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The Great American Eclipse coming Monday, Aug. 21

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Monday, Aug. 21, all of North America will be treated to an eclipse of the sun. Anyone within the path of totality can see one of nature's most awe-inspiring sights – a total solar eclipse.

This path, where the moon will completely cover the sun and the sun's tenuous atmosphere can be seen, will stretch from Lincoln Beach, Oregon to Charleston, South Carolina. The path of totality is a relatively thin ribbon, around 70 miles wide, which will cross the United States from West to East.

The first point of contact will be at Lincoln Beach, Oregon at 9:05 a.m. Pacific Time. Totality begins there at 10:16 a.m. Pacific Time.

Over the next hour and a half, it will cross through Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The total eclipse will end near Charleston, South Carolina at 2:48 p.m. From there, the lunar shadow leaves the United States at 4:09 p.m., Eastern Time. Its longest duration will be near Carbondale, Illinois, where the sun will be completely covered for two minutes and 40 seconds.

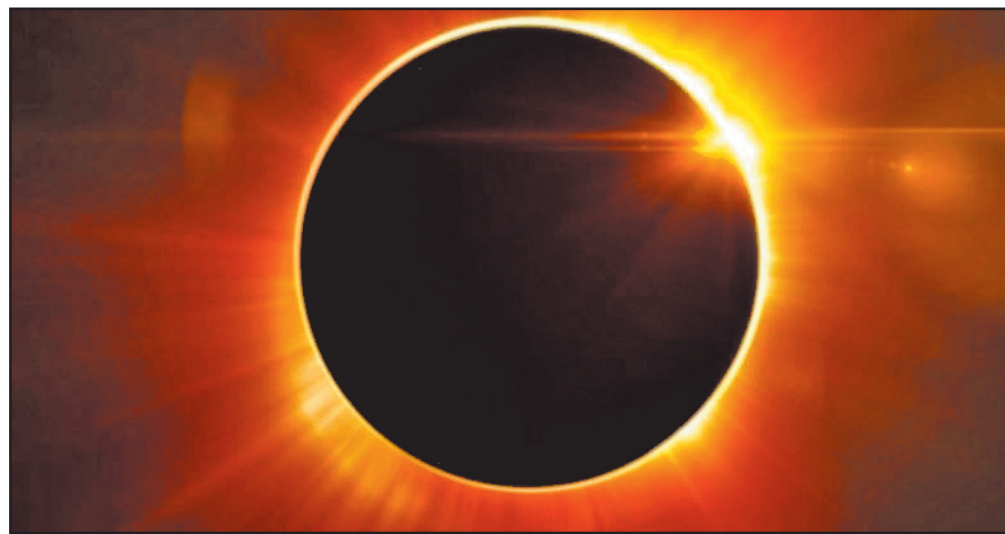
Observers outside this path will see a partial solar eclipse where the moon covers part of the sun's disk. This event, in which the moon passes between the sun and the earth, blocks all or part of the sun for up to three hours, from beginning to end.

For this eclipse, the longest period when the moon completely blocks the sun from any given location along the path will be about two minutes and 40 seconds.

In Hiwassee and Young Harris, totality will last approximately two minutes and 20 seconds, just 20 seconds shy of the longest viewing time, beginning at 2:35 p.m. with the partial phase lasting until approximately 4 p.m.

To celebrate this incredible celestial experience, the Towns County Chamber of Commerce and Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge are co-hosting a Tailgating Party at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds. Attendees are encouraged to bring tents, lawn chairs and lunches and plan to spend the afternoon at the Fairgrounds.

Steven Phillips and the



Total Solar Eclipse

Midnight Express Band will be performing, there will be lots of fun and games for children of all ages. The cost to attend is \$5 per carload,

which includes two pairs of eclipse glasses, provided courtesy of The Glass Doctor of Hiwassee.

Please note that it

is imperative to wear these protective glasses when looking at the eclipsed sun throughout the entire eclipse. HomeMade

See Eclipse, Page 6A

EMA, first responders ready for anything on Eclipse Day

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

In final preparation for next week's solar eclipse, Towns County officials met on Tuesday, Aug. 8, in the 911 conference room to discuss traffic, emergency protocols and all other points of concern regarding the celestial event.

"A full solar eclipse will occur around 2:36 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 21," said Cliff Bradshaw, Towns County Sole Commissioner. "This event will be marked by a brief period of darkness. Citizens are asked to prepare for this event as they might prepare for a snowstorm – avoid travel if possible, you may want to have the following stocked: household supplies, food, medicines and gas for your vehicle.

"We are expecting a large number of spectators to our area for the eclipse and



Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw and EMA Director Rickey Mathis. Photo/Lily Avery

there may be little or no cell service during this time.

"I would like to thank you for your patience and cooperation during this event

and assure you that Towns County Emergency Services are prepared with extra personnel on duty during this time; if you

See EMA, Page 8A

Phillips humbled by winning GAB's Best On-Air Personality

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
Editor

A humble Steven Phillips said he's still trying to let it soak in that he was selected Best On-Air Personality at the recent 55th annual Georgia Association of Broadcasters award dinner held at Jekyll Island.

Phillips, a radio personality from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. on "Morning Dish," on radio station WJRB 95.1 in Young Harris, said it's hard to believe he took top honors in Jekyll, and took home a GABBY.

"It's hard to believe that in the state of Georgia, they picked me to be the personality of the year," Phillips said. "Just little ole me from Hiwassee, Georgia, with all those folks in the Atlanta area. Winning this award, well, it really hasn't soaked in real good yet. It took



Steven Phillips at the Gabbys.

me by surprise,

"I'll tell you, I've been doing this for five years now, I've got to meet a lot of people that just love the show," he said.

"It's been fun. We try to be fun, but clean, sort of like the late great Rhubarb Jones was."

In addition to Phillips, See Phillips, Page 6A

GM seeking exit strategy as Cable TV Division loses \$30,000 a month

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
Editor

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC's Cable Television Division is losing \$30,000 a month, and the Cooperative's General Manager and Board of Directors are seeking an exit strategy from the EMC's agreement with the cable service provider.

The cable TV service contract, which currently provides cable TV services to approximately 1,600 customers for a loss of thousands of dollars each month, was discovered by EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms.

The contract runs through 2020, Nelms said.

Nelms said it was a problem that had persisted for



BRMEMC General Manager Jeffrey Nelms

several years. The agreement dates back to 2010 and was not entered into by the current board of directors, Nelms said.

"As far as our cable television service, we are no longer taking on any new customers," Nelms said. "We are looking for an exit strategy with our current provider, which is not to say we'll always stay away from TV service, but, not the way as it stands today.

"We want to give our existing TV customers proper notice, we don't want to be disruptive to them," Nelms said. "We're working to try to partner with a local TV offering. That would be a nice win-win for our membership."

BRMEMC Secretary Roy Perren said the Board of Directors wants to remedy the situation.

"We want to fix this and

See Cable TV, Page 6A

Judge Murphy Miller lifts injunction blocking EMC elections

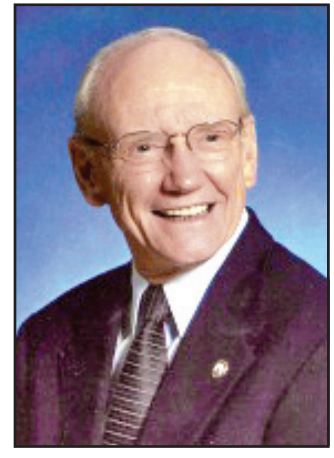
By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
Editor

Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board Member Charles Jenkins calls it the "biggest screwed up mess" he's ever seen.

At least, that's what he told the Mountain Movers and Shakers on Friday, Aug. 11, at The Sundance Grill in Hiwassee.

The rejection of four candidates from the Annual Election Ballot by the Credentials Committee, resulted in an Enotah Circuit Superior Court judge issuing an injunction to prevent the EMC's September elections from happening.

The Board's Credentials Committee reconvened on



BRMEMC Board Member Charles Jenkins

Aug. 3 and reconsidered, allowing Bert Rogers, Preston Cabe, Karen Pirie, and Tommy White to appear on ballot.

The four had been deemed "members not in good standing" because of previously late power payments.

Senior Superior Court Judge Murphy Miller was asked to decide the meaning of "member in good standing," because there wasn't a definition included in the Cooperative's bylaws.

Because the Credentials Committee reversed its previous decision, Judge Miller dismissed the court-ordered injunction on Aug. 7.

Rogers, who felt wronged, pursued the legal action and rightly so, as there is no legal definition of "member in good standing."

BRMEMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms See BRMEMC, Page 3A

Towns County FBLA students compete at national level

News Special
Towns County Herald

ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA – Over 12,000 of America's best and brightest youth gathered in Anaheim to showcase their talents as future business leaders, and to compete for a chance to make it to the national award stage and the opportunity to win over \$150,000 in cash awards.

Future Business Leaders of America, the largest and oldest business student organization, held its National Leadership Conference in Anaheim from June 28 through July 3.

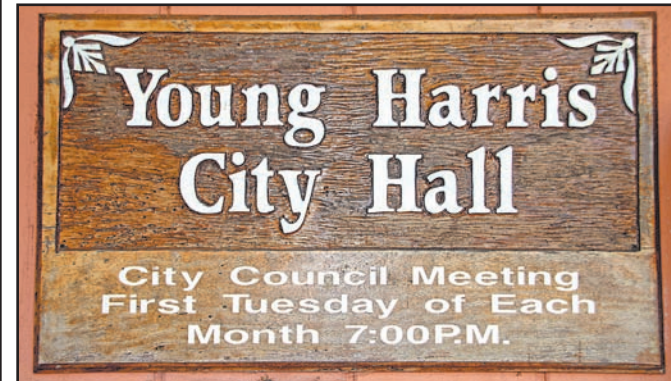
Participants from around the country were in attendance for this conference to sharpen

See FBLA, Page 3A



FBLA National Competitive Event Team from Towns County: (Back Row) Nick Shook, Jackson Taylor, Nick McConnell, Will DeVries, Chase Williams, and Kendall Floyd; (Front Row) Makenzie Carroll, Taylor Cornett and Emily Williams.

Hiwassee, Young Harris to begin qualifying



The sign just outside of Young Harris City Hall.

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Heads up to the residents of Hiwassee and Young

Harris, qualifying for each city's Nov. 7 General Election is just around the corner.

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