

Weather ...from Page 1A

According to Ready.gov, "Winter storms and blizzards can bring extreme cold, freezing rain, snow, ice and high winds."

"A winter storm can last a few hours or several days; knock out heat, power and communication services; and place older adults, young children and sick individuals at greater risk."

When it comes to being under a Winter Storm Warning, as happened over the weekend, Ready.gov advises people to do the following:

Find shelter right away, and stay off roads, stay indoors and dress warmly; prepare for power outages, and use generators outside only and away from windows; listen for emergency information and alerts; look for signs of hypothermia and frostbite; and check on neighbors.

The Ready.gov site also teaches people how to build and maintain a basic disaster supplies kit for at least three full days of self-sufficiency, with recommendations such as one gallon of water per person per day, for both drinking and sanitation.

Other items people should build into a basic disaster supplies kit include non-perishable foods to last at least three days, a battery powered or hand-crank radio, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, extra batteries, prescription medications, blankets and more.

Ready.gov takes a deep dive into emergency



Georgia 180 got some snow near Brasstown Bald and Jacks Gap at the Towns/Union line on Sunday, Dec. 9.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

preparedness, empowering people via a thorough breakdown of how to really dig in and use all resources fully.

People can also learn how to prepare, or winterize, their homes for frigid conditions, and the website offers tips on keeping safe when heating homes with alternative heating sources, such as gas and firewood.

In addition to winterizing vehicles, i.e. checking all fluid levels and having a mechanic certify that cars are good to go, Ready.gov recommends people create an extra emergency kit with car-specific items.

"In case you are stranded, keep an emergency supply kit in your car with the addition of these automobile extras: jumper cables, flares or reflective triangle, ice scraper,

car cellphone charger, blanket, map, (and) cat litter or sand for better tire traction," per the website.

Residents needing to find a local shelter to ride out a storm and/or its aftermath can find one by texting the word "Shelter" and the local ZIP code to 43362, such as "Shelter 30512" or "Shelter 30546."

Check in with Facebook to the first responder agencies in the area, which are good about updating residents concerning what's going on in their communities, especially during weather events.

Fortons more information on winter safety and other types of emergency preparedness, please visit Ready.gov and carefully study the life-saving information therein.

status in 2011, but it took until 2016 to acquire property for a half-way house. It's a five-bedroom, four-bath house that accommodates a house mother and four residents, with three women currently residing there.

"The Drug Court has stringent requirements," said Gray. "They have to get a job, we spend a lot of money getting them to and from when they don't have a car of their own. Basically, what we're trying to do is parent, because these people have not, largely, been parented."

Bradshaw commended everyone present for the work that they carry out on a daily basis, as all three organizations make a real difference in their communities.

"I'm very, very thankful," said Bradshaw. "As I get older, I realize more and more how important it is for what you do. We have a great community, and the reason is because of great people like you. And I sincerely mean that."

their abusive or neglectful homes.

Malinda Gray was there to accept a check in the amount of \$1,666.66 on behalf of Almost There, an organization that works with the Family Treatment Court and the Enotah Judicial Circuit's Drug Court Program to combat recidivism in previously incarcerated women.

Rosemarie Karr was present to accept a check in the amount of \$1,666.66 on behalf of the Towns County Food Pantry.

The Towns County Food Pantry is a mission of the Towns County Cooperative Ministries, which helps the needy of Towns County.

"I would like to be able to tell you his name and really do a great story, but that's the kind of guy he is," said Bradshaw. "He really doesn't want any (recognition)."

Gray said Almost There got its 501(c)(3) nonprofit

Donor ...from Page 1A

There; and the third thing is, of course, the Towns County Food Pantry.

"I called this individual back and asked him about the three that I had in mind, and he thought that was great. I asked him if we could use his name, and he said no, he'd rather remain anonymous.

"We have some great people in our community. We have some very loving and caring people. And that's what makes Towns County and Hiwassee and Young Harris what it is."

Bradshaw split the \$5,000 donation three ways, which amounted to \$1,666.66 to each organization.

Liz Ruf, Linda D'Angelo and Lynn Buck were there to accept a check in the amount of \$1,666.66 on behalf of Enotah CASA.

CASAs are Court-

Appointed Special Advocates for children who've been removed by the courts from

Grand Jury ...from Page 1A

than an ounce; possession of drug-related objects.

Ronald Christopher Smith, manufacture of marijuana; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce; possession of drug-related objects; recidivist.

Candie Sue Merritt, two counts theft by receiving stolen property; possession of methamphetamine.

Carl Wallace Merritt, two counts burglary in the first degree; burglary in the second degree; two counts theft by receiving stolen property; possession of methamphetamine.

Jeffery Dale Plott, two counts burglary in the first

degree; burglary in the second degree; theft by taking.

Susan Kimberly Spears, burglary in the first degree; two counts theft by receiving stolen property.

Adam Daniel Silva, crossing the guard lines with drugs; violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act; two counts possession of marijuana, less than an ounce; possession of drug-related objects; driving on improper registration; operating a vehicle without insurance.

Dylan Joseph Maiani-Taglione, two counts aggravated battery; aggravated assault; battery; two counts simple assault.

completed, the case will be forwarded to the Enotah Judicial

Christopher Steven Ray, trafficking methamphetamine or amphetamine; possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute; possession of methamphetamine; possession of a Schedule II controlled substance; three counts possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce; possession of drug-related objects; four counts obstruction of an officer.

Mary Angeline Nicholson, AKA Mary Angeline Young, possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

Circuit District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

Light Up ...from Page 1A

Veronica, 3, to see Santa.

"They're having a blast," said Milam, who smiled as she watched them run around the square.

Just as the sun was setting, the golf cart parade got up and running. Three local businesses participated this year by decking their buggies with festive displays of Christmas spirit and then driving them twice around the square.

Hamilton Gardens erected a mini garden full of ferns and evergreens perched on the back of their cart, while North Georgia Golf Carts used the roof to set up a Christmas tree of lights surrounded by shiny wrapped presents.

English Country Gardens and Botanical Suds used every available space on their cart to show off their Christmas spirit, with a design that featured an almost life-size Santa doll, a sleigh, and an impressive stack of presents on the roof, all enveloped in evergreen garland and big red bows.

Enotah CASA members lit hundreds of luminaries set up along the sidewalk and gazebo in the square, marking their fourth year as luminary event hosts.

CASA Board Chair Liz Ruf spoke briefly about the organization's mission and the importance of advocates for children, noting that there are currently 22 foster kids in Towns County without a place to live.

Anyone interested in making a difference in the



The Christmas Golf Cart Parade entry of English Country Gardens and Botanical Suds on Dec. 6.

Photo by Lowell Nicholson

lives of these children should contact Enotah CASA at 706-864-0300.

The mayor thanked Hiwassee City Councilwoman Nancy Noblet for organizing the event and the dozens of volunteers for making it happen.

Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw led the square in a prayer just before the countdown to the main event.

Following a brief countdown, the Town Square ushered in its Second Annual Light Up Hiwassee with thousands of dazzling lights strung everywhere, including a fully trimmed Christmas tree

perched in the gazebo.

The crowd was in for one more treat as Santa arrived in a fire truck, lights and sirens on full display. Santa was escorted to his chair next to the Christmas tree by Hiwassee Police Chief Paul Smith and firefighters as kids lined up to declare their Christmas wishes.

"This is a great family event," said Ordiales in a message to the community. "It's just a fun, feel-good event."

People should also be sure to check out the Jimmy Wright Memorial Tree, which has been fully decorated on the square.



Edible reds and greens make for the best cookie decorations, as witnessed here during Light Up Hiwassee on Dec. 6.

Photo by Samantha Laratta

Santa ...from Page 1A



Santa taking Christmas requests from kids in the Young Harris City Council Chambers on Dec. 7.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Following the musical performances, Mayor Gibby and the other attendees turned toward the tree at the end of the park to begin the countdown to the lighting.

When the countdown finished, the tree illuminated, and guests applauded the work to decorate the park.

The children got a huge surprise after the lighting, when Santa came out with sleigh bells ringing to meet all the shouting kids.

Santa made his way to the gazebo and directed the children to the interior of Young Harris City Hall, where they could gather around the tree inside and listen to Santa.

Other guests followed the children inside and

enjoyed cider beverages and homemade cookies to bring some more festive feeling to the celebration.

Each child made their way to the floor in front of Santa to wait for their turn to sit in his lap and tell him of their Christmas wishes.

The festiveness brought plenty of cheer and laughter that echoed through City Hall, as friends and families enjoyed the evening.

This event could not have been possible without the help of the Enotah Garden Club, which has helped organize the event for more than 40 years.

Members of the club help decorate the park and bake the cookies for the attendees to enjoy.

"We plan every year, and several of the ladies came yesterday and set up," said Tish Lashley, one of the Garden Club's co-presidents. "In November, we come and decorate city hall, so everything is decorated before December. Then, the ladies bake three to four dozen cookies, which they all brought up this morning to prepare for the lighting."

Added Lashley, "It is just a wonderful community thing—that people can come out and enjoy."

The Enotah Garden Club is the second oldest in the state, having been around for over 75 years, and members plan to continue organizing and helping decorate the city in the coming years.

Trusky ...from Page 1A

The investigation is active and ongoing, and once



Towns County Schools Band Director Allison Arnold leading members of her Indian Band in a series of Christmas tunes at the 2018 Young Harris Tree Lighting.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener