebrating National Library Week with their April special book sale at the Young Harris Library. On April 24 & 25, the public is invited to the sale which, although smaller than our sale in late summer, will have better quality books including first editions (\$4 each), hard cover fiction books at \$3 each and first edition fiction that have been withdrawn from the library shelves at \$1 each. A good selection of soft cover books will be available. Hours are 9-5 on Friday and 10-2 on Saturday.

## Reading Festival

The first Pages in the Park Festival will be held in Mayor's Park in Young Harris on Saturday, April 25 from 11 am - 3 pm. There is no fee for admission or parking. This will be a wonderful opportunity to spend the day with your child or grandchild and support childhood literacy. For more information, call Candace Lee at (706) 379-3121 ext. 127.

## MCC Performs

Mountain Community Chorus welcomes spring by offering a concert of short choral pieces. Performances are May 1st at 8 pm and May 3rd at 3 pm in Clegg Auditorium at Young Harris College. Admission is free. Mountaincommunitychorus.org

## Still keeping "Bankers Hours"



Curtis Underwood and David Riddle performed as part of the Bankers Hour last Saturday. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Bankers Hour celebrated a Salute to Service last Saturday at the Anderson Music Hall. The musical and variety performances were based on all facets of service—from military to community.

Special events coordinator Gail Day said, "It has never been more important to the cast to entertain people and show them a good time than this year." She said it takes about 100 United Community Bank

employees to throw the event, which covers not only the performers, but backstage and ushering. Day gave special thanks to the community volunteers who handled parking.

Day said they really want to put on a good show this year because these are tough times, and there is a lot to be concerned about with the economy. In fact, this is the first year the show has required tickets. Day said before now the Bankers Hour has always taken donations.

Day said they have raised more than \$200,000 in the last fifteen years, and that money went to local, regional, and national charities such as the American Cancer Society and the March of Dimes. This year the Bankers Hour expects to raise about \$26,000, and that money will go to charities including the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition, the Tennessee based Kids First Child Advocacy Center, and the North Carolina based Equine Second Chance.

As far as the show itself, Day said this year's performance will be period pieces starting during World War II and traveling forward to the present. She also said this year the show will not have as much bluegrass and gospel as usual. Instead, there will be more swing, rock, and popular music performances.

Audio and video copies of the performances will be available for \$15 and \$20. If you would like to order a copy of this year's Bankers Hour, call Gail Day at the Blairsville UCB by calling 706-745-2151.

## Two arrested for sex crimes

A former jailer and a local businessman have been arrested on separate incidents

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

Former Towns County Sheriff's Office Jail Administrator, Stanley Richardson, of Blairsville was arrested Apr. 9 on one charge of violation of oath of office and five sexual assault charges against a person in custody. Five female inmates have accused Richardson of engaging in sexual contact

while serving as their jail supervisor.

Richardson, who served as a jailer under former Sheriff Rudy Eller, was indicted by a Towns County Grand Jury earlier this month and was arrested afterwards. Richardson is currently out on a \$30,000

See Crimes, page 5



Richardson



Swanson

## Weekend fire burns 35 acres

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

Last Saturday around 4 p.m., a fire broke out, originating from 3037 Bear Lane, and spread to 35 acres before firefighters from Towns County, Georgia Forestry, and U.S. Forestry could put it out.

Towns County Fire Chief Mitch Floyd said the homeowner was burning pampas grass without a permit when the wind caught the fire and blew it up the mountain into thick brush. The fire quickly spread to U.S. Forestry Land, so the



Photo by Lowell Nicholson

See Fire, page 5

## YHC remembers Rebecca Kessler

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

You could not have asked for more beautiful weather—a warm spring day without a cloud in the sky. Friends said it was a perfect day for Rebecca Kessler, who was the outdoors type.

Last Friday, Apr. 17, about forty people attended a ceremony at Young Harris College to dedicate a new swing to Kessler. Rebecca Lynn Kessler died tragically on Oct. 3, 2008 when her car ran off the road and down a steep embankment



Ramona Kessler shares her heartfelt gratitude to the friends of her daughter Rebecca [inset] before cutting the ribbon on a swing dedicated to Rebecca.

See Swing, page 5

## 100-year-old resident earns diploma

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

100-year-old Mary Chesney is proof that with life comes hope, and maybe even dreams too.

The Chatuge Regional Nursing Home resident had a dream fulfilled last Monday. The Towns County chapter of Second Wind Dreams provided Chesney with a high school diploma.

At the age of twelve, Chesney had to drop out of school in the eighth grade after her father was killed in a coalmining accident in Sykesville, Pennsylvania.

The oldest of five daughters, Mary soon became responsible for caring for her sisters while their mother

worked. Mary said she was working by the age of fifteen.

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Mary Chesney receives diploma from Principal Roy Perren.

## Working for a Drug Free Towns County

By David Seckinger  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

Towns County citizen Mac McBride held a meeting for local leaders and law enforcement in hopes of creating a new board in the fight against local drug abuse. McBride wants to call the board the Drug Free Towns County Coalition. His idea is based on a coalition in Union County that has operated for three years.

Union County Coalition founder and board member Mike Priven said the coalition has been successful in raising the public's awareness about drug abuse. Priven said the Union County Coalition has spent about \$40,000 a year, and one year they received a \$50,000 grant from the state. The Union County Coalition is also up for a potential \$125,000 grant from the federal government.



McBride

In the beginning of the meeting, the executive director of the Union County Coalition, Marcene Friedley, asked the group for volunteers. Later in the meeting, McBride explained that the Towns County Coalition needs special persons from a cross section of the community to qualify for funding. He said, in particular, he

needs a representative from the medical field and another from publicity.

McBride said right now they are setting up the corporation with the assistance of attorney Beth Martin, and he hopes to get non-profit status in a couple of months. The coalition will have 12 board members, who meet each month. The coalition will fight drug abuse through public awareness, school education, neighborhood watch, hosting healthy activities, and supporting homes and families.

McBride said they want to hold a county-wide information meeting on May 21. While the details of the meeting have yet to be worked out, McBride said he hopes to have a few hundred people attend.

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## Young Harris College plays host to International VIPs

By Carl Vanzura  
TOWNSCOUNTY HERALD

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual International VIP Tour of the Consulate Corps of Georgia visited Young Harris College Thursday morning as part of a three day tour visiting sites highlighting Northeast Georgia's diversity.

As a tour bus pulled into the Young Harris College campus led by members of the Georgia Highway Patrol, diplomatic and business officials from 20

countries including Albania, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, German, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Nigeria, Philippines, Quebec, Slovenia, South Korea, Switzerland and Taipei were welcomed by YHC President Cathy Cox and a music group from the college that played as the visitors

See VIPs, page 5

## The heart of a King

Special to the Herald

Good work, Halle King, the winner of "Stars Shine for Cancer" on March 28!

The fundraiser (which was put on by Towns and Union Counties Relay for Life at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds) raised over \$6,000 to benefit the American Cancer Society. Halle was the winner as she raised \$855—the most money raised by a performer.

Halle is 12-years-old and has been part of the Ray of Hope Relay Team since she was 18 months old. She walked the track her first time with her papa, Ray Sales, who died from stomach cancer when Halle was two-years-old. Halle has sung at the Union County Relay since she was seven.

Halle will be singing the song that has recently been written just for Relay (You Are All Our Heroes) at this year's Hiwassee Relay during the luminary



Halle King was the winner of Stars Shine for Cancer

Photo by Lowell Nicholson



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