

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC lights up "Come Grow with Us" Campaign

The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC works throughout our community in many ways that are visible and sometimes unseen. Everyone knows them as a reliable provider of safe and economical electric power throughout our mountain communities. More recently broadband services and a variety of other products and services including Green Power Switch have been added. And then there is the company's continuing commitment to the economic development of our area.

But behind the scenes the company also supports many charitable and civic causes, the most recent of which was a generous donation to the Georgia Mountains Research and Education (GMRE) Center Community Council's "Come Grow with Us" campaign.

Matthew Akins, General Manager of BRMEMC, said, "On behalf of our associates and member-customers, we are proud to support the Community Council's programs. Their Preservation projects protect our past, the Adult Outreach invigorates our present and the Student Education programs insure our future."

In accepting the donation, Center Superintendent,



Matthew Akins, EMC General Manager, presents Joe Garner with Blue Ridge Mountain's continuing support of the Community Council.

Joe Garner remarked that, "Blue Ridge Mountain EMC has been a long-term partner with the Community Council. We are most grateful for their continuing support of these initiatives."

The "Come Grow with Us" campaign has achieved almost 70% of its goal of \$60,000 which will permit the Council to fully fund the three initiatives of Student Education, Adult Outreach and Preservation Projects. If you are a business looking for a way to support your community or an individual who has benefited

from the Council's work, you can make a donation to the campaign by visiting our secure site at www.gmrec.uga.edu.

The Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center is part of the University of Georgia and its Community Council programs, which are 100% funded by community donations, serve Fannin, Towns and Union counties in Georgia and Cherokee and Clay counties in North Carolina. For more information on the Center and the Community Council programs call the Center at (706) 745-2655.

Speech Contest date set for January 29, 2011



Members of the Youth Leadership Development Committee seated left to right: Chairman Chuck Luca, Joan Crothers, Fran Johnston, Mark Wolchko. Standing left to right: Sam Fullerton, Brian Watton, Gary Meir. Absent: Harvey Cohen

Members of the Youth Leadership Development Committee have set January 29 as the date for the second annual Speech Contest. High school participants in the contest will be vying for a first prize \$1000.00 scholarship.

Second and third place scholarships of \$600 and \$200 will also be awarded.

Because of the success of last year's event, two teachers at Towns County High School have volunteered to work with the Youth Leadership Development Committee to assure that this year's contest is even better. Quilla Thomas-Bradley, gifted coordinator of the school system and Sabrina Garrett, agricultural educator and advisor to FFA are enthusiastically helping to coordinate the event and are excited that their students will have the opportunity to develop and improve their public speaking skills.

Meanwhile, the committee continues to work selecting and orientating judges, securing facilities, obtaining sponsors, recruiting a moderator, informing the public, reviewing speech topics, printing brochures, meeting with

school officials and contacting home-schoolers and private schools.

This year individuals and businesses are being given the opportunity to participate as sponsors. These generous donors are allowing the committee to double the amount of scholarship money awarded. They are also helping the committee to reach its goal of involving the youth of Towns

County in the government and political process by encouraging them to think about what makes America the best country in the world. Sponsorship questions can be directed to Chuck Luca, committee chairman, at 706-994-9801.

Applications for the contest can also be obtained from Luca or the Towns GOP website www.townsgop.com.

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Burrell and her son Ernest from their burning home on Dec. 7, 2009 off Scataway.

We've laid the groundwork for the year that was and now we'll take a look back at 2010.

In January, State Rep. Allison was appointed Deputy Whip of the Georgia House; Community Bank & Trust was purchased by South Carolina Bank & Trust; a rock slide on Young Harris Mountain was caused by record rainfalls in 2009 and early 2010.

February began with the Federal Emergency Management Agency granting Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall time to complete revisions to the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map for Lake Chatuge; Towns County High's Missy Conrad was named 2010 Basketball Homecoming Queen; Jane Goodall, one of the world's most renowned scientists, lectured at Young Harris College; Towns County government and local municipalities began to explore a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax referendum; TCHS senior Thomas Black was named STAR student and he selected Alecia Frizzell as his STAR Teacher.

March began with the madness of a state playoff win by the Towns County Lady Indians. The trip resulted in a win over Holy Innocents and a trip to the Sweet 16; George Jones came to Anderson Music Hall and performed before a standing room only crowd; Towns County's Kyle Davis brought home the silver medal after competing in the USA Wrestling championships; Country Music Superstar Sara Evans delighted the crowd at Anderson Music Hall with her brand of Country Music; Bank of Hiwassee was bought by Citizens South Bank based in Gastonia, NC; former chief deputy Eddie Osborn returned to Towns County Superior Court to seek a new trial; former State Sen. Nancy Schaefer died the victim of a murder-suicide in Habersham County; locals learned the local Health Department was in financial trouble due to state cutbacks.

April brought big news to Towns County. Chatuge Regional Hospital was named the state's best small hospital; the Lady Indians tennis team was the No. 2 seed in Region 8-A and advanced to the state tournament; basketball standout Missy Conrad signed a scholarship to play basketball at Young Harris College; the McKinney Building, a landmark in Downtown for decades, gave way to the test of time; the Chophouse of Hiwassee was in and Shoney's was out; Towns County FFA President Jeannie Bradley was became the state's top extem-

poraneous speaker.

May came with the news that Towns and Union counties would renew their football rivalry; TCHS senior Jeff Stewart was named the school's valedictorian; Indian scoring legend Ken Hamilton was chosen to lead the boys' basketball program; Georgia House Speaker David Ralston delivered the Commencement Address at his alma mater, Young Harris College; the historic Presley Post Office was restored and rededicated behind the Towns County Courthouse; Commissioner Bill Kendall announced that the county would purchase land on Mining Gap Trail to serve as future park land; TCHS seniors Amy Vardeman and Thomas Black were named Salutatorian and Historian respectively; Alecia Frizzell, Thomas Boyd and Kay Dyer were named Towns County Schools teachers of the year; the Class of 2010 bade farewell to Towns County High School.

June brought Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle to town where he told locals that better days are ahead economically; at Young Harris College, Randy Dunn was chosen as the school's athletic director; at Towns County High School, Chris Vardo was chosen to succeed Shannon Moss as the school's baseball coach.

July came and Towns County residents turned out to celebrate the announcement of the purchase of land on Mining Gap Trail as the future home of the Ralph and Johnnie Foster Memorial Park; the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds celebrate 60 years in entertainment; Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton told the local GOP of his intentions to expand the county's neighborhood watch program; Jeff Langley got the voters' choice as the next district attorney and State Sen. Jim Butterworth was the overwhelming choice to return as the Senate District's leadership; Sheriff Clinton was named the Towns County Lions Club Citizen of the Year; all three Towns County Schools earned the title of Distinction for meeting AYP for the seventh consecutive year; Victoria Neisler was named Miss Georgia Mountain Fair 2010.

In August, Young Harris College unveiled its multi-million dollar basketball arena; Towns County Schools reopen after summer break; the Board of Education votes to not raise local taxes; Commissioner Kendall revised the county's Dangerous Dog Laws.

September came and Commissioner Kendall vowed not to raise local

taxes in 2011; The Ridges Resort hosted a fireworks display on Labor Day, the first community event under new ownership; the state awards \$500,000 to build a new Senior Center in Towns County; the state's largest willow tree was discovered in Towns County; Pat Smith announced her candidacy for Hiwassee City Council; Community Bank & Trust hands out hundreds of dollars in the bank's first Money Grab; Chris Swett announced his candidacy for the Post 5 Hiwassee City Council seat.

October arrived and the Towns County Indians won their first game of 2010, a 48-18 win over North Cobb; Commissioner Kendall settled the Lake Chatuge Flood Plain Map; the commissioner announced a millage rate cut for 2011; state budget cuts close the Towns County Forestry Commission Office; Carly Coffey and Brett Bradshaw are named 2010 Football Homecoming Queen and King; a ruptured spleen ends Billy Meier's football career; the Georgia Baptist Retirement Community is dedicated in Towns County.

November finally gets here and House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison returns to the State House in a landslide; Nathan Deal is Georgia's 82nd governor; Pat Smith wins a seat on the Hiwassee City Council; Jeannie Bradley takes sixth place in the National FFA convention's Extemporaneous Speaking; the Towns County community rallies to support Bradley Rogers' fight against cancer; Eddie Osborn's quest for a new trial is denied by Superior Court Judge Lynn Alderman; Alecia Frizzell is named Towns County Schools' Teacher of the Year; Elois Anderson and Dick Paris are honored as community icons at Anderson Music Hall; college basketball returns to Towns County as Young Harris College celebrates its return to the collegiate ranks; the First Lady of Country Music Loretta Lynn plays Anderson Music Hall.

December comes and Gov.-Elect Nathan Deal appoints State Sen. Jim Butterworth as Senate Floor Leader; Old Man Winter shuts down Towns County schools for four days before the Christmas Break; Commissioner Kendall uses county reserves to pay off the County Jail; Towns County Woman charged with attempted murder of her mother; Food Pantry founders David Mullins and Jim Hicks are honored; outgoing BOE member Bob Gibby is honored for his 12 years of service; a 38-year-old Towns County man is one of two men identified as victims in a double fatal house fire in Union County.

Alzheimer's Support Group

The Nursing Home of Murphy Medical Center sponsors an Alzheimer's support group the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 2 p.m. in the Long Term Care conference room.

For more information, contact support group leader Pam Lovingood at 835-7588.

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