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Veterans respectfully honored at annual Nov. 11 program

By Todd Forrest
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

Towns County paid homage to its hometown heroes during the Nov. 11 Veterans Day Service with a laying of wreaths, a Memorial Wall presentation, patriotic music, and keynote remarks from retired U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Vicky Healy on a cool misty morning in Hiwassee.

Hosted at the Towns County Veterans Park during the 11th hour, on the 11th day of the 11th month, local chapters of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The American Legion, American Legion Riders, Sons of The American Legion, and Marine Corps League were among the organizations coor-

inating the event honoring the community's servicemen and women.

"It means a lot to all of us veterans and the families of veterans that you care enough to come out and say 'thank you,'" American Legion Post #23 Cmdr. Randal Forehand said in his opening comments. "Towns County is very lucky to have so many veterans and a community that supports all of them."

Forehand continued by recognizing local dignitaries, expressing the local vets' appreciation of Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw, Hiwassee Mayor Liz Ordiales and other elected officials.

In addition, Forehand issued a thank you to past American Legion commanders John Harkins and Jim Hoyt.

During the keynote address, Healy offered a brief bio that began in Chicago, Illinois, and later, San Francisco, California, where she remained until joining the Army in 1972, which kicked off a 20-year career in the armed forces.

"I'm honored to be with you here today as we celebrate Veterans Day," Healy said. "In 2010, there were approximately 1.6 million women veterans, and I'm proud to be included in that number."

Healy attended Basic Training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, then underwent advanced Air Defense Artillery training at Fort Bliss, Texas.

She returned to the Windy City where she was stationed until re-enlisting in 1975. During her second stint, she served

as an Air Traffic Controller in Seoul, South Korea, Mannheim, Germany, and Fort Rucker, Alabama.

"Korea has a beautiful countryside of rolling hills," she said. "But then you would see the concrete barriers constructed to (stop the North Korean tanks), and it was during this tour that I realized how lucky I am to be an American and what it meant to serve our great country."

Following a deployment to Greece during the Beirut, Lebanon, conflict, Healy worked the Los Alamitos Tower in support of the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, California.

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Healy served at Cairns Army Airfield in Ala-



Retired U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Vicky Healy delivered a message of gratitude for her country on Veterans Day in Towns County Veterans Park. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

City creates new development position; Branson swears in

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Editor

The City of Hiwassee is getting a part-time dedicated Downtown Development Program Manager after City Council members voted unanimously to create the position in their Nov. 9 regular meeting.

Discussion over the need for such a position came up in the October regular meeting, at which time the council decided to table the issue for further consideration.

Hiwassee currently benefits from its relationship with Joint Development Director Denise McKay, who devotes her time to assisting the economic development efforts of Towns County, Hiwassee and Young Harris.

The city also has a volunteer Downtown Development Authority that majorly contributes toward local development initiatives that have included the Paris Business Center and designations like PlanFirst Community and Rural Zone, with



Mayor Liz Ordiales swearing in Municipal Court Clerk Sherly Branson during the Facebook Live broadcast of the Nov. 9 city meeting. Photo/Screenshot

involvement in the Main Street Program.

But given McKay's role heading up the joint authority, and the board's volunteer status, Mayor Liz Ordiales has said a city employee dedicated to development is needed. This person will work closely with the DDA and McKay in for-

warding the economic interests of the city.

Last month, Ordiales reminded council members that hiring a Hiwassee-dedicated development person was something the city had mulled over during past planning, saying it was becoming more necessary

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Historical Society applauds FFA for Carter Cemetery cleanup

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

On Nov. 7, the Towns County Historical Society welcomed the Towns County High School Future Farmers of America to showcase the students' recent project to clean up Carter Cemetery, which features local family history dating to the early 1800s and family patriarch Josiah Carter.

The presentation was delivered via slideshow of the before-and-after visuals, and an informative pamphlet was handed out to highlight some of the Carter Family history and lineage.

Historical Society Vice President Jerry Taylor provided the FFA with the history for the presentation, which contained facts about the people buried at the cemetery and even Civil War letters written home by Josiah and Nancy Carter's son W.J. Harvey Carter.



Towns County FFA students committed this fall to cleaning up the Carter Cemetery off Bugscuffle Road near Towns County High. Photo/Submitted

Sabrina Garrett is the Agricultural Mechanics teacher and FFA adviser at the High School, and she led that evening's meeting with the full scoop on the project.

"Having a sense of respect for the community and a strong work ethic is something to be proud of," Garrett said. "That is what I strive for with these kids, and I felt that was the goal for this project."

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For King & Country coming to Fairgrounds January 29

By Jeremy Foster
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds will be hosting another huge concert event on Saturday, Jan. 29, 2022, with four-time Grammy Award-winning Christian pop duo "for KING & COUNTRY." Tickets for the show went on sale last week at georgiamountainfairgrounds.com.

For King & Country is made up of brothers Joel and Luke Smallbone, who have been active since 2007 with four studio albums to their name.

Since their inception as a group, the duo has accrued many accolades, including winning GMA Dove Awards New Artist of the Year in 2013, Contemporary Christian Artist of the Year in 2015 and 2016, and Artist of the Year in 2020 and 2021.

Their biggest accomplishments include winning two Grammy Awards in 2015 for Best Contemporary Christian



Christian pop duo "for KING & COUNTRY" will perform at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds in January, with tickets on sale now.

Music Album for "Run Wild. Live Free. Love Strong," and Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song for "Messengers."

In 2020, For King & Country won two Grammys

for Best Contemporary Christian Music Album "Burn the Ships" and Best Contemporary Christian Music Performance/Song with "God Only Knows," the latter of which

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State Insurance Commissioner meets with local stakeholders



L-R: Blairsville-Union County Chamber President Steve Rowe, State Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris in the Nov. 10 Eggs & Issues Breakfast. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

BLAIRSVILLE – Georgia's Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King featured as the keynote speaker for the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce

"Eggs and Issues Breakfast" on Nov. 10.

Hosted at the Union County Community Center, the breakfast is a regular event featuring speakers from local and statewide levels. Primarily, discussions focus on legislative and business topics. Business owners, civic leaders and concerned citizens are welcome to attend.

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Marine Corps League celebrates 246th Birthday of the Corps

By Mark Smith
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The United States Marine Corps is alive and well in Hiwassee, a fact borne out on Wednesday, Nov. 10, when 17 Marine Corps veterans and others came together at Daniel's Steak House to celebrate the birthday of the Corps.

"Today's the 246th birthday of the Marine Corps," said Marine Corps League Unicoi Detachment #783 Sr. Vice Commandant Bill Lyons. "Every Marine Corps League,

every active-duty unit, every group of Marines get together, and they celebrate this day.

"There's a couple of traditional things that we do during the ceremony. We'll start out today with the Pledge of Allegiance, we're going to sing the Marine Hymn, our chaplain is going to say a prayer, then we're all going to eat together."

Continuing, he said, "We have an MIA/POW table that we commemorate as an acknowledgement of those who can't be here with us; we'll have a birthday message from

the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. (David H.) Berger; and we'll read Gen. (John A.) Lejeune's birthday message."

Gen. Lejeune started the tradition in 1921 of sending a birthday message to all Marines wherever they happened to be on Nov. 10 each year.

"We'll have a cake-cutting ceremony afterwards ... and we usually use a sword," Lyons said, noting that all Marine officers have a Mameluke sword as part of their uniform issue.

The tradition of outfitting officers with this particular

sword started with the gifting of a Mameluke saber to Marine Lt. Presley O'Bannon by an Ottoman Empire Viceroy for leading a successful charge against the Libyan city of Derna in 1805 to defeat Barbary Pirates.

Around the same time, the Marines rescued the kidnapped crew of the USS Philadelphia on the shores of Tripoli, not far from Derna, and it was there that Marines received the nickname "Leathernecks" because of the high collars they

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U.S. Marine Corps Veteran David Haag cutting the cake celebrating the Corps' birthday in the Nov. 10 observance at Daniel's Steak House in Hiwassee. Photo by Mark Smith

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It's beginning to sound a lot like Christmas! Brasstown Ringers handbell ensemble holiday concerts



Brasstown Ringers handbell ensemble

The Brasstown Ringers community handbell ensemble will kick off their holiday concert season, Sounds Like Christmas with a performance at 7 PM on Friday, December 3 at Oak Forest United Methodist Church in Hayesville, NC.

Additional concerts are scheduled as follows: Saturday, December 4, 7 PM – Hope Lutheran Church, Ellijay, GA; Sunday, December 5, 5 PM – First United Methodist Church, Copperhill, TN; Friday, December 10, 7 PM – First United Methodist Church, Franklin, NC; Saturday, December 11, 7 PM – Blue Ridge United Methodist Church, Blue Ridge, GA; Sunday, December 12, 5 PM – Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church, Young Harris, GA.

Brasstown Ringers was initially started in 1992 by Pat Meinecke, who retired as director and in 2019, passed her baton to Linda Sterrett from Franklin, NC. Ringing 5 octaves of Schulmerich bells and

6 octaves of Malmark chimes, these advanced ringers from across Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee come together for practice every Thursday evening in Blairsville, GA. This year's concert series is dedicated to Henry Meinecke, late husband of Pat and former choir member. He shared his love of music and dedication to beautiful handbell music with all he met.

Members include: (GA) Jason Brunner, Liza Lawrence, Tom and Jackie Volk; (NC) Danny Ferreira, Sheila Gregory, Steve Holcomb, Theresa Ramsey, Jackie Reed, Anne Rice, Sharon Ruffner, Mark Schickedantz, Kathy Tant, Linda Sterrett (director); and (TN) Lonney and Brett McDonald.

In addition to spring and winter performances, the choir has toured Europe, gone on multiple handbell retreats, and performed at the Biltmore House as well as other venues throughout western North

Carolina, northeast Georgia and southeast Tennessee. The Sounds Like Christmas concert will showcase the beauty and depth of handbell music and spotlight various ringing techniques. The program's variety of pieces featuring traditional carols, and pop favorites is sure to bring holiday cheer!

Because this is an indoor event, we respectfully request that the CDC guidelines be followed for everyone's safety, comfort and enjoyment. Also, Pure Water Technology of the Tri-State Area LLC, a distributor for AERUS Electrolux Air Filters, will donate the use of 7 air purifiers at each concert venue. These air purifiers reduce and eliminate bacteria and viruses in the air to add an additional level of air quality.

For details about upcoming handbell workshops or to schedule a performance, contact Linda Sterrett after a concert or at lkmsterrett@gmail.com. NT11Nov17.26CA

Marine Corps...from Page 1A

wore as protection from pirate sabers.

In 1825, Marine Corps Commandant Archibald Henderson adopted the Mameluke sword to be carried by officers in what has become a tradition lasting through to modern times.

As tradition holds in the cake-cutting ceremony, the first piece is given to the guest(s) of honor, for this occasion Hiawasse Mayor Liz Ordiales and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris. Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw was not able to attend due to illness.

The second round of cake is given to the oldest Marine in the room who hands it down to the youngest Marine in the room, signifying the passing down of the knowledge and traditions of 246 years of Marine Corps history and service to the country.

That evening, the oldest Marine was Jack McKorkle, 90, who served from 1949 to 1971. The youngest Marine was Alex Bacardi, 28, who enlisted in 2011 and got out in 2016. But, as Lyons said, "Once a Marine, always a Marine. There are no ex-Marines."

Gen. Berger's message to Marines on this 246th birthday was to "not look back, but instead, look to the future."

Quoting Commandant Leonard F. Chapman Jr. from his Nov. 10, 1970, Marine Corps birthday message, Berger said, "He insisted that we



Marine Jack McKorkle, 90, posing for a photo with fellow Marine Alex Bacardi, 28, at the Nov. 10 birthday bash. The pair were the oldest and youngest Marines present, respectively.

Photo by Mark Smith

celebrate our anniversary, 'not as an end of almost two centuries of dedicated service, but as preparation for our new service, new dedication, and new achievements.'"

Lyons remarked that this was as applicable today as it was 51 years ago, bringing to mind Marines and other military veterans who are committing suicide at an average rate of 22 per day, the message being to look ahead and not dwell on the past.

MCL Unicoi Detachment #783 Chaplain Richard Hoibraten, a retired Navy

Seabee who is an honorary member of the Marine Corps League and a life member in the MCL Auxiliary, closed the birthday event with "The Marines Prayer."

The Unicoi Detachment enjoys membership by veterans living in the North Georgia Mountains, including Union and Towns counties.

Happy Birthday, Marines. May all Leathernecks be safe wherever they are, defending the freedom and sovereignty of the United States of America. Semper Fidelis – Always Faithful.

City of Hiawasse...from Page 1A

now that the city was further along with its development goals.

"I'm looking for someone who can just focus on city business three days a week, part time," Ordiales said Oct. 5.

The position will likely pay about \$20 per hour from hotel/motel tax revenues, which are significantly up of late due to recent changes in state law allowing collections on short-term vacation rentals like Airbnbs and VRBOs, according to Ordiales.

Now that the position has been created, next steps include finalizing a job description, which the city is in the process of doing currently, after which the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government will check over the description and provide a pay scale.

Three people have shown interest in the position already, and Ordiales anticipates being able to complete the interview process and hire someone to serve as the new Downtown Development Program Manager by January 2022.

The program manager will be an employee of the city and will not be directly affiliated with the Hiawasse Downtown Development Authority or Joint Development Authority.

Also in the meeting, the council appointed Sheryl Branson as the City of Hiawasse Municipal Court Clerk, and Mayor Ordiales swore her into the post.

"Sheryl Branson comes to us from Tennessee, she is a sort-of-retired person from the University of Tennessee – don't hold that against her, she

is a Vol," Ordiales said, joking. "She has been with us since June 1 (and) gone through training on court clerk."

"She has been with Judge (Robert) Sneed for a few months. He is very happy with her performance; we are very happy with her performance. In order to stabilize that position a little bit – Bonnie has been doing that work – so now she is the court clerk and Bonnie will be the deputy court clerk."

In other business Nov. 9, the council held a second reading and enactment of the "Sewer Force Main Requirements Ordinance." The ordinance creates a new section in the city's Code of Ordinances requiring a written contract before anyone can tie into the sewer force main.

Per the Environmental Protection Agency, "force mains are used to convey wastewater from a lower to higher elevation, particularly where the elevation of the source is not sufficient for gravity flow and/or the use of gravity conveyance will result in excessive excavation depths and high sewer pipeline construction costs."

The city has one force main sewer pipe that runs from the sewer plant up US 76, then over to the Towns County Jail. As there are no manholes along that stretch, anyone wanting to access city sewer must tie directly into the force main.

Requiring a contract for new force main tie-ins will protect the city moving forward by shifting the responsibility of maintaining tie-ins, including private lift stations, explicitly to new sewer customers and away from the city.

The ordinance amendment follows the establishment of a new rate for all force main tie-ins, which the council approved in the Oct. 5 regular city meeting.

"(The rate) is going to go to \$3,500 from what it was depending on whether you were inside the city limits (\$2,250) or outside the city limits (\$2,700)," Ordiales said last month. "I hate doing that, but I think it's our only choice to provide economic development in the areas where we don't have lift stations and manholes and that kind of stuff. It just requires more equipment and supervision."

Additionally last week, council members approved the "Low-Income Water Payment Agreement," which is a federal program administered through Ninth District Opportunity Inc. to assist low-income residents by paying the cost of their water bills directly to the city.

The council also voted to approve the 2022 Holiday and Meeting Calendar, which features no changes from 2021 and is available at hiawasseega.gov.

For audit purposes, the City Council approved a by-law amendment for the DDA to change the organization's fiscal year from calendar year Jan. 1 through Dec. 31 to the city's fiscal year that runs from July 1 to June 30.

Hiawasse City Council and Mayor Ordiales will meet again Nov. 29 for their work session and Dec. 7 for their next regular meeting. Both meetings will take place at 6 p.m. inside City Hall, with livestreams available via Facebook.

Cemetery Cleanup...from Page 1A

as we typically try to do a community service project at least once a year.

"Out of respect for our heritage, I knew this just had to be done. When we first started the project, the area was barely recognizable, as grass, leaves and other debris covered everything, with even trees growing through some of the headstones."

"We had about 30 kids working on the project, and it took us nearly two weeks to complete it, albeit with some rain here and there that we had to dodge. But it was worth it, because not only were we able to preserve the cemetery, but the kids gained a lot from it."

"They got exercise, got a history lesson, and learned the values of hard work and gained a lot of experience they can take with them throughout the rest of their lives."

As far as what all went into the efforts, Garrett said "a lot was involved in getting the job done."

"We had to clean and

spray off headstones, as they were all covered with moss and soot and barely readable," she said. "A lot of underbrush had to be moved out, as well as several logs and dead trees; trimming up some holly bushes so you could walk under them again; and blowing away all the backed-up leaves so you can see the headstones again."

In terms of other projects moving forward, Garrett said the FFA always has its eyes open "looking for things to be done as well as our ears if we hear of people suggesting things that we did not realize."

"We are here for our community," she said, "and we feel there is no better way to give back than taking care of our ancestors' success that gave us the foundations to what we have today. They gave us a lot to be successful, so we took the initiative to give back."

Pertaining to native son of Towns County W. J. H. Carter, he enlisted in the Confederate Army at the age of 17 in 1861 and was captured by

Union forces at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. He ended up getting out of prison about a year later by becoming a "Galvanized Confederate."

"This meant that he would be a U.S. soldier but would not be sent back to fight against the Confederates," per program literature. "Instead, he would be sent to Indian Territory to help stem the problems in that area."

He died six months after joining the Union. At the time of his enlistment in 1864, he was described as having been healthy, though he succumbed to "consumption" less than two months after transferring to Fort Rice, Dakota Territory, where conditions were incredibly harsh.

W. J. H. Carter is buried in the National Cemetery at Little Bighorn National Monument in Montana.

The names of families buried at the Carter Cemetery include Carter, Stroud, Tanner, Barnes, Foster, Parton and Jones, with many unmarked stone gravesites.

Eggs & Issues...from Page 1A

"Spanish-Southern" accent.

Offering some biographical background, King said that his father, a native of South Georgia, didn't want to be a tobacco farmer, so after traveling the world during World War II, he retired and married King's mother in Mexico. It was there that King spent his first 17 years of life.

When he first moved to the United States, King lived in Albany. He would go on to join the police force, where he was one of the first members of the Red Dog Squad, which was an original anti-drug task force. Notably, he also recalls walking Coretta Scott King to her car.

"And you would think that somebody like Coretta Scott King would have a hard time dealing with a young white cop who had no idea of the racial challenges that the '60s and '70s had, but she took a lot of time to really teach me why it's important that police officers really be committed to the safety of their community," King said.

He would go on to spend 41 years in the National Guard after moving to Atlanta, and the resilience and social skills he picked up from each of his previous professions helped him when he was sworn into office as Georgia's Insurance Commissioner.

After Gov. Brian Kemp's election, King interviewed for the position of being Head of the Georgia National Guard. He and his best friend maintained a friendly competition for the job, but ultimately, the latter was hired.

"A month later, I get a call from the governor saying, 'Hey, I've got this other job I want to talk to you about.' He asked me to serve as Insurance Commissioner," King said. "Of course, my first response is, 'I don't know anything about insurance. I know how to pay my bills.'"

Fortunately, King adapted to his new position quickly and brought about change for the better.

"I took over a troubled

agency," he said. "The insurance commissioner that was elected was indicted, just got convicted not too long ago. And so, for the last two years, I've been cleaning the mess."

Part of "cleaning the mess" has included gaining the trust of the state and proving himself in the position, and King seems to be doing an effective job by making a point to visit the public and speak with them, clearing up any lingering concerns they may have.

He recognizes that he must work on "confidence-building activities, chief among these being a better understanding of how insurance works among the general public."

"I have to do a better job of educating Georgians about what it means to buy insurance," King said. "I call this 'insurance literacy.' How do we teach young folks coming through the school system? How do we train adults who have to have the conversation with their agent about what it means to manage risks?"

But before he can implement a large-scale plan tackling insurance literacy, King must first confront some of the issues that plague the industry. High rates, for example, are a problem that most insurance clients wonder about.

"They look at a lot of factors: where you live, where you drive, what kind of job you do," King said, before bringing to light another problem tied to rate prices. "I see the future of insurance being determined by this," he said, pulling out his phone and holding it up.

"That free app that you all signed up for? Guess what – Mr. Google and Mr. Facebook are selling that to insurance companies so they can determine a personal insurance rate for every one of y'all."

In other words, King said insurance rates will be "determined by the data that consumers generate."

On the topic of insurance companies storing consumer data, King said he doesn't believe that it's wrong for insur-

Concert...from Page 1A

earned them a Billboard Music Award for Top Christian Song in 2020.

Fairgrounds Event Coordinator Shannon Baldwin-Nguyen said she believes bringing For King & Country to Hiawasse is huge, especially since people have been embracing local shows so incredibly well in 2021.

"It will be more inviting to the younger crowd and encourage them to come out and see what we have to offer, because they are eager to get out and go to concerts and support the (Fairgrounds) and their favorite artists," she said.

Continuing, "Tickets officially went on sale Nov. 9, but we have already gotten a massive amount of phone calls from people asking about the event, so we expect to have a very large crowd from all over."

Fairgrounds General Manager Hilda Thomason said she was super excited for the show, as it will be the first time For King & Country has played

at Anderson Music Hall.

"This is a very big deal," Thomason said. "Christian concerts go over extremely well in our area because they blend different styles of music together that everyone can enjoy."

"Everyone is more excited to be getting out again now that COVID has taken a backseat. We were not able to have any concerts last year, so we just about sold out of every concert we have done this year so far."

"In 2019 we put on 23 concerts, and this year we are at about 19 for now, and to think that we have almost equaled that in between COVID is truly remarkable, and I cannot thank our wonderful community enough."

People will want to pay attention to upcoming Fairgrounds events, including the Mountain Country Christmas In Lights that kicks off Thanksgiving Night with amazing local craft and food vendors on display, and concerts includ-

ing Night Ranger, Foghat, Sawyer Brown and more.

All these events and more can be found on the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds website.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings/times

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope, in order to solve their common problem and help others to recover from Alcoholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Young Harris: Sharp Memorial Methodist Church on College Campus: Tuesday 7 PM, Men's Meeting.

Hiawasse: Methodist Church, 1139 Hwy 76: Wednesday, noon, open meeting. 1298 Jack Deyton Circle: Friday 7 PM, open meeting; Sunday 7 PM, open meeting.

For more meeting info, call 828-837-4440. NT11Nov17.21JCA

Veterans Day '21...from Page 1A

bama, and she met her husband during her final assignment with the 2nd Infantry Division in South Korea.

"I had a wonderful career, and I am so proud to have served in the military," Healy said in closing. "Thank you very much for being here today, and hopefully the weather will hold off for the rest of the ceremony."

Also in attendance was Towns County Memorial Wall Committee Chairman Scott Drummond, who joined Forehand for the annual Memorial Wall presentation.

"We had a blank slab of granite sitting by the highway back in 2012, and that's when we got together and decided that we need to engrave the names of our Towns County veterans who served this great nation and passed away," said Drummond, a retired Coast Guard veteran.

Drummond announced the recently departed veter-



Local veteran service organizations all played a part in hosting the traditional Laying of Memorial Wreaths in last Thursday's Veterans Day program at the Memorial Park in front of Towns County High School.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

ans whose names will soon be etched into the wall: Gordon Allison, Michael Chapman, Curtis Dearing, David Ely, Donald Hilscher, Robert Hogsed, Bud

Johnson, George Laliberte, Leonard Sofield, James Stiles and Terry Thompson.

Johnson's daughter, Marilyn Sardella, asked permission

to offer a few words about her father.

"I know that right now he is looking down at all of you, and this is exactly what he is saying: 'Today is a good day, and today is a day that matters,'" Sardella said.

Conducting the Laying of Wreaths ceremony were representatives of the American

Legion Post #23 and Auxiliary, American Legion Riders, Sons of the American Legion Squadron #23, Marine Corps League Unicoi Detachment #783, and VFW Post #7807 and Auxiliary.

Singer Pam Leslie and the Towns County High School Marching Band performed the National Anthem during the

early stages of the service. Following the Laying of Wreaths, they offered patriotic renditions of "America the Beautiful" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

After the ceremony closed, all guests were invited back to the VFW Post on Sunnyside Road for a delicious lunch.



World War II Veteran Shirley Sonnenfeld, 99, attended the 2021 Towns County Veterans Day Observance, pictured here with Hiawasse Mayor Liz Ordiales. Sonnenfeld is Towns County's oldest living female veteran.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson