

Towns County Herald

Legal Organ of Towns County

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50 Cents

www.townscountyherald.net

Publication Number 635540 Volume 84 Number 22

Wednesday, April 3, 2013

Local Weather and Lake Levels

Thu: Rain 43 40
Fri: Rain 58 36
Sat: Clouds 66 42
Sun: Clouds 68 45
Mon: Sunny 71 50
Tues: Clouds 70 51
Wed: Clouds 70 51



Upstream Elevation
Predicted
04/03/13
Lake Chatuge 1921.25
Lake Nottely 1768.30
Blue Ridge 1682.89

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HGC Plant Fair



Hiawassee Garden Club
Annual Plant Sale
April 13

8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

on the town square
Choose plants from at least
10 local vendors and club
members. Delightful home
made baked goods will be
available for sale. Don't miss
the fun and fellowship.



Are you at risk?

The Bradford Club at Brasstown Manor and Emory Healthcare are pleased to present a free one hour seminar on preventing heart disease, knowing your risk factors and current cardiac testing.

Dr. Marc Veneziano, Cardiologist with Emory Healthcare, will be educating the public on how to manage and lower risk factors associated with heart disease and stroke on Tuesday, April 16, 11 a.m. Space is limited, so reserve your seat today by calling 706-896-4285.

Brasstown Manor is located at 108 Church Street in Hiawassee.



TOWNS COUNTY Locally Grown
Farmers Market

Towns County Farmers Market to begin 2nd year
Opening in mid June
No Vendor Fees

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Towns Co. Baseball

Wed., April 3 • 5 p.m.
@ Athens Academy

Towns Co. Soccer

Tues., April 2 • 4 p.m.
@ Providence

Towns Co. Tennis

Tues., April 2 • 4 p.m.
vs. Athens Christian

Warrior Hike comes to Towns

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
libby.tcherald@windstream.net

The Warrior Hike came to Towns County Saturday, March 23rd.

Fourteen veterans from across the country were honored by Unicoi Detachment 783 as they came off the Appalachian Trail.

The veterans were picked up by a county bus, courtesy of Towns County Sole Commissioner Bill Kendall, and were transported to a local motel for a much needed shower, thaw out, and rest.

They were then treated to a meal at Daniel's Steakhouse courtesy the Marine Corps League.

The Warriors gathered and broke bread and shared stories of their war experiences with local veterans.

They've all fought the same fight and all felt the same loneliness and desolation of war.

They all served and fought with great courage and



Warrior Hikers enjoy a meal and conversation with local veterans at Daniel's Steakhouse. Photo/Libby Shook

are all participants in Warrior Hike which provides the opportunity for building friendships, trust, and camaraderie hiking the beautiful and tranquil Appalachian Trail.

The group, made up of veterans having served from four to 32 years in the military,

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Easter was a hop, skip and a jump for kids



Towns County youth make off in a mad dash for Easter Eggs and prizes at the annual Towns County Parks and Recreation Easter Egg Hunt at the Recreation Park. Photo/Libby Shook

By Libby Shook
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Towns County Parks and Recreation Director Wes Hooper, Assistant Director Alan Rogers, and Joshua Carnes were out early Saturday morning, March 30th, rallying to assist the Easter Bunny in placing 2,600 plastic eggs on two Towns County Recreation Ball Fields.

Yes, once again Towns County Parks and Recreation hosted the Towns County Annual Easter Egg Hunt for the enjoyment of local kids between the ages of 4 and 9 years.

At exactly 10:30 a.m., the whistle blew and the kids were off and running. They had an egg-cellent time as about 150 kids swarmed the fields in search of the "Grand Prize Egg" and any other eggs they could fill their baskets with.

In just a short period of time, there wasn't an egg to be found.

"This makes about 26 years that we've been doing this and it's something we enjoy doing for the kids," said Hooper.

They provided two separate fields, one for kids aged 4-6 and one for the 7-9 year age range.

It makes the competition

See Easter, page 11

There's a new North Georgia Idol

By Libby Shook
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It's official. North Georgia has a new idol.

Eighteen-year-old Caylin Walsingham of Lookout Mountain wowed the guests and the judges as she performed before a large crowd at the Lodge at Copperhead Saturday night.

She walked out on the stage like it was second nature to her and like she had been there all her life.

Along with the recognition and notoriety that comes with the honor of being chosen North Georgia Idol 2013, she also won a full production studio recording session, valued at more than \$5,000, compliments of this year's Sponsor, Sean Clyde of C & C Media of Young Harris.

Clyde is a two-time Grammy nominee and CSRA



Left to right, the North Georgia winners, Kaylee King, third place; Tatum Turner second place; and Caylin Walsingham, North Georgia Idol 2013. Hip Hop Award Winner.

He has produced some of the top talents in the world, including Michael Jackson, Alanis Morissette, Trisha Yearwood, and Garth Brooks.

He has worked with some of the best known music labels including Atlantic Records, Sony, RCA, and Virgin Records.

See Idol, page 11

There's no place like home

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
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Spring has sprung and that is a cause for concern for the Humane Society's Mountain Shelter.

This is the time of year that animals start looking for mates and that includes the many dogs and cats in Towns and Union counties that have not been spayed or neutered.

That signals trouble with a capital 'T' for this private, non-profit charitable organization who depend on donations and fundraisers to keep them up and running.



It's time to spay and neuter your pets in Towns County if that's what they need. Photo/Libby Shook

Lions revving up for White Cane Days

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
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The Towns County Lions Club are gearing up for White Cane Days.

The Lions have been an active participant in White Cane Day since its inception in 1940 and will continue in that commitment as they hold their annual White Cane Days on April 26th and 27th.

According to Lion Doug Canup, "Towns County generally raises close to \$3,500 every year and all funds go to support the Lighthouse Foundation."

Judith Kerr of the Georgia Lion's Lighthouse Foundation addressed club members on Tuesday, March 12th.

Kerr was there to update members on the current activities of the Lighthouse Foundation and talk about ways they can extend their services to local residents.

Kerr joined the Lighthouse Foundation through the AmeriCorps VISTA program in 2011 and stayed on as part of the vision clinic team.

She is working to expand services provision to underserved children statewide as well as increase the capacity of the Lighthouse's optical lab.

Kerr said, "The Lighthouse Foundation is made up

of a wonderful group of people who care about their community. It is a pleasure working alongside so many people dedicated to serving those in need."

The Georgia Lion's Lighthouse Foundation, founded in 1949, has served as a beacon of hope to many for more than 60 years.

Their services include vision screenings, vision clinics, eye surgeries, hearing services, and eyeglass recycling.

The reach of the Lighthouse extends statewide, and services have been provided in every county in Georgia.

The Lighthouse partners with 23 free clinics throughout the state. White Cane is an annual fundraiser to support Lighthouse's eye surgeries.

"The goal is \$120,000 statewide," said Kerr.

Mark your calendars and get out and support this effort on behalf of the Lighthouse Foundation and Georgia's needy children.

When you are out traveling during White Cane Days, drive a little slower, dig a little deeper, and feel that swell of pride as you contribute to a worthwhile cause that makes a tremendous difference in the life of a child and the Towns County community.

Art is in the air at Brasstown Valley



Jackie Su West shows off her artwork at Brasstown Valley Resort in Young Harris. Photo/Libby Shook

By Libby Shook
Towns County Herald
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Mother Nature has quite a sense of humor and likes to show off when it suits her as was evidence at the Mountain Arts Association's 'Colors of Spring' Art Exhibition held at Brasstown Valley Resort.

With the temperatures in the mid-40s, she reminded us all that the calendar doesn't always signal spring time weather for the North Georgia Mountains.

Her antics did not keep the community from turning out in large numbers, however, for this spectacular display of artwork by some of the Southeast's most popular and talented artists.

Folks gathered downstairs for the art show featuring 24 area member artists with close to 60 pieces of art ranging from oil, acrylic, watercolor, pastel, charcoal, and photography hanging on every wall and lining the hallway.

Fine wines and hors d'oeuvres were served as guests and artists discussed the art work on display and artists exchanged ideas with fellow artists.

The artists were more than happy to discuss their craft and explain their art work to anyone willing to listen, as well they should as they had all definitely earned bragging rights with their craft.

Mountain Arts Association President Barbara Terrell was in charge of the exhibit and had her work represented as well with her oil paintings, *Lemon & Leek*, *Tomatoes II*, and *Green Cabbage*.

Terrell was quick to brag on the many talented artists participating in the Spring exhibit.

"We have some wonderful artists displaying their work here tonight and we've had a great turn out."

Local artist Jackie Su West of Hiawassee said, "I

joined the Mountain Arts Association in the winter of 2011 with only two paintings and one of them was sold before they even hung it up. The second one sold by the end of the season."

West has since been asked to serve on the Board of the Mountain Arts Association. "I have sold a total of 22 paintings and have had four commissioned works through referrals by friends or through the art exhibitions," said West.

She had two oil paintings hanging for this exhibit, *Sunrise* and *This Ole House*.

West is inspired by the natural beauty of the North Georgia Mountains and loves to recreate it in her art work.

Another local talent, Keith Burgess of Hiawassee, has been displaying his art work with the Mountain Arts Association for quite some time now.

Colors of Spring is his fifth exhibit with them and he really outdid himself for this particular show with his beautiful oil painting entitled *Pitcher with Phlox*.

He also had two additional oil paintings, *Pastoral Sunset* and *Orchard Light* that were crowd pleasers as well.

Burgess, an award winning artist working primarily in oil, has garnered numerous one-man gallery shows and commissions and his work is widely collected.

Bill Suttles of Blairsville, had two pastels on display, including *Crump Creek Road* and *Cove Road*. Suttles also works with oils and acrylics in his art as he captures landscapes and figurative work on canvas.

Amanda Fullerton has been a member of the Association.

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TOWNS COUNTY HERALD



Arts...continued from Page 1

tion since 2008.

“I am an artist from Florida, with a home in North Carolina, and I love to travel. I am a signature member of the Watercolor Society of North Carolina and have participated in many juried shows in Florida, Georgia and North Carolina,” said Fullerton.

She was well represented with three beautiful watercolor paintings *Dock of the Bay*, *Relax*, and *Istanbul*.

Idol...continued from Page 1

In the first round performance, Walsingham walked out confidently and went right into a beautiful and flawless rendition of *A Thousand Miles*.

She took control of the stage and had the audience completely amazed as she sang with great feeling and confidence.

When she was selected as one of the five finalists to compete for the title of North Georgia Idol 2013, she didn’t appear at all shaken as she walked back on stage and gave a stellar performance as she sang her own amazing version of *Drops of Jupiter*.

She was an absolute natural on the stage and she made singing appear so effortless.

She makes it look as easy and natural as speaking or breathing.

Walsingham is currently attending Covenant College and is majoring in music.

“Winning North Georgia Idol, and having the opportunity to work with Sean Clyde in the recording studio is like a dream come true,” she said. “Ever since I was little, singing has been a passion of mine.

“When I get up to perform, it’s not just about singing a song, but about communicating a message,” she said. “I feel the music in my heart and in my soul. Singing is the only thing I can see myself doing for the rest of my life, and the thought of being able to record my own songs means so much to me.

“I am so thankful for the opportunity I had to be a part of North Georgia Idol,” said Walsingham.

Walsingham was up against some pretty tough competition and this was certainly a night for talented young women as she competed against Annabell Camp, 16 of Newnan; Tatum Turner, 15 of Conyers, Kaylee King, 13 of Lagrange, and Lilly Camp, 13 of Bowden.

While they didn’t go home with the title of North Georgia Idol 2013, second place winner Tatum Turner won a two-song demo studio

Pets...continued from Page 1

The Shelter provides a much needed service to both Towns and Union counties, but the facility is filling up faster than money is coming in.

Shelter Director Lisa McConnell wants to remind folks that spaying and neutering your pet makes it less likely to stray and “it is probably the single most important act of kindness you can show your pet.”

“We have many animals brought in as strays or drop-offs. We try to reunite them with their owners, but many times that just isn’t possible. We also get a lot of animals that are bought as ‘gifts’ for children. When the new wears off and they are not quite as cute, or they become more of a responsibility and expense than anticipated, they end up here, if they are lucky,” said McConnell.

“The Humane Society’s Mountain Shelter is dedicated to preventing overpopulation, animal cruelty and suffering, and the inhumane treatment of animals,” said McConnell.

One of the suggestions of the HSMS is to educate children regarding the proper treatment of animals.

“If we educate our children, they in turn will educate their children. We need to teach children compassion for animals, as well as the importance of humane treatment, proper care, and the need for spaying and neutering,” said McConnell.

The staff at the shelter would like for interested persons to know that they welcome volunteers and also appreciate any support in their fundraising efforts.

Mountain Shelter operates two thrift stores, one in Blairsville and one in Young Harris off Highway 17.

They appreciate your support of their thrift stores either with donations or purchases.

This exhibit will be on display in the Gallery at Brass-town from March 22nd through July 8th.

All of the art work is available for purchase and would make a lovely addition to any home or office.

For more details on the Mountain Arts Association, Terrell encourages you to visit the Web at www.themountain-artsassociation.org.

recording session and third-place winner Kaylee King won a one song demo song recording session.

All prizes were compliments of C & C Media.

It was a win-win situation all the way around for these three talented young ladies.

While the Camp sisters did not place, they are definitely forces to contend with when they return.

“North Georgia Idol 2013 was an awesome event. I made several new friends, listened to wonderful singers, and took home the third place prize. I can’t wait to come back next year and hopefully win first place,” said King.

It was a tough night to be sitting in the judges’ seats as all five young ladies gave a great performance with their own unique style and sound.

It was certainly a difficult decision for the judges. But, as in any competition, somebody has to win and, unfortunately, someone has to walk away with dreams of that win whisked away in the blink of an eye.

These young ladies have all vowed to return next year and vie for the title of North Georgia Idol 2014.

Last year’s 2013 Idol winner Palmer Mireille was unable to attend this year’s event as she is in Los Angeles doing photo shoots, working on her song writing, recording her original music, and working on her vocals with some very renowned vocal instructors.

She did send her wishes of good luck to this year’s participants via her mother Robbie Derhnel.

This years judges were Keren Leppo, Marietta; Don Byers, Blairsville; Tammy Clyde, Young Harris; and Gail Lynn, Blairsville.

Emcee Shad Bradley claims both Woodstock and Blairsville as his home.

He did an excellent job and entertained the crowd with his quick, unique style of humor, and his ability to make the performers feel at ease on the stage.

The Shelter also appreciates local support of their fundraisers.

McConnell encourages Towns and Union residents to come out and support their next big fundraiser on June 15th at the Mountain Shelter from 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

“We welcome everyone to our Annual Pet-A-Pet as we celebrate our 25th anniversary and open house. Come visit the shelter and pet all the animals, but please do not bring your pets with you,” said McConnell.

There will be continuous door prizes and educational material available.

McConnell is pleased to announce that veterinarian Hilty Burr of Lake Chatuge Animal Hospital will be available for ‘Ask a Vet’ sessions.

Union County Animal Control and the North Georgia S.P.C.A. will be on hand to answer your questions and provide educational information to area residents.

“This is a huge fundraiser for the Shelter and we are very excited about it. We will have face painting, bracelet design, Dance for Dollars, and lots of more fun for the whole family. We hope to have the whole community come out and join in this fundraiser and anniversary celebration,” said McConnell.

Mountain Shelter is always looking for dedicated volunteers and they will offer a “volunteer sign up” for those looking for ways to serve their community.

Volunteers are needed at the shelter and the thrift stores as well.

Mark your calendar folks and come out and support your local shelter.

You will walk away with a smile on your face and a slight skip in your step knowing that you have made the world a little brighter for a shelter pet.

Warrior Hike...continued from Page 1

U.S. Marine Corps captains Sean Gobin and Mark Silvers co-founded Warrior Hike, after returning home from Afghanistan in 2012.

The two men were on a mission and totally committed to seeing Warrior Hike become an outlet for the many dedicated veterans who had served their country selflessly, had endured great hardship, witnessed great losses, and left family behind to fight to preserve the great freedoms that we have and often complain about and take for granted today.

Gobin and Silvers drew their inspiration for Warrior Hike from a story they heard regarding a World War II veteran, Earl Shaffer, who, in 1948, “told a friend he was going to ‘walk off the war’ and four months later, he became the first person to hike the entire length of the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine,” said Gobin.

“Recognizing the physical, psychological, and spiritual benefits of hiking the Appalachian Trail, Warrior Hike partnered with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to create the Walk Off The War Program,” said Gobin.

Aimed at providing a therapeutic and holistic approach to helping veterans “walk off the war,” Mother Nature assumes the role of physician, therapist, trail guide, and confidant.

The warrior hikers connect with other veterans from all across the country on their own self-paced journey of self-awareness, soul searching, and striving to make sense of all they have seen, felt, lost, and sacrificed. For many veterans, the battle continues long after they have left the war and returned home.

Gobin told their veteran hosts that he and Silvers hiked all 2,185 miles of the



Warrior Hikers pose with local veterans. Photo/Libby Shook

Appalachian Trail in a fundraising effort to benefit wounded veterans.

During their journey, they organized numerous speaking events via the veterans’ organizations they encountered during their time on the trail.

“By the end of our hike, we had raised \$50,000 and were able to purchase adapted vehicles for seriously wounded veterans from the war in Afghanistan,” Gobin said.

U.S. Army Corp. Gary Ewin, best summed The Trail experience up when he said, he never thought he could have so much fun being so miserable.

Ewin was referring to the cold, wet conditions endured on The Trail.

Twenty-four year U.S. Army veteran Chris Galemor said the reason he was doing this is because it gives him time to think with every step he takes.

There were many more who shared this sentiment and expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to be a part of this adventure.

Due to a scheduling conflict, Commissioner Kendall was unable to attend the gather-

ing and expressed his appreciation for these veterans.

“We are real proud to have this group of veterans passing through Towns County,” Kendall said. “I regret that I was unable to be there to shake their hands and tell them how much we appreciate their service to this country. We certainly wish them well as they continue on the Trail.”

Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris, who was described by Marine Corps League member Walt Scott as “a big supporter of veterans and the Marine Corps League” was invited to take part in honoring the veterans.

“I appreciate what this group is doing for veterans, past and present, and for their service to our country,” Paris said.

“Their effort in helping veterans transition back into civilian life after having served in a war or wars, by allowing them the opportunity to participate in the Warrior Hike is commendable,” he said. “It’s a very worthwhile program, and I am proud to have been invited to help honor them.”

The Appalachian Trail

Warriors 2013 Corp. Adam Bautz , Las Vegas, NV; United States Marine Corps; Infantry Machine Gunner; Chief Warrant Officer Jesse Bier , Fredericksburg, VA; United States Marine Corps; Ordinance Officer; Sgt. Major Rob Carmel , Olympia, WA; United States Army; Field Artillery; Staff Sgt. Steve Clendenning , Jacksonville, NC; United States Marine Corps; Light Armored Vehicle Crewman; Petty Officer Second Class Stephanie Cutts , Winters, CA; United States Navy; Hull Maintenance Technician; Sgt. Dick Erwin , Modesto, CA; United States Marine Corps; Cryogenics Equipment Operator; Corp. Gary Ewin , Gillespie, IL; United States Army; Military Police; Chief Warrant Officer Chris Galemor , Pooler, United States Army; Electronic Systems Maintenance Officer; Lance Corp. Thomas Gathman , State College, PA; United States Marine Corps; Infantry Rifleman; Specialist William Guill , Hillsborough, NC; United States Navy, United States Army; Public Affairs Specialist, Unit Armorer; First Sgt. Jeff Harper , Virginia Beach, VA; United States Army; Musician (Orchestral Tuba Player); Corp. Kevin Reed , Rochester, MN; United States Marine Corps; Infantry Mortarman; Sgt. Sharon Smith , Garner, NC; United States Air Force; Medic; Specialist Cody Umphress , Evansville, IN; United States Army; Military Police.

spans 14 states beginning at the southern terminus, Springer Mountain, in northern Fannin County, and ends in Katahdin, Maine.

This group began their trek on St. Patrick’s Day and will wrap up Sept. 15th where they will be honored with an End of Trail Festival.

Warrior Hikers, the Marine Corps League and Towns County salutes you.

Easter...continued from page 1

a little bit more fair this way,” said Hooper. “The younger kids don’t have to compete with the older ones.”

This was a wonderful community-building event as parents, grandparents, and other family members talked and socialized with old and new friends as they waited patiently for the opportunity to watch their kids hunt for eggs.

Six-year-old Eva Alford, with parents Judson and Lisa Alford of Hiawasee, was very excited about Saturday’s events.

“This is fun,” said Eva.

She also was eager to tell of her second place win in the Easter Drawing Contest sponsored by United Community Bank on Friday, March 29th.

“I won a big Easter basket and it had a frog in it and a chocolate bunny.”

This was two big days in a row for this young lady and she was hoping to go home with another victory.

She was not disappointed as she was not only the winner of a Grand Prize Easter Basket, but won a “regular” prize basket as well.

There were a total of six recipients of the Grand Prize baskets, three from both ball fields.

Winners of the Grand Prize baskets were Eva Al-



ford, Hanna Monnin, Devin Reece, Seth Rutan, and two more anonymous children who eagerly collected their baskets and left to enjoy their tasty treats and prizes.

This was a fun morning for most all of the kids, but as in any sport, you can’t have this many kids on the field without a minor mishap.

In this case, a young child (4-6 year age group) was accidentally knocked down and hurt his mouth. Hooper assisted his

mother by providing a bottle of cold water, some paper towels, and provided a place for mom to wipe up his face.

Here’s hoping the Easter Bunny puts an extra helping of chocolate in that young man’s basket this year.

“All the eggs have an assorted candy in them, while others have winning prizes listed on slips of paper in the egg letting the kids know exactly what they have won,” said Hooper. “We wanted to

make sure that every kid leaves with some kind of treat.”

Some of the eggs even had gift certificates in them.

“I want to thank McDonald’s and Dairy Queen for the gift certificates they donated for the egg hunt,” said Hooper.

Hooper also said that there were some anonymous donations made by individuals who did not wish to be recognized, but their generosity was greatly appreciated.

