

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, May 28, 2014

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: T-Storms	82 60
Fri: T-Storms	82 61
Sat: T-Storms	84 62
Sun: Clouds	79 61
Mon: T-Storms	80 62
Tue: T-Storms	81 60
Wed: Rain	83 61



Upstream Elevation Predicted 05/28/14	
Lake Chatuge	1,925.77
Lake Nottely	1,776.37
Blue Ridge	1,687.57

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Gibson declares TCHS seniors ready for life

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The graduation ceremony commenced for the Class of 2014 as the sun set on Towns County High School Friday evening as family and friends packed the Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium in their brightest spring colors to watch their brightest spring forward.

Seniors anxiously awaited the shifting of their tassels and a grasping of their well-earned diplomas.

The Towns County High School Principal Jonathan Gibson approached the microphone up with proud words toward his seniors.

Faith Robinson, named STAR Student based the highest SAT scores, Nicole Garrett, rewarded for perfect attendance K-12th grade, Courtney Marshall, named Historian, Ansley Vardeman, TCHS Salutatorian, and Kaila Reece, TCHS Valedictorian, joined together as Principal Gibson called especially upon them to honor their hard work and diligence.

Towns County High



TCHS 2014 Valedictorian Kaila Reece delivers her Valedictorian Address. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

School 2014 Valedictorian Reece fell back on memories she had made alongside her peers, reminiscing on life many years prior to graduation while also

anticipating the road ahead. "I remember the moment I walked into school the first day and I knew that I would be best friends with all of you for many years to come," she said. "And I have to say, I can't imagine spending the past eight years without them. We began to blossom and

grow together as we spent time in musicals and plays, or the fun times we had at the middle school football and basketball games. We had finally made it to the top and spent some really wonderful years together."

The moment for Reece swelled poignantly when she spoke of sanctions as well as hard times.

"God gives us suffering as a bittersweet blessing," she said. "And yet we propose to do better and I'll always be grateful for Him."

Salutatorian Ansley Vardeman next spoke of blessings and humility.

"What these years have taught me is to have nothing to fear," she said. "I encourage you to embrace everything life has to offer with open arms and open minds, and most of all an open heart, so that every breath you take will have meaning and purpose."

Principal Gibson also spoke of breaths and purpose, promised to keep his speech "short and sweet," he joked.

"I will not be singing any

See *Grads*, Page 10

Towns County remembers its Veterans on Monday

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Memorial Day in Towns County drew a crowd of more than 150 people on Monday and even more in spirit as Capt. Steven Evans, USN Retired, honored current and fallen fellow veterans.

Capt. Evans, a Blairsville resident, didn't have to travel far as the Keynote Speaker at Towns County Veterans Memorial Park.

However, Capt. Evans has travelled far and wide to get where he is today, with honors comprised of many, including the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Navy Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, the National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Capt. Evans thanked the VFW post 7807, the American



Capt. Steven Evans, USN Retired receives a gift from VFW Post 7807. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Legion Post 23, The Marine Corps League, Unicoi Detachment 783, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary 23.

"We're here to pay tribute to our service members, and to remember those sacrifices they have made," said Capt. Evans,



Laying of the Wreaths at Towns County Veterans Memorial Park. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"Particularly all those who have fallen, making the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation. It's a real joy to see all of you

out here to honor our veterans, both living and dead, to share in

See *Veterans*, Page 10

Nannie celebrates 100th birthday



Nannie Rose and family on Sunday at the Towns County Senior Center. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Matthew Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

There was little doubt

who was the life of the party at Nannie Rose Sims Tatham's 100th birthday bash on Sunday at the Towns County Senior Center.

Rose, the longest living member of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church, greeted loved ones with smiles, enthusiasm.

See *Nannie*, Page 10

MECHS graduates 44 on Thursday

By Todd Forrest
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Forty-four students from Union and Fannin counties and will walk the aisle and graduate from Mountain Education Charter High School on Thursday at 5 p.m. at the Fannin County Performing Arts Center.

More than 300 will graduate from the 11 counties that make up the school, and that is a normal sized class according to Union County State Administrator Roy Perren.

"These kids are here for different reasons," Perren said. "Some are here because this is where they want to go to school. Some are here because they have struggled in school or dropped out and this is like a second chance. We're really doing a lot of great things for kids at Mountain Ed."



Roy Perren

During Thursday's graduation exercises, Raymond Lee Mitchely III will give the Mountain Education's reflection and Holly Davis will present the Union County Senior High Honor Address.

Fannin County Site

Administrator Lori Chastain will give the Recognition of the 2014 Class.

Dana Lance will present the President's Award for Educational Excellence and the President's Award for Educational Achievement.

Scholarships will be presented by the Union County Rotary Club, the Rotary Club of Lake Chatuge, MEC Faculty Scholarship, Blairsville Kiwanis Club, Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Union/Towns Employer Committee, Corrugated Replacements, ETC, Shining Star, Union County Intergency Group, Jenn Bailey Memorial Scholarship, Union County and Fannin County Woodmen of the World, UCBI of Union County, Pearson Learning Systems Scholarship, Tri-State Business Women, Unity Church of

See *MECHS*, Page 10

Kendall responds to Jobson Letter to Editor

By Charles Duncan
Towns County Herald
cduncan.tch@windstream.net

Numerous persons have expressed concern about the Letter to the Editor in last week's *Towns County Herald* written by Lance Jobson, Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall said.

Commissioner Kendall told the *Towns County Herald* that he takes full responsibility for allowing church groups and others access to the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center, Beach and other county facilities, and that under his administration they will continue to have use of these facilities the same as other groups and as well as non-believers.

Commissioner Kendall said it is ironic that Jobson would write his provocative Letter to the Editor at the same time as the Memorial Day observance to our fallen soldiers who paid the supreme price to protect our freedom that allows Jobson the freedom to write his "distasteful" letter objecting to the use of county facilities by those who believe "and want to honor our Lord."



Commissioner Bill Kendall

The Memorial Day Service at Towns County Veterans Memorial Park, which is located on government property and much of it constructed with public funds, was started with prayer by veterans and ended with Rev. Richard Hoibratten thanking God for our blessings of freedom and liberty, Kendall said.

"Sunday School classes from various churches in our county frequently reserve the pavilions at the beach, at no charge, and they shall continue to have access to the beach, the Recreation and Conference Center, ball fields and all

See *Kendall*, Page 10

Woman charged with aggravated assault

Towns County Herald
News Special

In the early morning hours of May 20, at approximately 1 a.m., Towns County sheriff's deputies were dispatched to a residence off Highway 17 North near Woods Grove to a call of gunshots fired.

When deputies arrived, they found that the persons later to be identified as the victims had left the scene to seek medical treatment in Clay County, NC.

The victims later went to Union County for medical treatment. Both were treated and released.

TCSO sheriff's Detectives Lt. Mark Cecci and Sgt. Brandon Barrett arrived to process the scene and continue the investigation.

Investigators were able to

determine that two rounds from a .30-30 caliber rifle ammunition had been fired outside the residence, both hitting the home and penetrating into the house.

An adult male relative of the suspect was hit by shrapnel from one of the bullets and an adult female was hit by part of the same bullet. The other shot went into a window and went through multiple walls.

Two children were in the home at the time, in an adjacent

See *Shooting*, Page 10

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD



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Gospel Fest

Union County Saddle Club Arena
June 6th
See page 6



Relay For Life

Yard Sale
June 7th
see page 2

US Forest Service Fishing Rodeos!

See page 8

Senior Centered
June 17th
see page 2