

Volunteers prepare Town Square for Light Up Hiawassee



Volunteers gathered the morning of Saturday, Nov. 17, to decorate the Hiawassee Town Square with Christmas cheer. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

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More than two dozen volunteers came together to put up Christmas decorations at the Hiawassee Town Square on Saturday, Nov. 17, to help give the city a more festive feel. This year, more volunteers than ever before came to help the city decorate and put up all the Christmas lights for the coming month and holiday season. "Our turnout this year is great, and I really appreciate all the volunteers that came out to help us put it all together," said Hiawassee City Councilwoman Nancy Noblet. "We have everybody working on something and getting it all put together."



More than two dozen volunteers pitched in to decorate the Town Square for this year's Light Up Hiawassee event. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

S.A.F.E. hosts Dinner & Show fundraiser at civic center



Members and volunteers with the S.A.F.E. organization of Towns and Union counties in the Tuesday, Nov. 13, S.A.F.E. Dinner & Show. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

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BLAIRSVILLE – Members and volunteers of S.A.F.E. Inc. of Towns and Union counties gathered on Tuesday, Nov. 13, to put on Spaghetti Dinner & Show fundraiser at the Blairsville Civic Center. S.A.F.E., which stands for Support in Abusive Family Emergencies, invited the community to join the organization in enjoying a night of movies, trivia and dinner. While enjoying their dinner, attendees could watch the movie "Max" on the big screen in the room, and following their meals, trivia was hosted in a small room near the dining area for families and friends wanting to compete with each other to see who could outwit the other. "We decided to do an event like this because we wanted people to come enjoy the evening, and usually these types of events work out because everyone enjoys the food," said Molly Cousin, executive director for S.A.F.E. A large, pink dollhouse was also on display for guests to look at and buy raffle tickets for, and the raffle for the house

will take place on Dec. 8. The three-hour event strived to entertain attendees while still supporting and donating money to S.A.F.E. "S.A.F.E. has three programs," said Cousin. "They have domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse, and this money we raise tonight goes into all of the programs. "The funds help with victim needs. Most victims come with literally nothing, so transportation, medical needs, housing, basic shelter needs, and other stuff like that needs to be covered." S.A.F.E is a non-profit organization that has served the area since 1989. The goal of the organization is to provide support, advocacy and emergency shelter for victims of domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual abuse, regardless of gender, and to heighten community awareness of such abuse in Towns and Union counties. The organization encourages building a safety plan for families to follow when they feel that they are in danger, and advocates suggest that anyone in an abusive relationship of any kind speaks out for their own physical and

emotional health. When times for families are critical, S.A.F.E. relocates the abused under their care to watch over them and help them develop to recover from the effects of the abuse. According to literature made available at the Nov. 13 event, the process of seeking healing from abusive relationships is complex, but through access to a comprehensive array of services, victims can find hope. By providing resources, support and a safe environment, victims are empowered to support themselves. The organization always appreciates volunteers who wish to help them reach their goal and help the abused victims in their custody. S.A.F.E. has various opportunities for volunteers to apply for, and each position, no matter how minor, helps the organization make a difference. For more information on S.A.F.E., their upcoming events, or volunteer opportunities for the organization, visit one of the local S.A.F.E. thrift stores, or visit their website SAFEServices.org.



Guests of the S.A.F.E. Spaghetti Dinner & Show on Tuesday, Nov. 13. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

American Legion Post 121 flag fundraiser supports scholarship program

The Ira Weaver American Legion Post 121, 78 Old Blue Ridge Highway, Blairsville, GA is excited to let you know that the Holiday Season is just around the corner. We believe that there is definitely an increased tone of patriotism in the air this season. We extend this tone to you by your consideration of a purchase of a 3x5 American Legion Flag as a present to your family and friends. The American Legion Post 121 sells the American made all weather flags for \$20. If you want to purchase a flag, please contact us no later than 7 December 2018 so we can order a flag for you. Contact smstratman@lelgiopost121.org or call 912-856-7951. Proceeds from the flag purchase goes to support American Legion Post



121 scholarship program. If you are a military veteran of any service and are interested in experiencing the type of camaraderie that you experienced during your time in the military, you can join. You can call Commander Mike Ayers 678-378-4663 or Adjutant Jack Waters at 813-334-7235. Our meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month, except December, at the Major Leon Davenport Veteran's Center at 78 Blue Ridge Street. The meetings start at 6:30 PM. Prospective members are welcome to just come to a meeting. The more members we have, the more clout we have when our representatives go to Washington. Also, the more members we have, the more we can do to help veterans who need a hand up from a comrade. N(11/21/22)/CA

With all hands on decorations, the square began to look more and more festive as the chilly morning hours passed that Saturday. Decorations for the square included multiple trees around the gazebo, a giant "Joy" sign, many lights to surround the area, different large Christmas-themed shapes, a banner, and many more decorations to make the square look ready for the coming holiday season. Volunteers with the heavy lifting and construction of the giant "Joy" sign facing Main Street and with hanging the lights and banner downtown. Within the first hour of decorating, volunteers had trees up and ornamented, and all that teamwork brought about a feeling of community that

made decorating the square a fun activity rather than a chore of untangling and putting up lights. "Compared to other years, this is coming along and starting to look great," said Noblet. "Every year, we have more and more volunteers that come out to make this all possible. "I appreciate all the work they put in, and I'm thankful for the support from the mayor and city council. None of this would have been possible without all of them." All the decorating on the square is in preparation for the Light Up Hiawassee! event coming on Dec. 1. "We will begin the event starting at 4 p.m. on Dec. 1," said Noblet. "We will have

Santa, the lights, vendors and food to enjoy bringing in the Christmas season." The event will last until 7 p.m. and be a family-friendly occasion for children to enjoy with various activities for them to participate in, including a golf cart parade, welcoming Santa, and Christmas Caroling. This event will also give Enotah CASA the opportunity to do the annual lighting of the luminaries to memorialize the children that CASA has helped this year. Noblet and the rest of the city council, as well as Hiawassee Mayor Liz Ordiales, are looking forward to a great turnout at the Dec. 1 event, and they encourage the entire community to come out and ring in the holiday season.

Shop with a Hero...from Page 1A

purchased for family members, students will be treated to a lunch at a local Towns County restaurant. People interested in making a donation or referring a child to Shop with a Hero can contact Gibby-Rosser at argibby@townscountyschools.org or by calling 706-896-4131. "I just think it's a great way for people all over the community to be involved in some aspect," said Gibby-Rosser. "They can give money, they can volunteer, and they know that they're touching a child's life. "The children that

participate, they are so appreciative every year and just so grateful that we pick them and that they've been able to do it. We always have such a great group, and it makes me feel good knowing that they feel blessed." Added Gibby-Rosser, "Any amount matters. If people want to send something, we appreciate it, and it 100 percent directly goes back to the kids." Donations can also be dropped off at the Police Department, located inside Hiawassee City Hall. For his part, Chief Smith has been involved with the Christmas program every year

since Chief Wright hired him in 2010. He said he misses Chief Wright, and that he's glad to carry on his legacy in such an enduring way. "It's a way that we can help give back and touch lives in a positive way that we otherwise might not be able to do," said Chief Smith. "We appreciate the community's continued support. A lot of the same people give every single year. "That really makes a difference, to know that we can rely on yearly businesses or individuals to donate every year."

Transit...from Page 1A

serves 317 people per month. The transit service caters primarily to the elderly, the infirm and people who are without transportation. Towns County Transit Secretary Betty Greenwood said that a 24 to 48-hour notice is required, and only riders who are residents of Towns County

are considered for pick-up. Also, Union County, namely Blairsville, is the only destination outside of Towns County that the transit service travels to. In other news, the commissioner signed a Resolution to Amend the 2018 Budget, per Georgia law, to

account for restitution revenue received from a Towns County prisoner. Earlier this year, a Towns County fugitive was apprehended a great distance away and had to be transported back to Towns County. The cost of the transport to Towns County was \$1,144.

Election...from Page 1A

U.S. passport; valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, this state, or any county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of this state; valid U.S. military photo ID; valid tribal photo ID." Robyn Crittenden, former commissioner of the Georgia Department of Human

Services, is serving out the remainder of Kemp's term as Secretary of State. Appointed by Gov. Nathan Deal on Nov. 8 after Kemp resigned from his position, Crittenden will be in charge of overseeing the runoff election. Following the Nov. 6 election, county restaurants will now be able to apply for

liquor licenses, which will be regulated by county ordinance to determine the hours and other parameters of liquor by the drink sales, excluding Sunday sales altogether. Also, Hiawassee voters approved a referendum to move the start time of local alcohol sales by the drink from 12:30 p.m. to 11 a.m. on Sundays.

Christmas...from Page 1A

as well." The month of December is all about celebrating Christmas at the fairgrounds, with concerts and other events going on during the light show. On Dec. 15, there will be A Shaggin' Christmas Concert, where The Tams, Swingin' Medallions and Clarence Carter will perform. "On Dec. 22, Macedonia Church will be doing their Christmas Cantata in the music hall," said Thomason. "We also have an animal farm coming in with a variety of different farm animals that will be down at the fairgrounds the entire duration of the events." Added Thomason, "We have lots of volunteers, and we appreciate everybody helping and volunteering. Thanks to Towns County for making this possible, and we want everybody to come out and enjoy it and bring their families. They'll want to come out and see it more than once, it's absolutely beautiful."

Also coming up at fairgrounds in 2019, the contemporary Christian band Bid Daddy Weave concert will take place in April. "We got Bid Daddy Weave confirmed for April 13, and I know that is a long way

out, but the tickets go on sale Monday," said Thomason. For more information on upcoming concerts and other events at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, visit GeorgiaMountainFairgrounds.com.



Frosty the Snowman in Christmas lights last year at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.