



Merry Christmas  
from the staff of the Towns County Herald

# Towns County Herald

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## Love Light Tree lights up for students pursuing medical careers

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Chatuge Regional Hospital and Nursing Home Auxiliary hosted the annual Love Light Celebration and Tree Lighting at the front entrance to the hospital on Monday, Dec. 9.

The ceremony and tree lighting allow the auxiliary to highlight their scholarship drive, wherein they raise money for local high school students planning to pursue medical careers after graduation.

Scholarships are awarded to these students from funds the organization raises through donations to have loved ones memorialized on the Love Light Tree.

And Chatuge Regional appreciates the work and support of the auxiliary, as efforts like the Love Light scholarship fit well with the overarching goals of the hospital.

"I want us to especially thank all of our volunteers for everything we do," Hospital Administrator Ryan Snow said. "These ladies and gentlemen are very much appreciated."

Added Snow, "Not only do they help in serving our patients, but also in helping us and assisting us through time and effort and smiling faces, but also monetarily. There are some things in this hospital today that we would not have without (their help with) donations. We just want to say thank you."

The Love Light project has remained ongoing throughout the years to raise as much money as possible for the student scholarships. Each donation made is honored and put into a list of names so that viewers can see who is being remembered this year.

Donations are beneficial to students and the county, as some of the students who receive these scholarships have plans to return to Towns County and practice in their hometown.

"People donate to the Love Light throughout the year in honor of someone or someone who has passed on, and usually at the end of the year we have a list of everyone



The Chatuge Regional Hospital Auxiliary and Dr. Robert Stahlkuppe helped lead the Love Light Ceremony earlier this month. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

## Bradshaw welcomes students, purchases ambulance; SAR thanks Walls



Towns County Middle School Robotics Team members Bentley Floyd, Laura Mauldin and Erin Page attended the December county meeting to discuss their assistance with safety upgrades at the Towns County Beach. Photo by Chad Stack

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw welcomed the Towns County Middle School Robotics Team to his last regular meeting of 2019 on Tuesday, Dec. 17.

Middle School Spanish Teacher and Robotics Team Leader Dr. Darren King and students Laura Mauldin, Bentley Floyd and Erin Page attended to discuss their assistance with several safety upgrades at the Towns County Beach.

After receiving an email earlier this year from King about doing a project to help Towns County, Bradshaw said he went to the beach to meet with King and the Robotics team.

Following the meeting, the Robotics team presented several ideas for much-needed upgrades at the beach. Bradshaw said. With his approval, King and his Robotics team students got started right away volunteering their time and efforts to the task.

Mauldin, Floyd and Page

completed several projects to improve the safety at the beach, including the building of a retaining wall and a bridge that goes over a hazardous culvert, and the installation of handrails next to the swings along the water's edge, Floyd said.

Hoping to increase tourist activity – one of the goals Bradshaw discussed in his initial meeting with King and the Robotics team – students installed a QR code scanner at the beach. Floyd said beachgoers can now scan the

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## DDA discusses derelict buildings use, upcoming Madison trip



Hiwassee DDA members attended their last regular meeting of 2019 on Dec. 9. Photo by Chad Stack

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Hiwassee Downtown Development Authority Board convened on Monday, Dec. 9, at City Hall for their monthly meeting.

A week before the DDA board's December meeting, the Hiwassee City Council approved the purchase of the two buildings on Main Street between Anderson's and

Victoria's Attic for \$99,000.

Mayor Liz Ordiales updated DDA board members on the buildings, saying the city has had workers cleaning them up. And with the buildings being so old, Ordiales said they needed to go through several environmental studies.

"Phase one of the Environmental Product Declaration study is finished, and they only found acetone in the soil, which is non-harming

to anybody," Ordiales said.

"We are not looking to make huge profits from the buildings," Ordiales said, adding that they "just need to put things in there that make good sense."

The intent is to bring businesses into the city to create jobs and economic stability, Herb Bruce said, agreeing with Ordiales that the DDA was not in the business of making

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## Senior project raises money for soccer kids with festive Jingle Jog 5K

By Chad Stack  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Towns County High School senior Corrina Luckenbach hosted a 5K Jingle Jog race earlier this month to help raise funds for the school district's boys and girls' soccer programs.

The Jingle Jog originated as an idea for her senior project and became a fully realized effort between the Towns County Soccer Booster Club and the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, though at first, Luckenbach said she wasn't sure what she wanted to do.

Luckily, Luckenbach said she was able to call in assistance from her friend Amy Barrett, who is a mom in the school system and involved in the booster club.

"I had so many things I wanted to do, but nothing was really coming together," Luckenbach said.

It just so happened that the Soccer Booster Club was



TCHS student Corrina Luckenbach raised nearly \$2,000 for Towns County Soccer with her Jingle Jog 5K senior project. Photo by Chad Stack

looking for someone to head the club's festive 5K run, and after attending the booster club meeting a few months back, Luckenbach said she couldn't wait to get started planning the race.

"I instantly got so excited," Luckenbach said. "I think within that first week I

made a website, social media pages, I contacted radio stations, newspapers and all that. I was really excited from the get-go."

In just a couple of weeks, Luckenbach had most of the event planned, including the venue and date, Luckenbach

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## Perren rocks Old Courthouse as Elvis Presley in Christmas concert

By Jarrett Whitener  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

The Union County Historical Society hosted Elvis Presley at the Old Courthouse on the Downtown Blairsville Square on Friday, Dec. 13.

Performing live in concert as "The King" himself, Roy Perren sang a selection of Elvis songs along with a few other well-known tunes to get people in the holiday spirit.

Despite the bad weather that Friday night, the event was still well attended by fans wanting to support Perren and his passion for music, as well as support the Historical Society for hosting the event.

"I really enjoy singing, and I enjoy it when you connect to the audience and they connect to me and we feed off of each other," Perren said. "It's just a lot of fun when you see people smiling and singing along with you."

"I believe that music touches people's hearts and you kind of forget everything going on in the world because we are busy having a good time. And that's why I do these shows, is to have a good time."

Perren has been singing his entire life, having gotten into it during his childhood years, and he's pushed his voice further ever since.



Roy "Elvis" Perren live in concert at the Old Union County Courthouse on Dec. 13. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

He found out early on that singing was a passion for him, but he did not get into Elvis songs until his friends and family pushed him to try.

"I wasn't a big Elvis fan growing up, but people kept telling me that I sound like him, so I started listening to his music," Perren said, noting that he's now been singing Elvis for the last 20 years or so.

Since becoming an Elvis fan later in life, Perren has performed countless shows over the years and become a bit of a local celebrity whom people follow and enjoy listening to.

The Dec. 13 Christmas

concert had audience members cheering at the high notes and singing right along with each of the songs as they applauded Perren's performance, and the entire evening proved to be a fun experience that some said they couldn't get at a bigger venue.

"This was my first time watching him do Elvis," Alvin Tanner said. "We are up visiting some family this time of year, and he did a really good job."

"I like Elvis pretty good, and I think he does a great impression and he knows how to get the audience involved."

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