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red with blood. He told the crowd of the alarming rate of death that is taking our veterans to a higher glory.

"As we speak, there is but one surviving veteran of World War I," Barrett said. "Vietnam Veterans make up 33 percent of today's surviving Veterans."

"From the Revolutionary War to the battles fought today in Afghanistan and Iraq, our Veterans have one mission: to preserve peace," Barrett said. "They allow us to stand here freely and honor the men and women who served and are serving."

"Our veterans are still standing, ready to serve; still standing firm," he said. "They allow us to remain free to agree to disagree."

"They have stood up and said 'we have the opportunity to and desire to relish freedom,'" Judge Barrett said. "We're here today to remember the blood, sweat and the tears of those who kept us free."

Afterward, veterans lay wreaths in honor of the branches of U.S. Military Service. A moment of silence followed out of respect for those who didn't make it home.

Barrett stepped from the podium; VFW Post Commander Marty Mynatt took his place. Mynatt was solemn, who thanked the crowd for their attendance and prayed for the heavenly protection of those still in service of their country.

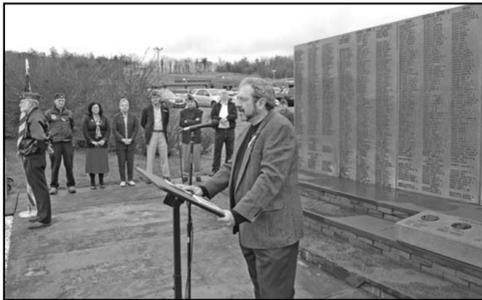
Mynatt urged the crowd to keep the families of the soldiers who died at Fort Hood at the hands of a domestic terrorist in their prayers. He urged them to pray for the wounded and their speedy recovery.

Afterward, Mynatt said days like Wednesday make him proud to be an American and a U.S. Military veteran.

"I didn't know how many people would show up because of the weather, but it was a real good turnout," he said. "I'm very pleased and happy with the turnout. I'm not surprised at the turnout, we still have a lot of people over-seees."

The emotions displayed on Veterans Day reflect the mood of the moment.

"Things are getting tough in Afghanistan and there are things that are happening domestically that have people alarmed and alert," he said. "I think all-in-all, that's why we did have such a good turnout."



Top, Towns County Elementary School student Payton Cagle, center, is surrounded by her teacher and classmates at last week's Veterans Day ceremonies at Veterans Memorial Park. Below, Enotah Circuit Superior Court Judge David Barrett addresses the crowd as the event's Keynote Speaker. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

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Towns County Schools. It's one check of many that Sheriff Clinton will be more than proud to accept.

The Sheriff's Office also is sponsoring an *Adopt-A-Child* program, another community effort to bring Christmas Day smiles to less fortunate children.

The Empty Stocking Fund and *Adopt-A-Child* campaigns will attempt to help at least the same number of children as in years past. The sheriff understands that times are hard and that economically, businesses and residents have struggled to stay above water, in terms of fiscal matters.

He also understands that rough economic waters also makes for tough times for small children who don't quite understand what the word *recession* means.

"We hope the giving

spirit of the people of Towns County will be able to help and assist us in this endeavor," Sheriff Clinton said.

The 2009 Parade begins Saturday, Nov. 28 at 5:30 p.m. The lineup for the parade begins in the top parking lots of the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, and line up begins promptly at 4 p.m., the sheriff said.

"We would like for each entry to bring a new unwrapped toy for the Empty Stocking Toy Drive," Sheriff Clinton said. "All parade entries must be well lit."

Children under the age of 18 must be supervised by an adult. For those with questions, feel free to give Vicki or Heather a call at (706) 896-4444.

Here's hoping that the Sheriff's Empty Stocking Fund Parade truly rings in the Christmas season.

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"We identify the children in need through Amy Gibby-Rosser with Towns County Family Connection," Chief Wright said. "Our goal is to spend \$200 a piece on each child and let them spend it on anything that they want to buy."

Last year, the department raised enough money to benefit 22 local children and treat them to a trip to Walmart and Pizza Hut via the Shop with a Cop program.

"We are very excited that the children got this opportunity," Gibby-Rosser said.

This year, 2009 proves to be an even more of a hardship for children as many families continue to struggle in a flat line economy. Many families are able to draw unemployment compensation, but more often than not, it's only enough to cover the family bills.

That's what makes Shop with a Cop such a needed blessing, Chief Wright said.

"More than anything, this is an opportunity to interact with the children and make a difference in their lives," Chief Wright said. "That 12-16 year-old age group is kind of caught in the middle. That's why we make this age group our target."

The inaugural Shop with a Cop was a rousing success.

"Last year, we had a ball

with the kids," Chief Wright said. "It's something to see their faces light up during a time that could be one of the most difficult times for young people."

"It's important to make a difference in the lives of young people," Chief Wright said.

All in all, the Shop with a Cop program is a chance to make Santa proud.

"The main thing is the kids," said Wright. "We want them to have a ball, have a good time. That means everything in the world to us."

There is still time to make a difference with this year's Shop with a Cop program.

It's easy to become a sponsor whether it's \$50 or \$2,000.

The donations are tax deductible and all you have to do is make a tax-deductible gift payable to the Hiwassee Police Department/Shop with a Cop, 229 Chatuge Way, Hiwassee, GA 30546.

Chief Wright urges locals and businesses to become a sponsor:

- \$100 is a Bronze Sponsor;
- \$200 is a Silver Sponsor;
- \$500 is a Gold Sponsor;
- \$1,000 is a Platinum Sponsor;
- \$2,000 Double Platinum Sponsor.

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of the most storied careers in Nashville.

Three marriages and a mountain of bourbon bottles later, George Jones finally found his salvation in a little lady named Nancy Sepulvado. He married her, and together they whipped the demons that had plagued Jones since the early days of his music career.

At 78, Jones is having a "blast," according to his Web site. His health is good, his energy is high and, at long last, he enjoys being sober and interacting with business associates and fans.

As for Tippin, he's excited that *The Possum* is back on the road and headed to Hiwassee.

"*The Possum* is gold," Tippin said. "I'm glad to see the 'Old Hall' getting some music acts back in there and start letting Country Music roll again."

"Country Music and its artists have suffered over the last few years, not having any place to play," Tippin said.

"May be things are getting generated again and we can get back to enjoying some good Country Music."

GOP members meet at Daniel's

One of the goals of Towns County Republicans is to become educated and informed about the issues and candidates in Georgia as the 2010 elections loom closer and closer.

To this end, the local Party invites candidates for statewide offices in Georgia to speak at one of its monthly meetings. By election time, every candidate will have presented his platform and his vision for Georgia to Towns County.

As usual, the room was at capacity at last week's monthly GOP meeting at Daniel's Steak House in Hiwassee when three persons spoke: Ralph Hudgens, candidate for Insurance Commissioner, Sam Olen, candidate for Attorney General and Melvin Everson, candidate for Labor Commissioner.

Hudgens is currently Chairman of the Senate Insurance and Labor Committee. Since the Insurance Commissioner is an administration position, Hudgens believes he is the most qualified candidate based on his years of experience. He is considered one of the state's foremost experts on insurance,

business regulation and consumer issues. He says he wants to emphasize that he is a Christian, a family man, a businessman and a conservative.

Olen is seeking to be Georgia's Attorney General, a state position not yet in Republican hands. As Chairman of the Cobb County Commission since 2002, he has made the county the envy of local governments nationwide. It is one of the most fiscally conservative and best-managed counties in the U.S. Olen's top priorities are public safety, leading the fight for Georgia's water resources and assuring an equitable redistricting effort in 2011.

Everson energized the crowd with his animated appeal for support in the Labor Commissioner's race. His top priority will be to use his past experience to help attract the high-paying jobs Georgians need and deserve. He plans to bring together legislators and economic developers to connect a ready and able workforce with world-class employers. If elected, Everson will be the first ever Republican Labor

Commissioner to lead this vitally important agency.

Another stated goal of the Towns County Republican Party is to become intimately involved in the community

—by responding when there is a need. One of the ways they do this is by participating in the "Group for Food" program at the Towns County Food Pantry, a ministry of the Towns County Cooperative Ministries. They will again be unloading the food truck, packing boxes and distributing food on Monday and Tuesday, Nov. 16-17.

Next month's speakers will be our own State Senator Jim Butterworth and State Representative Stephen Allison. They will be reporting on their efforts on behalf of Towns County and soliciting input for the upcoming 2010 Georgia Assembly. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents are all represented by Butterworth and Allison and are invited to attend the meeting on Tuesday, December 7. Meetings are held at Daniel's Steak House in Hiwassee beginning at 6:30 PM sharp.

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group with the simplest of messages: "We are taking Towns County Schools into Tomorrow. We are, Towns County Schools."

Lewis Kelly, CEO of Chatuge Regional Hospital and Nursing Home, grimaced as he followed Dr. Behrens.

"I guess you all are going to expect something big out of me now," he joked with the crowd.

Kelly has a lot to crow about. He has a state-of-the-art facility; complete with state-of-the-art technology that includes nuclear medicine equipment.

"MRIs are available, we have a sleep laboratory and state-of-the-art X-ray technology," he said. "We have a very complete and medically diverse

hospital system."

That isn't all; the nursing home facility can care for 112 patients at capacity and is staffed by a group of top notch professionals.

Kelly also provided the answer to the day's biggest question: local economic impact.

"Chatuge Regional Hospital and Nursing Home has an impact of more than \$34 million in Towns County," he said.

The two entities are definitely key economic drivers that attract new businesses and the benefits — jobs for the community.

Afterward, Chamber President Angel Long spoke of the impact Behrens' schools and Kelly's hospital have in the local community.



Lewis Kelly

"What struck me most was the number of times Dr. Behrens and Lewis said how proud they are of their operation and organization," she said. "It was so heart-warming to hear over and over again the pride that each person has in their work."

"After hearing about the great accomplishments both organizations have made, it is easy to see they certainly do have a lot to be proud of," she said. "We appreciate what you are doing for our community."

Long and Chamber Chairperson-Elect Candace Lee urged chamber members to follow the principle of shopping local this holiday season.

"That's one of the most important messages that we can stress in this time of economic turmoil," Long said.