

Towns County Herald

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Sunny	88 65
Fri: Sunny	89 67
Sat: Rain	90 68
Sun: Rain	89 68
Mon: Rain	89 67
Tue: Rain	89 68
Wed: Rain	88 67



Upstream Elevation Predicted 07/15/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,925.23
Lake Nottely	1,775.87
Blue Ridge	1,686.24

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17TH ANNUAL BUTTERNUT CREEK FESTIVAL

July 18 & 19
MEEKS PARK

See Page 3A

ENCHANTED MUSIC ON THE SQUARE

See Page 2A

FREE FOOD



N. Mt. Zion

July 16th

10-Noon

See page 6A

FREE Personal Safety Defensive Arms class

See Page 2A



JULY 17-25TH

HIAWASSEE GARDEN FLOWER SHOW AT THE FAIR!!

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Georgia Mountain Fair kicks off Friday

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Come one, come all, to the 65th Annual Georgia Mountain Fair at the Fairgrounds, which officially kicks off on Friday, July 17, with the Flower Show and concerts from Dailey and Vincent, as well as Raven and Red.

Each year, thousands of tourists flock to the fairgrounds to take part in the festivities made available by the Fair. From music to rides, arts and crafts to Southern cultural tradition come alive, the Fair is a unique offering of Towns County to its residents, as well as the surrounding areas.

Smokey Mountain Amusements Midway will feature carnival rides starting Thursday, July 16, at 5 p.m., the day before the start to the Fair.

Admission is \$20, but the carnival will be offering free rides with gate admission on Monday, July 20, from 2-4 p.m., and a Dollar Day with gate admission on Tuesday, July 21, from 2-4 p.m. as well.

Gate admission ticket



The 65th Annual Georgia Mountain Fair begins on Friday.

prices for the Fair are \$12 for a one-day pass, where children 12 and under get in free; \$33 for a three-day pass, which saves \$3 and is valid over any three days of the fair; and \$90 for a Fun Fair Pass.

The Fun Fair Pass saves \$18 on overall admission, and guarantees access to all nine days of the fair. Music shows

are included in the ticket price, but access to the Midway Rides are an additional charge.

On Saturday, July 18, the Georgia Mountain Fair Parade will begin at 11 a.m., from Park Sterling Bank and all the way to the Fairgrounds. This year's two Grand Marshals are DJ Rhubarb Jones

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T. Graham Brown is back in town

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Country Music Star T. Graham Brown is coming to town, and will headline the Georgia Mountain Fair on Monday, July 20, with concerts at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"I bet we've been there 10 times at least - maybe 12 or 15," said Brown. "I love it. I get to see a lot of friends that come, and get to see my momma, so it's all good."

Brown's mother lives in Commerce, and will surely be in attendance to see her son perform, who has been a professional musician for more than 30 years with a lifelong love of music.

Originally from Athens, Brown spent his boyhood years in Arabi, a small South Georgia town in Crisp County with a current population of around 600 people.

He and his family moved there when the population was closer to 300, after his father opened up a grain elevator in Arabi, and that was where he



T. Graham Brown

got his first taste of live music.

"Our house backed up to the railroad tracks down there," said Brown. "All the white people lived on one side of the tracks and all the black people lived on the other side. We didn't have air conditioning - we had an attic fan that would draw air in through the windows."

"I would sleep down at the foot of the bed so my head

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Towns celebrates Heritage Day

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

If history is a wheel, then that wheel has been rolling down the Unicoi Turnpike since before Towns County came to be.

Towns County Historian Jerry Taylor gave a history lesson to those in attendance for the Historical Society's Heritage Day on Saturday, July 11.

Taylor's interactive lecture centered on a quilt designed to be a teaching tool on Towns County history for elementary school students, created to celebrate the county's Sesquicentennial, or 150th anniversary, in 2006.

The quilt features a mural depicting the geographical regions of Towns County, including Bald Mountain, Lake Chatuge, local wildlife and more.

"Woven around it is a yellow ribbon," said Taylor. "Can you imagine what that yellow ribbon might be? What is there that has been through Towns County from its beginning, when the early settlers were coming in in the 1830s until today, with all the laptops and cellphones and computers? What has been a constant in Towns County's history?"

Why, the Unicoi Turnpike, of course.

Turnpike is another word for road, and what started as an Indian trading path so long ago is today better known in the county as Highway 17.

Bordering the mural are several patches depicting a timeline of county history, and the ribbon symbolizing the turnpike makes its way through and around that timeline, a graphic reminder of that which has been here all along, since



Jerry Taylor plays an antique reed organ at Towns County's Heritage Day. Towns County was considered part of the Cherokee Nation.

Taylor took guests down this memory turnpike, highlighting a treaty between the United States and the Cherokee Nation that allowed for the creation of a toll road and therefore trade between U.S. citizens and the Cherokee.

These early settlers were the source of Towns County's founding mothers and fathers after the infamous Trail of Tears and the formation of the county in 1856 from land carved out of Union County.

The next major event that shaped the future of the county - and the country - was the American Civil War, which left a generation illiterate when it ended.

As a result, church-sponsored schools sprang up everywhere in the 1880s to combat the problem of education in the North Georgia Mountains, including the roots of Young Harris College in the Susan B. Harris Chapel.

Towns underwent a series of economic changes, shifting from a culture where residents farmed for their food, to a mill-centered lumber industry, where people began making money.

"Those Yankee lumber companies, like Vogel from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, came down here by the droves," said Taylor. "They'd already cut all the lumber up North, so they came down here. And we were glad - people wanted a job. We even had a railroad in Towns County for hauling out timber."

Unfortunately, the timber industry led to a clearcutting of the county, as evident from the earliest photographs of the area.

Taylor highlighted the importance of the longest-running newspaper in Towns County, the Towns County Herald, founded in 1928, which was a clear sign that literacy

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Veterans remembered on anniversary of WWII

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Saturday, July 11, the Towns County Historical Society honored local veterans at its annual Heritage Festival.

Some of the veterans present had fought as far back as World War II.

"This day is what we set aside each year to celebrate our history, and our heritage," said Historical Society President Shylan Wood. "The reason we did the veteran thing this year, this is the 70 year anniversary of the end of WWII, and we as an organization decided that if we didn't do anything else, we needed to honor them and be very appreciative to them and show some gratitude for what they've done in service to our country."

One such veteran was Todd Kimsey, who fought in the battle of Iwo Jima during World War II.

"I don't know whether you can call it a privilege or not, spending a lot of time and putting a lot of lead in Iwo Jima," he said. "I've got a book written by the captain of a destroyer. Waves were 60 to 90 feet tall. If you think that don't scare you a little bit, you just try it."

"Then we had Okina-



Iwo Jima veteran Bud Johnson speaks at the opening ceremonies of Towns County's Annual Heritage Day. Photo/Mason Mitcham

wa," he went on. "The land of the Kamikaze. One day they had over 200 Kamikazes in the sky over Okinawa. I was a range-finder operator. I had a big high-powered thing I could look through. I ranged in on one Japanese plane. He flew through everything we threw up. We knocked him down 50 yards from the ship."

After finishing his tour, Kimsey came back to Towns County in 1946, finished college, and remembers teaching

Commissioner Bill Kendall in Towns County.

"Mr. Kendall was one of my favorite basketball players," he said. "He's lived up to what I thought that he would do."

Wood said that Heritage Day is not always specifically for veterans. Rather, it often serves as a reminder of the depth of history in Towns County.

"July 11, that's when

See History, Page 10A

Don't smoke or dip on city property

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Don't light up in Downtown Hiawassee, and put that spit cup down.

The City of Hiawassee has passed of an ordinance prohibiting the use of tobacco products on city properties.

"The Hiawassee Council has determined that smoking and the use of any tobacco products on certain city properties constitutes a threat to the health and safety of our citizens and a probability of creating litter or a nuisance," the ordinance reads.

"We had John Harmon come in and speak to the council, and apparently he'd had some visitors, he runs a Bed and Breakfast, and they came to the Square and complained about people were smoking on the Square," said City Manager Rick Stancil. "So I did some research and we drafted an ordinance."

The original thought was to ban smoking specifically, but the ordinance grew to encompass all tobacco products.

"This one's a little bit



Rick Stancil

more inclusive," said Stancil. "We basically, to avoid confusion, will be banning it all."

Also at the Hiawassee City Council regular meeting on Tuesday, July 7, the City got a concrete reminder of the effect of its advertising from the Towns County Chamber of Commerce.

At the beginning of the meeting, Chamber President Candace Lee Candace Lee, passed out folders containing pages from magazines.

"What you see all through this notebook are magazines that you guys have paid for

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Brewer happy without a job

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Robert Brewer recently retired from his job as the Towns County Extension Agent.

For someone normally so busy, getting sudden time off came as a bit of a shock.

"This is my first full week of retirement," he said. "It is a very odd thing getting up Monday morning and not going to the office. It probably was the first Monday that I was not sick or on vacation that I hadn't gotten up or gone to work in 40 years or more, so that's sort of an odd feeling."

The University of Georgia School of Agriculture is broken into three parts, teaching, research, and extension. The extension service is the public outreach arm of the



Robert Brewer

School of Agriculture.

After graduating from Auburn University, Brewer worked in the poultry industry

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