

# Towns County Herald

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50 Cents

Publication Number 635540 Volume 89 Number 05

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

## Community gathers to 'Light up Hiawassee!' with Christmas spirit

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Downtown Hiawassee Square was the place to be last weekend as the city held its first "Light Up Hiawassee!" to kick off the Christmas spirit on Saturday, Dec. 2.

The first of many more Christmas festivities to come, Hiawassee Mayor-Elect Liz Ordiales hit the ground rolling shortly after winning the mayoral seat several weeks ago in hopes of bringing a city-organized event to the square for the holidays.

Along with the dozens upon dozens of lights beautifully decorating the square, Mayor-Elect Ordiales brought another new tradition to coincide with the lighting festivities – a golf cart parade.

"This is something new," said Mayor-Elect Ordiales. "We've never done anything like that before and I've never seen anything like that before up here, though it is pretty common in campgrounds. A lot of campgrounds do golf cart parades through the holidays.

"I thought that it might be a great idea, just to go around the square. It doesn't affect traffic. It doesn't affect our businesses. They don't have to close early.

"One of the biggest complaints we get is, on having the parade the Saturday after Thanksgiving, is that it's Shop Small Saturday and they have to close down early. And these businesses don't like having the parade interfere with that.

"So, I thought, well this is a parade where they don't even have to close early."

And what a success it was for the first year. The nine golf carts participated in the parade, each circling the square twice while the judges took their time considering each festive detail to see whose stood out among the rest.

A crowd favorite was Towns County Elementary School's golf cart, with its holiday candy lollipops and bright jovial colors. Another that stuck out among the rest was that of TATA On Main, which was decked to the nines in Christmas garb.

But, the winner of them all and the judges' favorite, was Rob and Sarah Pawli's cart with decorations sponsored by Always Christmas.

Before the golf cart parade began, all those who



The Towns County Elementary School entry into the golf cart parade that Saturday. Photo/Lily Avery

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## Young Harris Christmas Tree Lighting tradition continues



Towns County kindergartners and Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby greet Santa at the Governor's Gazebo. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

There's been a Young Harris Christmas Tree Lighting every year since 1970.

And while it hasn't always taken place at the same tree, it has always taken place, and that tradition has become a valued part of the Young Harris community.

Young Harris Mayor Andrea Gibby welcomed hundreds of visitors to this year's lighting in Mayor's Park on Friday, Dec. 1.

The mayor explained to those gathered that, unfortunately, the former and longtime Christmas tree that many had grown to know over the years had died, and therefore needed to be cut

down over the summer. "But because of a lovely lady in the community (Annette Stookey), we now have another one," said Mayor Gibby. "I just want to say thank you to community, because that's why we're here.

"We're here because we love being a community, we love to come out and share with each other."

Mayor's Park was looking particularly festive that evening, with red and green lights festooning the fences, and the Governor's Gazebo decked out in holiday cheer.

The gazebo acted as the staging area for the first half of the evening's festivities, which included about 1,000

santa sleighfuls of cuteness thanks to the support of carols by Towns County Elementary School students from Cathy Seis' music class.

Towns County High School Band Director Allison Arnold, herself an Indian alumna who performed in past tree lightings, led a volunteer group of student musicians to play Christmas music for those gathered.

When the time came to light the new Christmas tree, Mayor Gibby enlisted the help of Cathy Seis' kindergarten choir in shouting out a countdown full of youthful Christmas cheer.

Plenty of oohs, ahhs and applause issued forth from the

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## December 7, 1941: 'A date which will live in infamy'

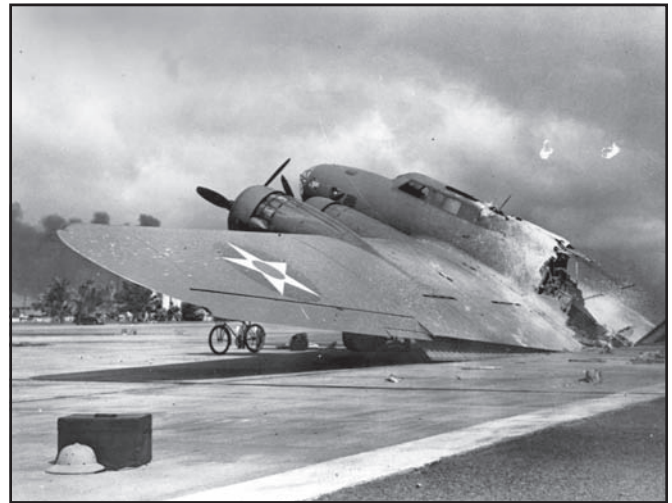
By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day is Thursday, Dec. 7, in honor of those men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice on that "date which will live in infamy."

This year's observance marks the 76th anniversary of the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the sole event that brought the U.S. directly into the grip of World War II.

On Dec. 7, 1941, 353 Japanese fighters, bombers and torpedo planes launched in two waves from six aircraft carriers nestled in the Pacific Ocean.

Their mission: do as much damage as possible on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in order to keep the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet from interfering in



Wrecked Army Air Corps B-17C bomber near Hangar No. 5 at Hickam Air Field, following the end of the Japanese raid ... Official U.S. Navy Photograph, now in the collections of the National Archives.

Japanese military operations in the Pacific.

One hundred eighty-eight U.S. aircraft were

destroyed in the sneak attack; eight battleships were damaged or destroyed; 2,402 Americans

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## Enotah CASA lights luminaries, brings awareness for abused kids

By Lily Avery  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Enotah CASA added to the collection of lights on the Hiawassee Square with its annual Christmas Luminaries event on Saturday, Dec. 2.

Just after the golf cart parade festivities and before the lighting of the square, Enotah CASA volunteers and community supporters gathered around the square to take part in the lighting of the luminaries, taking time out of the busyness of the holiday season to help make a difference in the lives of the area's children in need.

"This is our third annual hosting of the luminary event in Hiawassee," said Liz Ruf, Enotah CASA Board Chair. "I would like to thank Mayor Liz Ordiales and the city council for allow us to be part of the Light Up Hiawassee! event. It



Towns County Chamber President Candace Lee with Liz Ruf from Enotah CASA. Photo/Lily Avery

is through the participation of many in our community and your financial support that we hope to continue to participate in this event."

Enotah CASA, or Court

Appointed Special Advocates, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that spans across the Enotah Judicial Circuit

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## Habitat for Humanity dedicates 17th home in 17 years



Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties built its first home in 2000. The Lirettes make home number 17. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

For the 17th time in 17 years, a community gathered to take part in a joyous dedication

and blessing of a home built by Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties.

On Saturday, Dec. 2, family and friends of the Lirette

Family joined with Habitat volunteers and board members, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, and

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## Noblet swears in; city council holds EMC franchise fee hearing

By Shawn Jarrard  
Towns County Herald  
Staff Writer

Nancy Noblet is now a member of the Hiawassee City Council.

Noblet was sworn in to the Post 5 council seat by Hiawassee City Clerk Cenlya Galloway on Monday, Nov. 27, as the first order of new business during a council work session.

The new council-member, having won the Nov. 7 Hiawassee Special Election to fill the remaining two years of Council Post 5, took office early because the seat had been vacated by Mayor-Elect Liz Ordiales in August so that she could run for mayor.

All other newly elected city officials will be sworn in during the Jan. 2, 2018, city council meeting, which will begin at 6 p.m.

Noblet got into the spirit of her new position right



Nancy Noblet being sworn in to the Hiawassee City Council by City Clerk Cenlya Galloway on Monday, Nov. 27. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

away, taking an active role in the Nov. 27 work session and subsequent public hearing on the city's EMC franchise fee ordinance.

"It was pretty interesting, and needless to say, a lot of questions that I had were

answered that other people had asked me," said Noblet after the hearing. "I can go back and tell them what I have found out."

In the hearing, Noblet asked how the city had managed

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