50 Cents

Wednesday, November 27, 2013

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Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Sunny Fri: Clouds 50 24 Sat: Sunny 51 27 Sun: Clouds Mon: Showers 51 43 Tues: Showers Wed: Showers



Upstream Elevation Predicted

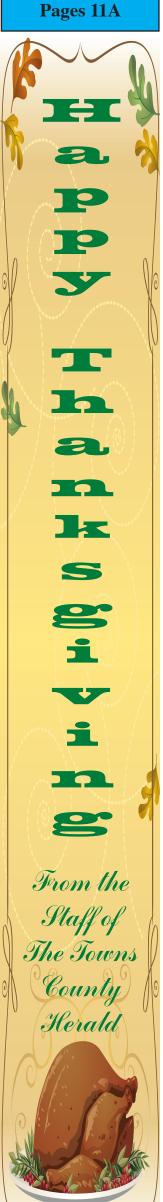
Lake Chatuge Lake Nottely Blue Ridge

1,917.39 1,761.43 1,667.52

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SPORTS



Iconic musicmaker dies at 84

Towns County Herald cduncan.tch@windstream.net

For 49 years, Howard Cunningham's name was synonymous with the Georgia Moun-

Along with the Georgia Mountain Fair Staff Band, Cunningham was inducted into the Atlanta Music Hall of Fame in

On Monday, the fiddling legend of the North Georgia Mountains was laid to rest.

Fiddlin' Howard Cunningham, 84, died late Friday at Chatuge Regional Nursing Home in Hiawassee.

Services were held Monday at McConnell Memorial Baptist Church.

Howard is known throughout the Southeast for his talents as a fiddler and music maker.

During his youth, Howard developed a love of music while playing guitar and singing with his family. At age 6, his brotherin-law, Ross Brown gave him a fiddle. By age 15, he was playing locally, regionally and was well known as a talented fiddle eight children born to Claude



Fiddlin'Howard Cunningham

Over the course of his life, Howard's gift for music brought a great deal of enjoyment to himself and others.

In 1955, it was his idea to have a group of musicians begin playing under a tree at the Georgia Mountain Fair. Howard remained a mem-

ber of The Georgia Mountain Fair Staff Band until his retirement in 2004, almost 50 years later. Howard was born Nov.

27th, 1928 in Clay County NC. He was the youngest of C. Cunningham and Ollie Ford Cunningham.

At a young age Howard's family moved to the Woods Grove Community in Towns

Through the years, Howard served on the Hiawassee City Council. He owned Cunningham Paint Store in Hiawassee and was a painter. He worked for Interstate Life Insurance as an agent and staff manager for 22 years.

He also was the owner of Cunningham Tools, a Mac tool distributor.

In October 1957, Howard married the love of his life, Alice

Together, they built a family of one son and three daughters.

Howard's family will remember him as a loving husband and father. The Cunningham children and grandchildren will have many fond memories of their time spent with their Dad and Granddad.

Interment was in Osborn Cemetery. The Unicoi Masonic Lodge of Hiawassee presided over graveside services.

Shakers learn about the rockhounds of Towns

By Azure Welch Towns County Herald Staff Writer

Friday morning, the Mountain Movers and Shakers organization welcomed Robert Terebayza, as the guest speaker for their weekly meeting at Mary's Southern Grill in Young

Robert Terebayza is the director of the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts, which boasts the tagline, "a rockhound's dream come true." According to Terebayza,

the term Lapidary literally translates as "stonecutter," but currently the main reference with the term lapidary is "jewelry making.' Terebayza provided the

group with some background information on the school. According to Terebayza,

the school was "founded in 1983 by Harold C. Sparks and his wife Mary Lou.

Harold Sparks was a member and a president of the "Southeast Federation of



Robert Terebayza

Mineralogical Societies," and because of he and his wife's love for "Lapidary Earth Science" they had a vision for a school where people from all over could come together to learn and to share their knowledge with each other.

However, according to Terebayza, Harold Sparks vision for a Lapidary Art School was the result of the fact that the country lacked such a school.

The site chosen was right here in our backyard, Young

See Lapidary, Page 10A

Mistletoe Market thrives in 2013

By Azure Welch and Mason Mitcham **Towns County Herald Staff Writers**

The 13th Annual Mistletoe Market & Sugarplum Tearoom was a huge success kicking off the Christmas Shopping Season, and for the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, a huge success for support of Hiawassee's ArtWorks Artisan Center's, Children's Arts and Crafts Summer Program.

Joy Garcia, president of the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild was extremely pleased with the success of the fundraiser and emphasized that this year is the "best turnout we have ever had.' This is a huge boost for

the more than 85 exceptional artists and craftsman from the local and surrounding areas who rely on this annual event to display their handiwork.

Although, this is a fundraising event, the proceeds for ArtWork's Artisan Center stem from the actual sales of vend-

\$45 or various sizes of display space ranging up to \$125, but the "funds generated independently from the vendor sales is theirs to keep," although Garcia graciously expressed her gratitude for the many vendors who donate additional monies at the



Shoppers at Mistletoe Market found a steady supply of Christmas bargins over the weekend. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

conclusion of the event.

In addition to the proceeds received from the Mistletoe Market & Sugarplum Tearoom, the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild sponsor's two other annual fundraising Garcia said that the ven- events; the Mountain Fling which happens the last week ing a "table" display area for of June, and their Celebrate Autumn fundraiser which happens the third week in September.

Between the three arts and crafts events, the guild is able to provide support for the future artists and crafters in the area through their summer program for kids.

The proceeds from the event benefit the Children's Arts and Crafts Summer Program which starts when the school year ends and continues throughout the summer until the new school year begins.

The program is for any ages 5-14 wanting to learn how to do a wide variety of arts and crafts from pottery, to drawing, to jewelry making, and more. Garcia stresses that the summer program is not only fun for the children, it is also a chance for veteran

See Mistletoe, Page 10A

Floyd, Riley, talk Firewise to GMRC in Young Harris

By Mason Mitcham **Towns County Herald Staff Writer**

Young Harris - The Georgia Mountain Regional Council's monthly meeting took place with Blue Ridge Mountain EMC hosting at its new facility last week. Fifty-one government

entities from the Georgia Mountain region came together for the business meeting, catered by Enrico's Restaurant.

The Council included representatives from Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White Counties, all gathered to learn about one very important initiative – Fire Adapted.

The Fire Adapted program is a large umbrella program which seeks to keep counties safe from wildfire and includes other, smaller initiatives.

Examples of the programs that make up the Fire dapted umbrella are fuel mitigation measures, prevention education, forest management initiatives, the Firewise program, and the Ready-Set-Go evacuation plan.

The importance of these programs should not be understated, especially considering the recent crop of wildfires in



Chief Mitch Floyd and Frank Riley western states such as Colo-

Danny Lewis, the executive director of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, stressed the importance of being knowledgeable about

"We could go up in flames just like any of those counties," he said. "Towns County is the only county in the state that I know of that has

become a Firewise county." Though the area has gotten a lot of rain in the past year, it's especially susceptible to fires because it's a heavily wooded region.

Because of this, Towns See Firewise, Page 10A

Benefit exceeds expectations

Towns County Herald Staff Writer

The Town Square in Hiawassee on Saturday, Nov. 9, was the backdrop for a combined yard sale, cake auction, silent auction and fundraiser to help fund a kidney transplant for Ronnie Rutledge.

The items for sale were donated by numerous individuals with 100 percent of the proceeds going directly to Ronnie and Rachel Rutledge to pay for the enormous medical costs that they are and will continue to incur. In addition to all the

available items for sale, many in the community showed the support through simple dona-See Benefit, Page 10A



The benefit for Ronnie Rutledge exceed the hopes and expectations of the folks who organized his fundraiser.

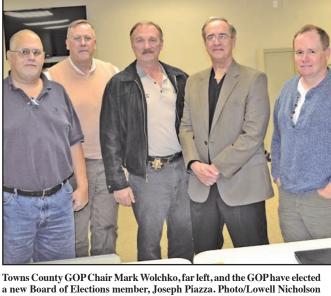
Towns GOP chooses new Elections member

By Azure Welch **Towns County Herald Staff Writer** Thursday evening,

during the Towns County Republican Party's monthly meeting, Mark Wolchko, Chairman of the Towns GOP, announced that David Keating suddenly resigned as the Executive Committee of the Republican Party's appointed official to the Towns County Board of Elections. Wolchko reported that

on Nov. 19, Keating submitted his letter of resignation which is in accordance with House Bill 795, which is

See GOP, Page 10A



Sheriff's Christmas Parade on Saturday in Downtown

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

The holiday season is upon us bringing an abundance of family, friends, food, fun, and fervor, but for some this time of year is perceived as

Especially when it is seen through the eyes of children who, for whatever reason, will not enjoy the magic and traditions of Christmas morning: the familial atmosphere, good food, and for a young child the most important thing, Christmas presents.

On Saturday, Nov. 30, at 5 p.m., the Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund Christmas Parade will route through the streets of Hiawassee. The price of admission

an unwrapped Christmas pres-There are many families

in our area that are struggling, and for those families the holiday's become another burden. The parents in these fam-

ilies work hard to provide for the daily necessities, such as a home, food, and clothing, but at the end of the day, there is too much month for the money. Families struggling with

making ends meet need and deserve to be able to give their children wonderful gifts and memories for the holidays. Through the Towns

County Sheriff's "Empty Stocking Fund Christmas" program, families in need receive anonymous gifts, individualized for each family, so that no child is left without a gift come Christmas morning.

This Saturday, after

to the sheriff's list. Sheriff Clinton said that the Sheriff's Office coordinates with other local organizations

like "Family Connections" to

obtain the names of the needy

See Parade, Page 10A

Sheriff Chris Clinton

Thanksgiving, the "Empty

Stocking" campaign kicks

off with 2013 Towns County

Sheriff's Office Empty Stock-

ing Christmas Parade, and after the parade, while many people will be shopping on "cyber Monday," the Towns County

Sheriff's Office gets busy.

County Sheriff Chris Clinton,

the Monday after Thanksgiving

is when they "begin to compile

a list of names" for those fami-

lies in the area that need a little

to ensure that all deserving

families in the area are added

Diligent efforts are made

help this holiday season.

According to Towns

TOWNS COUNTY HERALD

