

Tree Lighting...from Page 1A

Shows, club co-president. "We also put some extra money aside just in case we need more cookies, but this year, we are going to be great. It is something that we love to do. With over 1,000 cookies, we thought we had enough. "We have been working on this since November. We came in and put all the decorations up and decorated the Christmas tree. We all work together with the community, and I'm amazed with how much we were able to do." Next year will be the 50th anniversary of the Tree Lighting, and everyone is hopeful that the event will continue to grow.



The Towns County High School Band performed Christmas music at the annual Young Harris Tree Lighting. Photo by Jarrett Whitener



Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus posed for a photo with the volunteer members of the Enotah Garden Club on Friday, Dec. 6. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Stone...from Page 1A

the board said in a statement to the North Georgia News and Towns County Herald in October. Continued the statement, "It was the consensus of the trustees that Mr. Stone is not the best person to lead the system in this direction. We appreciate his service and enthusiasm and wish him all the best in his future endeavors." When reached for further clarification following publication of the original article detailing Stone's termination, the board said recently that, in his absence, "concerns came to light that made the board feel as though going in a new direction was the best thing for the libraries." As to the nature of those concerns, the board said they were "concerns we will not comment on." To Stone, the board's initial comments from October

that he was not the best person to lead the libraries into the future were hurtful and unreflective of his time leading the libraries. In recent years, Stone had pursued a number of new ventures at the libraries, including the creation of the "Mountain Regional Library Puppet Company" for kids, as well as the making of YouTube videos and audio podcasts. The Puppet Company performed 35 live shows around the three-county region that were attended by 2,300 people, Stone said, with one puppet show posted to the library system's YouTube channel garnering almost 200,000 views alone. Stone said that he is continuing to heal from his stroke and that, while he's not looking for a fight with the board, he would like the community to understand his

side of the story and to say farewell to the many people he's gotten to know as library director over the years. "I want to thank all the people of the Mountain Region Library System - employees, patrons, Friends of the Library and board members - for our time together during the past five years," Stone said. "I was always proud to be your director. Now, I move on with my life's journey. Thanks for all your cards, prayers and best wishes." As of press time, the director position had yet to be filled following Stone's departure. For more information, including new hours announced in October for the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris, visit mountainregionallibrary.org.

Hamilton Gardens...from Page 1A

hydrangea blossoms painted berry pink before adding glittering white snowflakes and crystal icicles. Executive Board members placed a cardinal inside a bird's nest located in the tree, and "we also put a butterfly in there to represent our pollinator garden," Howard said. They completed the theme with "a plethora of silver ornaments" featuring the logo of Hamilton Gardens at Lake Chatuge and Hiawassee, Georgia. The tree will be great publicity for the gardens, as the center is popular in the state, and it will be up for two months before being taken down, giving people plenty of time to see it. "We were excited to be asked to do this and to go and decorate a really pretty tree that shows off Hamilton Gardens at the visitor center," Howard said. "We considered it an honor, but we also consider it a great advertising opportunity for us, because that is a very busy welcome center and that's



Hamilton Gardens is currently selling their Christmas ornaments to anyone wanting to support the local group. For more info, call 706-970-0011.

exposure for us." Both the city of Hiawassee and Hamilton Gardens were proud to provide the decorations for all to enjoy during the festive holiday season, Board Member Jackie Millstone said, adding that the stanchions surrounding the tree were provided by Fieldstone Cinemas. The members of the Executive Board who participated in the effort were Millstone, Cyndi Daves, Linda Jones, Carol Townsend, Maggie Oliver, Anne Mitchell and Grace Howard. "It was a fun day, and I loved being a part of it," Jones said. "We are a cohesive group when we do stuff - we have each other's backs. It's important to us, because you wouldn't believe how many times people ask where the gardens are, and they have been there for more than 40 years. "The tree itself is 12 feet tall, and the ladies that work there said that people have commented on it, and that opens up an opportunity for people to talk about our gardens." Hamilton Gardens is currently selling their Christmas ornaments to anyone wanting to support the local group. For more information on how to purchase ornaments, call 706-970-0011 for details.

Gardens were proud to provide the decorations for all to enjoy during the festive holiday season, Board Member Jackie Millstone said, adding that the stanchions surrounding the tree were provided by Fieldstone Cinemas. The members of the Executive Board who participated in the effort were Millstone, Cyndi Daves, Linda Jones, Carol Townsend, Maggie Oliver, Anne Mitchell and Grace Howard. "It was a fun day, and I loved being a part of it," Jones said. "We are a cohesive group when we do stuff - we have each other's backs. It's important to us, because you wouldn't believe how many times people ask where the gardens are, and they have been there for more than 40 years. "The tree itself is 12 feet tall, and the ladies that work there said that people have commented on it, and that opens up an opportunity for people to talk about our gardens." Hamilton Gardens is currently selling their Christmas ornaments to anyone wanting to support the local group. For more information on how to purchase ornaments, call 706-970-0011 for details.

Pearl Harbor...from Page 1A

Retired U.S. Navy Lt. Ray Williams, 95, of Blairsville, was equally adamant that Pearl Harbor not be forgotten. Williams joined the Navy in May of 1942, just six months after the attack at Pearl Harbor. "World War II was a tremendous conflict between the dictatorships of Germany, Italy, and then the Imperial forces of Japan versus the Allies, so it was a very comprehensive and worldwide struggle," Williams said. The surprise, preemptive Japanese strike at Pearl Harbor was what triggered American involvement in the war, and shortly after the Pearl Harbor attack, Germany's Hitler declared war on the United States as well. "So, the remembrance of Pearl Harbor is a significant historical event that we in the United States should be remembering," Williams said. "It really needs to be communicated to the young people in school so that they recognize the importance of that date. "Dec. 7 started it all for the United States, and we should remember that date because over 2,000 of our military men were killed on that date, and it was a completely unexpected attack, so it's important for us to remember that. "Remembering Pearl Harbor Day really is remembrance of the starting of World War II and what the consequences were if we were not successful in defending ourselves. It's not only Pearl Harbor Day, but (remembering) the beginning of the entire World War II struggle." Williams and his wife Ellie - both World War II Navy Veterans - were married on Aug. 15, 1945, the day after it was announced that Japan had surrendered. "He was one of the last



The U.S. Flag flies over Hickam Airfield after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Note the burning buildings in the background. Photo/Pearl Harbor National Memorial

few crewmen who escaped before the Arizona sank. With his death, only three crewmembers who were on the Arizona that day still remain. Bruner wrote a book about his experiences, "Second to Last to Leave the USS Arizona." According to the National Park Service, "Crewmembers who were assigned to the USS Arizona on Dec. 7, 1941, have the right to have their cremated remains interred inside the barrette of gun turret four by National Park Service divers." Continued the Park Service, "On April 12, 1982, the ashes of retired Navy Chief Petty Officer Stanley M. Teslow were interred, making him the first USS Arizona survivor to return to his ship." And while there are three USS Arizona crewmembers still living who meet the interment criteria, it is being widely reported that Bruner will be the last interred, as the others have made known their intentions to be buried alongside their families. "Having joined the Navy in 1938, Bruner was serving as a fire controlman on the ship when Japanese aircraft flew so close to the Arizona's deck as they dropped their bombs that Bruner recalled seeing one pilot's face so clearly that he could see his grin," according to his Legacy.com obituary. "Bruner was shot during the attack, and, trapped on a control tower, he nearly missed his chance to escape. "He was one of the last

In 2015, the Williamses were selected to reenact the famous picture of the sailor kissing a nurse on V-J Day on Aug. 14, 1945, in New York City's Times Square in celebration of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. After passing away earlier this year on Sept. 10, Pearl Harbor Veteran Lauren Bruner - the second to last sailor to make it off the USS Arizona alive 78 years ago - was interred within the sunken battleship during the official 78th anniversary commemorative event in Hawaii. "Bruner was shot during the attack, and, trapped on a control tower, he nearly missed his chance to escape. "He was one of the last

School Board...from Page 1A

Tamie Bradley was selected by her peers to fill Smith's current role as vice chairperson. Smith will be taking over as chairperson from Board Member Stan Chastain. Also during last week's meeting, the board discussed and approved Middle School Baseball Assistant Coach Allen Turpin and Middle School

Football Assistant Coach Chris Drury. Board members discussed and approved the upcoming middle school field trip to Washington D.C. in March of 2021. Middle school students just got back from a field trip to New York, which Berrong described as an educational

experience to see what the big city looked like and had to offer in the way of museums and other destinations. The students who traveled to New York with the Middle School were expected to give a presentation on their trip during the regular meeting on Monday, Dec. 9.

Elementary School November Adventurers of the Month



We are glad to announce the Adventurers of the Month. We want to recognize students who put the PBIS expectations into action. These students have been selected for their outstanding display of safety. We are pleased to acknowledge your job well done. Kindergarten - Balin Cosgro, Zane Cline, Drew Stack, Jaxi Taylor. 1st Grade - Sophia Bowling, Caleb Torres-DeMarco, Christopher Green, Sasha Stoermer. 2nd Grade - Annaston Hodnett, Owen Ward, Rylee Garrett, Emily Cothren. 3rd Grade - Chloe Clark, Ayden Bradley, Ryder Ledford, Reilyn Gonzalez. 4th Grade - Zoey Holtsclaw, Brantley Eller, Dalia Millican, Emma Drury. 5th Grade - Bryce Sosebee, Braydon Henderson, Hannah Overton, Payten Wolf. (Dec 11, 2019)

Kemp appoints Kelly Loeffler to U.S. Senate

Atlanta, GA - Today Governor Brian P. Kemp announced his appointment of successful businesswoman Kelly Loeffler to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Senator Johnny Isakson, effective December 31, 2019. "From the farm to the New York Stock Exchange, Kelly Loeffler has lived the American Dream. I'm confident that she will work every single day to keep that same dream alive for our children, grandchildren, and generations to come. Kelly Loeffler will stand with the President, Senator Perdue, and their allies in the U.S. House and Senate," said Governor Kemp. "I'm excited to appoint Georgia's first female Senator in nearly 100 years - but, more importantly, I'm excited to appoint a life-long Republican who shares our conservative values and vision for a safer, stronger Georgia. "Kelly is a patriot who believes in the greatness of America. She is willing to serve for freedom's sake. She is a real conservative who will defend life against the radical left's abortion-on-demand agenda, protect the Second Amendment, champion pro-growth policies, support our President, and put hardworking Georgians first. "Senator Loeffler will fight to strengthen our immigration laws and finish the Border Wall so we can stop Mexican



Kelly Loeffler speaks at the Georgia State Capitol

drug cartels from flooding our streets - here in Georgia - with drugs, weapons, violence, and fear. She will work to end this impeachment circus in Washington, D.C. and get Congress back to work for the American people. "We have seen firsthand the impact that political outsiders like Donald Trump and David Perdue have in Washington, D.C. It is time to send them reinforcements so we can Keep America Great." "Over the last twenty-five years, I've been building businesses, taking risks, and creating jobs. I haven't spent my life trying to get to Washington, but there are a few things folks are going to find out about me: I'm pro-Second Amendment, pro-military, pro-Wall, and pro-Trump. I'm

a life-long conservative, and I make no apologies for my conservative values," said Kelly Loeffler. "I'm strongly pro-life and believe that every life is a blessing. When it comes to protecting the innocent, I don't look to government for the answers. I look to God. "With all of the important work to be done in D.C. and here in Georgia, I'm disgusted by the impeachment circus and strongly oppose it. It's a sideshow and partisan distraction. Democrats need to quit playing politics. We're facing the fight of our generation - and that's why I'm here. As an outsider, I know that I'll have to prove it. I'll work hard every day to earn Georgians' confidence and support with my votes, priorities, and actions." (NTDec11.26)CA