

# Towns County Herald

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## TCMS boys basketball takes top honors in conference

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Congratulations are in order for the Towns County Middle School Boys Basketball Indians, who finished their regular season as Smoky Mountain East Co-Champions with their Hayesville, North Carolina, counterparts.

“And the reason we were co-champions is because we were both 7-1 in our sub-region,” said Head Coach Shea Taylor, adding that Towns County Middle is the only Georgia school in the conference. “I like it there because it’s schools that are our size that we play against, and no private schools.”

The Indians’ finished the season with a whopping 14-3 record, a marked improvement over last year’s 5-10 season record, which was also Taylor’s first year as head coach.

“They worked hard as seventh-graders, they worked hard as eighth-graders, and everybody stayed together,” said Coach Taylor. “All the hard work paid off and we had a really successful year. We went 14-3 – that’s a great year. I can’t remember a team that’s been 14-3 in the past.”

Since Coach Taylor took over the team last school year, he has been working on building his program with the boys. He was assistant coach for a time before taking on head coach responsibilities, so he’s gotten to know his team well over the past few years.

“I feel like we were prepared when the season started, and I feel like we did get better as the season progressed,” said Coach Taylor. “Overall, I feel like we just played quality basketball for the most part.”

“We had a couple nights



The Towns County Middle School Boys Basketball Indians celebrate with cupcakes and a big trophy following their co-champion victory over the Eastern Division of the Smoky Mountain Conference.

where things didn’t always go our way, but we still were able to keep it together and win those games.”

Several eighth-graders will be moving on to high school after this school year ends in May, though the team will still have competent seventh-grade students moving up to the big leadership spots come basketball season next year.

Hayden McClure, an eighth-grader speaking for his teammates, said that the season was mostly about having fun.

“We worked hard, and we really deserved that championship this year,” said McClure. “It’s mostly been fun – we’ve had our times with the coach. I’m going to miss middle school basketball, but I’m ready to play for the high school.”

In a celebration at the

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## Nelms talks planning, TVA rate hikes, town halls and more

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

BLAIRSVILLE – Blue Ridge Mountain EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms and EMC Board President Mickey Cummings stopped by the North Georgia News offices last Friday with a few updates on the EMC in 2017.

For starters, Nelms touched briefly on his transition into the EMC, which he has handled since July of 2016.

“Right now, I’m slowly but surely getting my arms around the organization, all the ins and outs,” said Nelms. “It’s been a little bit of a learning curve, because the way an EMC works here in North Georgia is a little different than the way an EMC works in a metropolitan area of North

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Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board President Mickey Cummings with EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms

## Business group outlines agenda for coming year

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Plans for 2017 and group organization were the primary focuses of the Hiwassee Business Group during its first meeting of the year on Tuesday, Jan. 31, at the Towns County Civic Center.

Last year, beautification of the Hiwassee Square and downtown area was the group’s main effort. To work toward that goal, the group gathered sponsorships from local businesses for themed banners that now line Main Street to promote Hiwassee’s theme, “Georgia’s Lake and Mountain Paradise.”

Along with the banners, members of the organization repainted the gazebo in the square. This year, members



Hiwassee Councilwoman Liz Ordiales acts as a liaison for the business group and city hall.

hope to continue revitalizing the square and downtown area to make the city a more attractive destination for visitors and

tourists.

While city appearance is still high on the members’ to-do

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## After more than 20 years at city hall, Stancil departs

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Rick Stancil’s relationship with Hiwassee City Hall dates back more than 20 years, to when he first started practicing law in the city.

He served as city attorney from 1996 to 2009, and began as city manager in 2007, taking on both roles for two years until the city hired another attorney.

From 2009 onward, Stancil served solely as city manager until his last official day on the job, which was Tuesday, Jan. 31.

“I’ve been touched by the number of people that have come in, and especially the past week, and the positive comments that I’ve

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Former Hiwassee City Manager Rick Stancil sits behind his old desk, now empty, on Feb. 1, the day after his last official day as an employee of the city. Stancil volunteered his time last Wednesday as a friend and advisor to the mayor.

## Bill Kendall, Barbara Mathis to be honored for lake protection

News Special  
North Georgia News

MURPHY, NC – Is there anyone in the area who hasn’t at one time or another appreciated Lake Chatuge?

There are four gorgeous reservoirs here in the upper Hiwassee River watershed, but with its 7,000 acres of broad surface area, numerous islands and coves, and position spanning the NC/GA state line in the heart of Towns and Clay counties, it has a more “lived in” feel than some of our other lakes.

On Thursday evening, Feb. 23, Towns County local government leaders will be honored for their efforts to protect and improve Lake Chatuge at the 9th Annual Watershed Gala.

Chatuge has abundant



Hiwassee Mayor Barbara Mathis and then-Towns County Commissioner Bill Kendall at the July 21, 2016, dedication of the nutrient reduction system at the Hiwassee Wastewater Treatment Facility.

public access, playgrounds and hotels with lake views. In terms of water-based recreation, there is literally

something for everyone.

And whereas other lakes have a large percentage of

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## Barrett discusses Appalachian Trail with Movers and Shakers

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – Dr. Darrell Barrett brought the outdoors to the indoors at the Mountain Movers and Shakers weekly meeting, speaking on Appalachian Trail community and commerce opportunities on Friday, Feb. 3, at Mary’s Southern Grill.

An avid hiker and Appalachian Trail enthusiast, Barrett shared the nature of trail culture and how Towns County can benefit from promoting the hiking community.

“I’ve hiked hundreds of miles over the years on the Appalachian Trail,” said Barrett. “I want to share a little bit about the contour of the Appalachian Trail and give



Darrell Barrett shows off some hiking gear to the Mountain Movers and Shakers on Friday, Feb. 3.

you some statistics.

“I started on Feb. 28 of last year, and I was going to hike the entire 2,189.2 miles all the way from Springer Mountain – about 75 of those miles are in Georgia – all the

way to Mount Katahdin in Maine. It takes about four to six months to hike all of it.”

Due to a family emergency after a week of

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## Hiwassee Councilmembers take tour of sewer lift station

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Hiwassee City Councilmembers spent last Thursday morning learning the ins and outs of the city’s sewer lift stations, assessing each station’s needs to determine what steps should be taken moving forward.

“We took a tour of the lift stations because we wanted to know the conditions we were dealing with,” said Councilwoman Liz Ordiales. “We really want to understand what’s going on. We wanted to see how all of it works, and that’s why we went on that little tour.”

“We’re getting ready to submit an application for a GEFA (Georgia Environmental



City Engineer Don Baker, of EMI, leading a tour of one of Hiwassee’s sewer lift stations with Liz Ordiales, Kris Berrong, Rayette Ross and Anne Mitchell

Finance Authority) loan, a substantial loan of about \$1.5 million, so that we can upgrade

our plant and increase the capacity for it.”

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Lake Levels  
Blue Ridge 1,669.32  
Chatuge 1,917.42  
Nottely 1,762.08



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for YOUTH  
Baseball and  
Softball

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Senior Center  
Valentine's  
Fundraiser  
Feb. 10th

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Arts and  
Crafts show  
Brasstown  
Valley

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Basketball  
Region 8-A  
Wed. Feb 8 vs. Prince Ave.  
@ Lakeview  
Boys 5:30 PM  
Girls 4 PM