

# Towns County Herald

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## Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thurs: Rain	78 64
Fri: Clouds	80 61
Sat: Rain	73 56
Sun: Sunny	75 55
Mon: Sunny	76 56
Tue: Sunny	77 57
Wed: Sunny	77 59



Upstream Elevation Predicted 09/09/2015	
Lake Chatuge	1,921.83
Lake Nottely	1,769.68
Blue Ridge	1,679.72

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## Sports Page 11



## Department of Driver Services Hours Change

See Page 12



## Lake Chatuge Charity Classic Golf Tournament Sept. 18th



## FREE Food Distribution N. Mt. Zion Church

See Page 6



## SPORTS FOOTBALL

Fri. SEPT. 11

@ Lakeview Acad.

7:30

## SOFTBALL

Tues. SEPT. 8

@ COMMERCE

4:45 PM

TUES. SEPT. 15

@ Prince Avenue

4:45 PM

## Akins received severance package after resignation

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

In a response to a motion to dismiss a lawsuit filed in Towns County Superior Court by Blue Ridge Mountain EMC members Krista L. Gooch, Larry Williams, Andrew E. Stephens and Barbara Moss, it has been revealed that resigned General Manager Matthew Akins has been given a six-month severance package by the BRMEMC Board of Directors.

The severance package, according to court documents indicate that Akins will receive the salary he received as general manager of the cooperative, including insurance benefits.

The severance package was approved at a called meeting of the Board of Directors on Sept. 1, the *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald* have learned.

The vote on the severance package was not unanimous, the newspapers have learned.



The newspapers reported that Akins came before the BRMEMC Board of Directors on Aug. 18 and offered his resignation if he could be demoted to the position of engineer. The newspapers reported that the board told him that decision had to be made by the new general manager. Akins resigned from his position as EMC general manager on Friday, Aug. 21.

Akins' resignation came 16 months after the disclosure of more than \$48,000 in unpaid utility bills by former BRMEMC

President Terry Taylor. News of the debt started a firestorm throughout the membership that led to the defeat of three incumbent EMC board members.

The Board of Directors have hired Dan Brewer as interim general manager, the newspapers have reported.

The EMC Annual Meeting is Sept. 12. Three seats will be decided at the annual meeting. Mail-in ballots and online voting in the Board of Directors races came to an end on Wednesday, Sept. 9.

However, members can vote in person when the annual meeting at Anderson Music Hall takes place on Sept. 12.

Two seats are up for grabs and one has already been decided. In Union County, Mickey Cummings, Patrick Malone and Charles Rich are on the ballot by petition.

In Towns County, Roy Perren, who got on the ballot by petition, faces Incumbent

See EMC, Page 10

## Young Harris residents to vote on liquor by the drink, Sunday alcohol sales in November

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

The City of Young Harris is holding a two-question referendum in addition to its City Council election in November.

The city will ask voters yes or no, should the City of Young Harris powers that be, be authorized to issue licenses to sell distilled spirits by the drink with sales confined to the premises of the licensed establishment.

A second question asks yes or no, should the city have the power to authorize and regulate Sunday alcohol sales by the drink.

The special election is slated for Nov. 3 at 50 Irene Berry Drive, in Young Harris.

Oct. 5 is the last day to register to vote in the special election.

Absentee ballots and advance voting ballots also will be available at 50 Irene Berry Drive, in Young Harris. Early

voting begins on Oct. 13, and ends on Oct. 30.

The polls will be open on Election Day from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.

Meanwhile, also on Nov. 3, voters will determine if Post 1 Incumbent Councilman Terry Ingram will return to the City Council. Ingram faces a challenge from Jared Champion.

Post 2 Councilman Matthew Miller was unopposed as was Post 3 Councilman Stuart Miller.

As with the special election, the last day to register to vote in the general election is Oct. 5. Also, absentee ballots and advance voting ballots also will be available at 50 Irene Berry Drive, in Young Harris. Early voting for the general election begins on Oct. 13, and ends on Oct. 30.

The polls will be open on Election Day from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.

If there is a need for a runoff election, the date of this election will be Dec. 1.

## A close call at second; too close



Lady Indians' sophomore Jordan Hyatt gets a cleat to the mouth as she fields a pickoff move at second base in last week's game against the Lady Wildcats in Tiger. See Page 11 for more Towns County Sports. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

## Ride to Remember never forgets

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Blairsville - The unprovoked terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, perpetrated on American soil resulting in the deaths of thousands of Americans and launching the longest war in U.S. history must never be forgotten.

Which is why greater than 800 motorcyclists demonstrated their patriotism during the annual 9/11 Ride to Remember over the Labor Day Weekend, on Sunday, Sept. 6.

Starting from the ride's parent sponsor Cycle World of Athens, hundreds of bikers with big hearts traveled roughly 100 miles through seven North Georgia counties on a journey of remembrance that ended up at the Copperhead Lodge in Union County.

The honorary Grand Marshal for the 2015 ride was Cathy Wells, mother of USMC Lance Cpl. Skip Wells. Her son was one of four Marines gunned down in an apparent terror-



More than 800 riders took part in the annual Ride to Remember, a motorcycle ride from Athens to Blairsville. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

ist attack on July 16, 2015, at military recruiting centers in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Wells became connected with the 9/11 Ride to Remember through her neighbor, Jason Weeks, who is a member of the Wingmen Motorcycle Club Cherokee County Chapter.

Through the Wingmen, Wells has participated in bike rides to raise money for the Skip Wells Scholarship Fund, which she began as a way to honor her son.

Lance Cpl. Wells gradu- See Ride, Page 10

## Duck race raises record funds

By Mason Mitcham  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Towns County High School wrestling team hosted its Third Annual Duck Race on Saturday, Sept. 5, at Riverbend Campground, where campers lined the creek banks to watch the little yellow and blue ducks float downstream.

The duck race is part of the team's yearly fundraising efforts, and this year, the Indians hope to buy new equipment.

"All the money we make this year is going to go to help pay for the new mats that we're ordering hopefully," said Indians Head Coach Jeff Stowers. "People have been really nice, and the owners, Mr. and Mrs. McNabb, have helped us out a lot, and the people at Riverbend Campground have been amazing. The people that are camping in here have always



Indians' Head Wrestling Coach Jeff Stowers gets his ducks in a row for the Third Annual Duck Race to raise money for new wrestling mats.

been really supportive, so it's been a good experience from that perspective."

Participants paid \$20 for a duck, and the winner earned

an \$800 payout. While rubber ducks may not be as fast as the real thing, Coach Stowers said people still come to watch

See Duck Race, Page 10

## Seven candidates qualify for Hiwassee City Council seats

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Seven candidates have qualified to run in the Hiwassee Municipal General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2015, to fill three contested Hiwassee City Council seats.

Running for Post 3 are Kris Berrong, John Holmes and incumbent Joan Crothers.

Running for Post 4 are Anne Mitchell and incumbent Janet Allen.

And running for Post 5 are Liz Ordiales and incumbent Pat Smith.

Qualifications for the three city council positions had to have been filed in the office of Hiwassee City Clerk and Elections Superintendent Cenlya Galloway at Hiwassee City

Hall between Monday, Aug. 31, and Wednesday, Sept. 2.

Qualifying fees for any of the three seats were set at \$72.

The last day to register to vote in the General Election is Oct. 5. Also, absentee ballots and advance voting ballots will be available at 50 River Street, in Hiwassee. Early voting for the general election begins on Oct. 13, and ends on Oct. 30.

The polls will be open on Election Day from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.

If there is a need for a runoff election, the date of this election will be Dec. 1.

Those elected on Nov. 3 will begin their terms on Jan. 1, 2016. The terms of these councilmembers will expire on Dec. 31, 2019.

## Arrive Alive tour comes to TCHS



Daulton Rogers sits in the simulator.

By Mason Mitcham  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

On Monday, Aug. 31, students and faculty at Towns County High School received a sobering reminder of the dangers of distracted driving, when the organization UNITE brought its "Arrive Alive" tour to campus in order to demonstrate the impact of texting and driving or driving while intoxicated.

Students got in an un-moving car and "drove," according to video screens that simulated distracted driving. During the simulation, the students' reaction times and overall driving performances were lowered.

"It just shows you how distracted you can be, and you think that it's easy just to glance down and glance back up, you think you'd be fine, but in reality you don't really know how distracted you are," said TCHS senior Daulton Rogers.

Although Rogers did better than most, he still ended up running over a digital pedestrian.

"You never think that could happen to you, but it could happen to anybody. You never think it's going to happen to you, but it could," he said.

High School Principal Dr. Connie Hobbs gave credit to Towns County Sheriff's Deputy Donnie Jarrard, the school system's resource officer, for bringing this program to the students.

Deputy Jarrard was hesitant to take credit, insisting that he couldn't speak for the sheriff's office, but he did say that the grant was through the sheriff's department and CHAMPS (Choosing Healthy Activities and Methods Promoting Safety) program.

"We're very fortunate," said Dr. Hobbs. "It cost \$2,500, and most high schools do not have the money to do something like that, so usually they spend most of their time going to colleges, so we're very fortunate to have had them here, especially after the incident we had over the summer when we lost a high school student to texting and driving. It's just affected our community greatly."

Even though Towns County is a relatively safe community, Dr. Hobbs said that nobody is exempt from accidents.

"We have great students, but this community is just like any other. We have some of everything. Texting and driving is something that adults do. I'm guilty of it, you're probably guilty of it. We just don't think about what could happen," she said.

Dr. Hobbs added that she thought the simulation

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

