

# Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1928

50 Cents

www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 87 Number 35

Wednesday, July 6, 2016

## Jeremy Nelms is unanimous choice as EMC GM

By Charles Duncan  
Towns County Herald  
Editor

**Young Harris** – The nightmare is over and healing has begun as Blue Ridge Mountain EMC's Board of Directors announces that they have hired a new general manager.

Jeremy Nelms is the unanimous choice of the EMC Board of Directors, EMC Vice President, Mickey Cummings said.

Nelms replaces Dan Brewer, who has been serving as interim manager since Aug. 26, 2015.

Brewer replaced Matthew Akins who resigned following months of speculation by the board regarding stewardship of the five-county cooperative.

The unpaid account of former TRM EMC President Terry Taylor eventually led to the selection of Nelms as the cooperative's new general manager.



Though the EMC did collect a portion of the \$48,000-plus debt owed by Taylor, eventually, the legal costs to collect the remainder of the unpaid debt proved to cost more than the amount to be recovered.

Cummings said that the search firm hired to find a new general manager acquired more than 100 names inter-

ested in the general manager's job.

"After sifting through all of those candidates, the search committee decided to us with about four applications. The search committee sifted through those and we like three candidates," Cummings said. "We did preliminary interviews with those three individuals, and after those inter-



Jeremy Nelms

views were over, we decided to submit all three candidates to the board.

"The board then took a day and interviewed all three candidates," Cummings said. "The board asked each candidate some real pointed questions. It was an attempt to get to the heart of their personality, their management styles – those kinds of things."

"One name rose to the top, and that name was Jeremy Nelms," Cummings said. "It was a unanimous decision. We liked Jeremy, we were impressed with his experience, and we were impressed with his technological skills and how he applied those skills to EMCs."

"We were impressed with his moral fiber, his honesty and the way that he deals with problems," Cummings said. "We were impressed with his experience in budget building. In Florida, he was tasked with developing a long-range plan."

"We were impressed with that as well, because we feel that we need a long-range plan moving forward," Cummings said. "We wanted somebody that could pull all the elements together for our EMC and develop a long-range plan."

Cummings referenced fiber optic cable as one for instance.

"Everybody wants fiber in Union, Towns, Fannin and Clay County, NC and Cherokee County, NC," Cummings said. "We have to develop a plan to raise the funds to get there. We're looking at grants, and we've already started looking for the funding."

"Jeremy is one of the up-and-coming stars in the EMC world," Cummings said.

Nelms served as the director of Engineering and Operations Services for Talquin Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TECI) in Quincy, Fla., where he has been a team member since 2006. In addition to traditional supervisory duties, he also provided transitional and technical leadership in converting TECI's current utility system to a smarter electric grid.

Nelms' aggressive research and implementation skills are credited as being an integral component of

See EMC, Page 6A

## Support your local farmers at the Market

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Located just inside the turn-in to the Hiawassee Beach, the Towns County Farmers Market had one of its busiest days of the season on Saturday, July 2.

The market is open from 9 a.m. until noon every Saturday, and Sheleila O'Neal of Hiawassee said she's glad that she and other vendors have such a venue to sell their produce and wares.

O'Neal's Produce & Plants, run by O'Neal and her helper Peggy West, sell all kinds of garden grown goods – vegetables, fresh cut flowers, herbs, plants, and even homemade jams and jellies.

"I've been gardening for years and years and years," said O'Neal, a retired educator out of DeKalb County. "The first year I taught school I needed a little outlet, and I always liked helping my grandfather – when I was young, he used to have a garden, and I



Saturday was a busy day at the Towns County Farmers Market. Pictured here, Truman Barrett of Rock Hill Farms. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

always liked helping him. So I thought, maybe a garden would be a nice little outlet, because I was really stressed out my first years teaching.

"I started small with just tomatoes and cucumbers the first year, and I went from there. I bought a tiller after a couple of years, because

it was hard digging it up by hand, so I got a tiller and I made my garden bigger. And when I came up here, I actually tried to branch out a little bit, because there are some things that I can grow up here a little more easily than I could

See Market, Page 6A

## Three more candidates for November

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Henry Chambers, Linda Curtis and Brandon Barrett met on Friday, July 1, deadline to turn in their Declaration of Candidacy to run as Independent candidates in the Nov. 8 General Election.

Chambers is running as an Independent for the office of Towns County Sole Commissioner, and both Curtis and Barrett are running as Independents for the office of Towns County Sheriff.

Chambers turned in all of his paperwork Monday, including his nomination petitions, and the Towns County Board of Elections and Registration was able to verify his signatures last week, so Chambers has fully qualified to run for the Sole Commissioner office.

Curtis turned in all of her paperwork on Friday, including her nomination petitions, and though her petition



Linda Curtis



Brandon Barrett



Henry Chambers

verification had not been completed as of press time Monday, it is expected that her petitions will be verified and she will be on the November ballot.

As for Barrett, he turned in all but his nomination petitions Friday, though he has until July 12 to have at least 340 signatures turned in to be verified. And as of press time Monday, he expressed full confidence that he would have

See Candidates, Page 6A

## Little River Band reminisces at The Hall

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Little River Band lit up the stage Saturday night, bringing in a crowd of all ages to Anderson Music Hall to enjoy classical soft rock music hits from the late 70s and early 80s.

The fun-loving Australian band played a wide variety of their hits during the show, dazzling the audience with ballads and high-intensity tracks. Little River Band started the concert off with a bang, playing their hit, "Man On Your Mind," bringing everyone to their feet.

"We're so excited to be here," said keyboardist Chris Marion. "We were here maybe six or seven years ago. It's a cool place. There's a huge crowd out there and that's wonderful."

"We actually rented little small pontoon boats and went out on the lake the other day."

"It's a beautiful, gorgeous lake. It's a cool little town. The tour has been great. We do about 95 to 100 shows a year."



Wayne Nelson belts out one of the many hits recorded by the Little River Band. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

"Summer, of course, is prime real estate so we've been around the country two or three times already. We've been out west, just got back last week from a New England tour."

"So we're here tonight then we're headed out to St. Louis then next week we're

going to New York then Virginia."

"During the summer we run about 10 or 11 dates a month, mostly weekends. Sometimes, it takes you a couple of days to get somewhere."

The band even surprised fans later in the show

See Little River Band, Page 6A

## Towns County Daycare gets help from Fire Chief Copeland

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Every couple of years, the state requires daycare professionals to receive fire safety recertification, and assisting Towns County Child Development, also known as Towns County Daycare, with its training was none other than Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland.

Thirteen childcare teachers at the Towns County Daycare, including Director Brenda Brewer, attended the mid-June safety class, called the Caregivers Fire Safety Course through the Georgia Fire Marshal's Office.

This occasion marked the second time that Chief Copeland and Union County Firefighter James Rosser have taught the course for Towns County Daycare, and Director Brewer is thankful they returned.

"I've always had to get someone to come out of Atlanta to do it," said Brewer. "I'm just proud that we have a local fire department that's trained, because they had to get certification to teach



Towns County Daycare workers sit in on a fire safety class put on by Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland and Union County Firefighter James Rosser. Photo/Special to Towns County Herald

this course. "I'm proud that we have instructors in our area now that we don't have to hire someone to come in from the Atlanta area to teach the course for us."

And Chief Copeland said he, too, is proud to be able to provide the service to

the daycare.

"I feel like they've got one of the most important jobs in the county, if not the most important," said Chief Copeland. "They take care of our children – they have more than 50 children that they take care of daily. Their ages are

See Fire Safety, Page 6A

## Towns County Water Rescue drill important

By Todd Forrest  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Fourth of July, along with Memorial Day and Labor Day, typically account for more than a third of all boating related accidents and fatalities, and last Saturday the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds and Lake Chatuge played host to the inaugural Towns County Water Rescue Recovery Team Expo.

Live water skiing demonstrations were performed by members of Towns County Water Rescue, along with mock drowning/accident simulations on the lake with emergency personnel coming to the rescue.

Cmdr. John Nixon and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 23 were on hand to keep boaters out of the area while the demonstrations were underway.



Following the demonstrations that were held at 1, 3, and 5 p.m., a cornhole tournament began at 5:30 p.m. After the tournament, "Finding Nemo" was selected as the movie by the lake, beginning at dusk.

Donation booths and concessions were set up during the event. Members of Towns County's Water Rescue team reenact a rescue from the clutches of Lake Chatuge. Photo/Todd Forrest

ing the event to raise money for winterized diving gear for the Towns County Water Rescue Recovery Team.

"We're raising money to try and buy dry suits so we can dive in the winter time," said Towns County Fire Corp. Vice President Jewels Moss. "We dive in the winter now and we freeze to death, so that is why we are trying to get

See Rescue, Page 6A

2 Sections 16 Pages

Arrests 2A  
Chamber 2B  
Church 4B  
Classifieds 6B  
Opinion 4A  
Legals 7B  
Obits 5B  
Sports 7A

Lake Levels  
Blue Ridge 1,682.92  
Chatuge 1,922.63  
Nottely 1,770.23

Early Voting

July 5 - 8  
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

July 11 - 15  
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

July 18 - 22  
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

See page 1B

66th Annual

GEORGIA MOUNTAIN FAIR

Begins July 15th

HIGH COUNTRY ARTISANS

Butternut Creek Festival

July 16-17

See page 3B

Kid's Fishing Rodeo

August 6th

See page 2A