

# Towns County Herald

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## Primary ballot is ready for election, May 24

### Towns County Commissioner at Large



Cliff Bradshaw Rep



Steven G. Gerdes Rep



James Clifford Goodwin Dem



Nathan Hughes Dem



Steven Phillips Rep

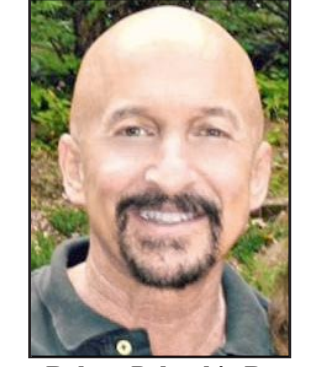


David Rogers (I) Rep

### Sheriff



Chris Clinton (I) Rep



Robert Palarchio Rep



Cecil Dye (I) Rep



Bruce Rogers (I) Dem

### Superior Court Clerk

### Tax Commissioner

### Board of Education Post 4

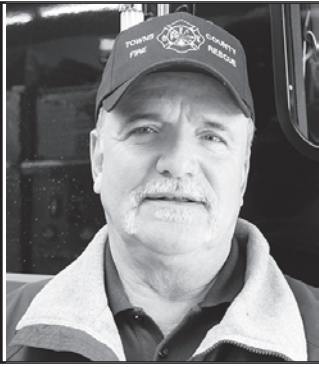


Laura Banister



Johnathon Fullerton

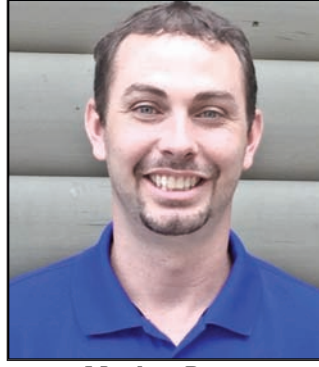
### Coroner



Harold Copeland Rep



Nathan Noblet



Matthew Parton



Dr. Kilee Smith

### Board of Education Post 5

### State Senator District 50



John Wilkinson (I) Rep



Roy Benefield Rep

By Charles Duncan  
Towns County Herald  
editor@nganews.com

A familiar name was missing from last week's qualifying for local elections. Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall didn't qualify to seek reelection. Commissioner Kendall

has dedicated four decades to public service, either as a school superintendent or a sole commissioner.

Five candidates from both parties have qualified for the sole commissioner seat. Republicans Steven Phillips, Cliff Bradshaw and Steve Gerdes; Democrats James Goodwin and Nathan Hughes.

Bob Gibby and Donna Hedden will not be seeking reelection to the Towns County Board of Education, and Tashina Eller chose not to qualify again for County Coroner, leaving Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland to run unopposed for that position.

Laura Banister and Jonathan Fullerton seek to fill Gibby's seat in Post 4; and

Nathan Noblet, Kilee Smith and Matthew Parton seek to fill Hedden's Post 5. BOE seats are non-partisan.

Incumbents who will run unopposed in the May 24 Primary are Clerk of Superior Court Cecil Dye, and Probate Judge David Rogers. Tax Commissioner Bruce Rogers also will run unopposed.

Towns County Sheriff

Chris Clinton has opposition from fellow Republican Robert Palarchio.

In the District 8 State House race, incumbent Stephen Allison, a Blairsville Republican, retired from the State House after four terms. That race is likely headed for a runoff.

Five candidates qualified for that seat – all

were Republicans.

From Suches, David Barton, from Tiger, Joshua Littrell, Kent Woerner, and Matt Jorgens.

Jorgens withdrew from the race on Monday, citing wanting to spend more time with his 7-year-old son.

See Qualifying, Page 10A

## Seabee Ball an evening to remember

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Members of Navy Seabee Veterans of America Island X-3 hosted Blairsville's first ever Seabee Ball on Saturday, March 5, in recognition of the 74th anniversary of the Navy Seabees – and they did it with style.

Plank member Seabees Richard Hoibraten, Ed Crenshaw, Bob Ramay and Mike Ruback planned the event, which took place in the Union County Community Center and featured formal dress with decadent dinner options from Amazing Grace Catering.

Seabees from around the region attended the event, along with individuals from other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, highlighting the exceptionally supportive community of veterans in the North Georgia Mountains.



L-R: Mike Ruback, Bob Ramay, Richard Hoibraten and Ed Crenshaw were the driving force behind Blairsville's first ever Seabee Ball

Command Master Chief (Ret.) Neal Beard of the U.S. Navy came all the way from Lawrenceburg, Tennessee, to be the keynote speaker for the evening.

Beard is Seabee Combat Warfare qualified,

a designation similar to the Combat Infantryman's Badge in the U.S. Army. His medals and personal decorations are considerable, including the Bronze Star, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation

See Seabee, Page 10A

## Congressman Collins pays a visit

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

U.S. 9th Congressional District Rep. Doug Collins made several stops in Blairsville and Union County on Wednesday, March 9, to give constituents an in-person update on what's been going on in the District of Columbia.

His first stop was to speak with students in the new Union County Schools Fine Arts Center, marking the first occasion the congressman had had to see the state-of-the-art facility.

"I've been doing a lot of that all over the district the last couple of years, but what is really interesting is to watch the kids become more engaged in their surroundings," said Rep. Collins. "Not just what's going on in their world, but asking questions about budget, asking questions about world



Copelan Collins with his father, Rep. Doug Collins, on a daytrip to Blairsville and Union County to visit with students and constituents on Wednesday, March 9

See Collins, Page 10A

## GEMA/FEMA assisting in plans for Towns County

By Mason Mitcham  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Severe winter weather, including heavy thunderstorms and flooding, recently caused President Barack Obama to issue a Major Disaster Declaration for the state of Georgia.

As a result, representatives from the federal and state emergency management agencies have come to Towns County to assess claims and damages.

At a meeting on Wednesday, March 9, Tara Teuta, a GEMA representative,



GEMA representative Tara Teuta attended a meeting with Commissioner Bill Kendall, Emergency Medical Services Director Rickey Mathis, and others, to discuss the process of acquiring project reimbursement money from the federal government.

See FEMA, Page 10A

## Time for telling stories near

By Mason Mitcham  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Young Harris – The Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival is once again coming to Towns County, and Young Harris College will host the festival on Friday, April 1, and Saturday, April 2.

This will be the second year that the Georgia Mountain Storytelling Festival has come to the area, bringing a variety of award-winning storytellers from all over Appalachia.

This year, the festival will feature many of the same storytellers, but also several



Returning Appalachian Storyteller Lyn Ford performed at the Festival Last Year

new ones. Names include celebrated environmentalist

Doug Elliot, award-winner Andy Offutt Irwin, musicians

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Miss Relay For Life Contest  
April 16th  
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Easter Egg Hunt  
March 26th  
Towns County Recreation Department  
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Prom Closet is in need of donations for this year's Prom Season  
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SPORTS BASEBALL  
Fri. Mar 18 vs. Hebron (DH) 4:30 & 6 PM  
SOCCER  
Tues. Mar 15 @ Providence 4 & 6 PM  
Thurs. Mar 17 vs. George Walton 5 & 7 PM