

Towns County Herald

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Wednesday, August 19, 2015

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Rain 75 65
Fri: Clouds 82 63
Sat: Rain 83 64
Sun: Sunny 84 65
Mon: Rain 84 63
Tue: Sunny 83 61
Wed: Sunny 83 62



Upstream Elevation
Predicted
08/19/2015
Lake Chatuge 1,922.77
Lake Nottely 1,771.27
Blue Ridge 1,681.80

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Towns County's Library Annual Book and Bake Sale

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FREE FOOD



N. Mt. Zion
Food Distribution
August 20th
10 AM - Noon



SPORTS
FOOTBALL
Fri. Aug 21
vs. Hayesville
7:30 PM

SOFTBALL
Thurs. Aug 20
vs. Hebron Acad.
4:45 PM

SOFTBALL
Thurs. Aug 20
vs. Hebron Acad.
4:45 PM
Sat. Aug. 22
Commerce
Invitational
10AM
Tues. Aug. 25
@ Athens
Christian
4:45 PM

Oak Ridge Boys anxious to play The Hall



By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

With The Oak Ridge Boys heading to Anderson Music Hall this Friday, Aug. 21, the band would like area residents to know that they are looking forward to coming back.

"The people in Georgia

over the years have always been so good to us," said Richard Sterban, the bass singer of the group. "They've treated us extremely well over the years. It's one of the best states for us to perform in, so we love coming down there. It's a nice venue where there's not really a bad seat in the house. It's just a beautiful setting there."

Sterban and fellow Oak

Ridge Boys Duane Allen, Joe Bonsall and William Lee Golden have been touring the country and entertaining crowds for more than four decades, and Sterban attributes that long run of success to the group's love of performing and overall chemistry between the men.

"Even after all these

See Oak Ridge, Page 10

Venomous snakes on the prowl in Towns

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

'Tis the season for snakes – venomous snakes.

Monday morning a copperhead hitched a ride from the Fodder Creek in the fender wall of a pickup.

It emerged in the parking lot of the Towns County Herald.

It wasn't welcomed with open arms and eventually, it died in the Towns County Herald parking lot.

The story is to warn residents that an abundance of copperheads and rattlesnakes are making their way into the public venue.

Last week, a Blairsville police officer was summoned to United Community Bank's main branch to dispose of a timber rattler.

Officer Dustin Walker, a four-year veteran of the Blairsville Police Department and a part-time Union County Sher-



This copperhead hitched a ride to Hiwassee from the Fodder Creek Community. It was its last trip to town.

iff's deputy, came to the rescue following a dispatch call to the UCB drive-thru.

The call came in Tuesday around 2 p.m.

"A call came in that there

See Snakes, Page 10

Chastain, Dr. Page: 'New school year off to best start in years'

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

By all accounts, the first week back for students of Towns County Schools went off without a hitch.

At the Towns County Board of Education meeting on Monday, Aug. 10, school administrators had only positive news to report.

"Everything's going really smoothly," said Principal Sandy Page of the elementary school. "It's probably been one of the best starts to the school that I can remember in a while."

Middle School Principal Erica Chastain agreed.

"The beginning of school has gone very well for the middle school. Open house went extremely well, we had several parents that were there and all signed in, so we took care of that, and that went really well," she said.

The state of Georgia has once again changed its testing policy for public school systems, and Towns County Schools have started their Student Learning Objective Assessments for the year. These tests are for classes that do not have an end of course test at the end of the year.

"We used to have CRCTs, and then they changed those a couple years ago, and they've now changed the name of that to the Georgia Milestones test," explained Superintendent Dr. Darren Berrong. "Last year was the first year that we had implemented those, and we still actually do not have the results back from those. This being the



Dr. Sandra Page

first year, they wanted to hold off on those results. I think they said we may not even get them until October."

As part of the new testing standards, the state has implemented Student Learning Objective tests, or SLOs.

"If you do not teach an end of course test, or if you're a middle school teacher who does not teach in an academic area – if you teach PE or keyboarding or something of that nature, that teacher has to give an SLO," explained Dr. Berrong.

The issue with the CRCT is that oftentimes in the past, teachers of non-academic areas had no standard by which to test their students.

"There are only eight subjects in high school that have end of course tests, and for the teachers, if you did not teach one of those, you had no accountability on assessment," said Dr. Berrong. "It's a pre-test given at the beginning of the year, and it's another post-test given at the end of the year."

See BOE, Page 10

End of an era for Friends

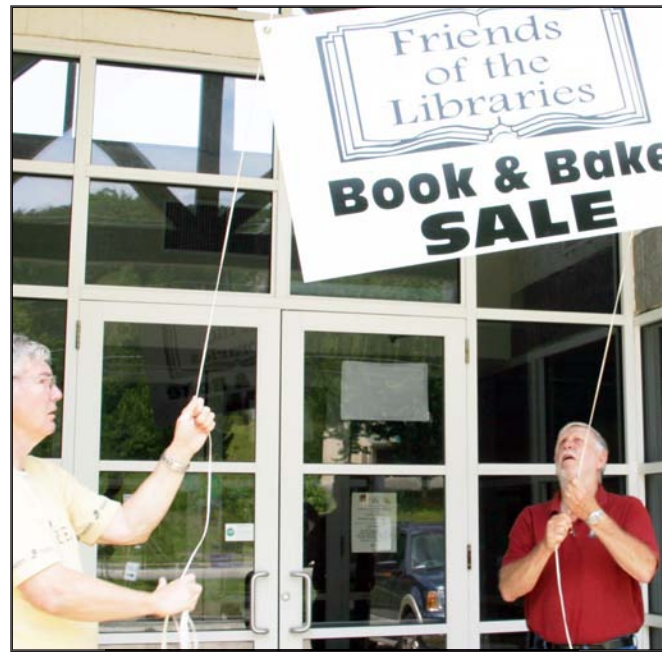
By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

A literary era is coming to an end, as the last ever Annual Book and Bake Sale put on by the Friends of the Libraries of Towns County opens shop at the close of August.

As the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris readies for its \$1 million renovation to begin in October, the Friends are poised to inherit a year-round store location in the library after its completion – which is why the FOLTC will no longer be holding an annual sale.

While renovations take place, the Mountain Regional Library will hold temporary lodging in the old Blue Ridge Mountain EMC building on Main Street in Young Harris, which is also where this year's sale will be held.

The annual sale has a long history in Towns County, the baking portion of which has been going on for more than a decade, and the book sale for nearly two decades, as far as



anyone can remember.

And this year will be the biggest book and bake sale yet.

"We got a windfall from a former school in Dahlonega," said FOLTC President Jan Roberts. "Recently, a Catholic organization over there bought

the whole thing, and they had all these books down in the basement. We made five trips over there."

When all was said and done, donations from the former school and other sources

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UNG begins new era in Blue Ridge

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Blue Ridge - The University of North Georgia's Blue Ridge Campus opened its classrooms for the first time on Monday, Aug. 17, and the university held a special ribbon-cutting ceremony to commemorate the event the week before, on Thursday, Aug. 13.

"This fall, University of North Georgia will open with five campuses, and across the five campuses we will have around 17,000 students, making us one of the larger campuses in Georgia," said UNG President Dr. Bonita Jacobs at the ribbon cutting.

The Blue Ridge Campus is the result of UNG's Regional Education and Economic Development Task Force, which performed a study in 2014 and determined that the North Georgia Mountains were underserved in higher education opportunities.

"I am thrilled to be in Blue Ridge," said Dr. Jacobs. "When we started our project to talk about this economic devel-



State Sen. Steve Gooch, (R-Dahlonega) is on hand for the ribbon cutting at UNG's Blue Ridge Campus. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

opment, our project was called REED – Regional Education and Economic Development. We had focus groups across the region, and one of the focus groups for this area was in Blairsville.

"The summary of the things that you all asked for in an institution – they said, we want you all to help us to

increase graduation rates, to embrace our regionalism and to be proud of it, and finally, to provide jobs for people to stay here or to move here. And those are goals that we're committed to."

Hank Huckaby, Chancellor of the University System of

See UNG, Page 10

V-J Day remembered in Towns

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Friday, Aug. 14, Towns County veterans met at Veterans Memorial Park to honor and commemorate the 70th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day.

Although the meeting was small, attended by less than 15 people, it was no less important to those who gathered.

"We take our hats off to you, and we honor you, and we honor all our brothers today who are on that wall," said U.S. N. Chief Petty Officer (retired) Bud Johnson, pointing to the names of veterans



Bud Johnson

etched into the stone wall at the memorial.

"It all began in our generation, and I believe Tom

Brokaw called us the greatest generation years ago. It all began on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese Navy, unprovoked and unknown to anyone else, attacked Pearl Harbor," Johnson said.

"At that time, our Pacific Fleet was tied up at Pearl Harbor. Of course, you know, we lost the USS Arizona, who is forever still there. The crew is still on battle stations, still today," he said. "There's quite a few who never made it."

Johnson, 93, an Iwo Jima survivor, fought in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

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DAR promotes Constitution Week in Towns, Union, Fannin

By Mason Mitcham
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Ann Atchison is a woman who wears many hats.

In addition to holding office in her chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, she also works and volunteers in various places locally.

"I'm doing Meals on Wheels, I do the Fire Coalition, I help out at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, so I do a lot of stuff," she said.

Most recently, in her capacity as a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, she is helping facilitate the signing of a county-wide proclamation honoring National Constitution Week.

"The proclamation is about preserving the Constitution of the United States, educating everybody about it, and reminding people what it's all about, what the Constitution is, and preserving our rights and our history, and just making sure that we are educating everybody, to remind you that this is the supreme law of the land and that we should be following it without discrimination," she said.

The history of Constitution Week goes back almost 75 years.

"Each year the week changes depending on how the days fall, but this year, it's Sept. 17 to Sept. 23. And the United States started this to recognize it and to proclaim it. Constitution Week was started in 1957



Ann Atchison

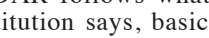
by the president of the United States (Dwight D. Eisenhower), so the DAR just kind of followed through with it to remind everybody," Atchison said.

She added that Constitution Week is an important reminder of the formation and history of the United States.

"I would like to think I'm a patriot," she said. "I'm into genealogy, so I like history. That's a part of what DAR is. It's remembering our history, remembering what our rights are, educating everybody, and that's what the DAR does, too. The DAR follows what the Constitution says, basically. So it's committed to educating

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