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BodySense and the Chamber of Commerce, Chamber President Angel Long said.

Tickets are \$25 each and are on sale now at the Chamber office, Deb Collins Signature Gallery & Tangerine Frog, Mountain Realty of Hiawassee and Sunflower Interiors, Long said.

The tour includes the home of Sean and Kim Ebersold.

The couple vacationed here for many years and purchased a lot here with the dream they would eventually move here.

In 2006, they started to build and now live in this beautiful house with their two daughters.

The home is a 2,800 square-foot, two-story craftsman style home. It includes four bedrooms, three bathrooms and a home office.

The home features a



The home of Sean and Kim Ebersold is on the Tour of Homes.

large open floor plan on the main level that contains the living and dining rooms. It also includes an open kitchen area with a large island that seats four.

There are many elements of the craftsman style offered in this home from the large overhanging front porch, which is

complete with tapered columns, to the prairie style windows, a large rock fireplace and the use of many natural materials.

The home contains a mudroom as well, which serves as a safe room and was constructed according to FEMA standards for storm shelters.

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Coach Stowers said that the tournament, along with the Towns-Union basketball games on Friday at Bill P. Kendall Gymnasium should provide an unexpected economic boost to the local economy.

"There will be at least 11 of those 16 teams and their fans and family members staying in the hotels, eating in the restaurants and shopping in our stores," Stowers said. "Each team has 14 wrestlers, they've all got parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and cousins. You never know how many people will be here. We're expecting more than 1,000 people, most of which will be spending the night."

Last week, 11 teams and 154 wrestlers converged on Towns County as the King of the Mountain middle school wrestling tournament took place.

The tournament's impact

reached far beyond the scope of wrestling. Cash registers were ringing last weekend and that spilled into the next week, all impacted by middle school and high school sporting events.

Athletic events such as the King of the Mountain wrestling tournaments, the Tip Off Classic and the soon to arrive Battle of the States basketball tournament provide an economic boost to local businesses when it matters most.

There were more than 40 coaches accompanying those wrestlers during the middle school wrestling tournament. The athletes also were escorted by countless fans and family members.

Afterward, the teams converged on local restaurants, pouring welcomed dollars into the local cash flow.

Expect the high school KOM version to do the same.

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8:30 a.m. on Friday.

"It was busy all weekend," Tiger said.

During the parade on Saturday, Anderson's got many customers, eager to find a warm place to wait for the parade to begin. Not only did Tiger sell the typical store items during the parade, but homemade goodies as well.

"I try out a lot of recipes and let people come in and taste and see what they think," she says.

The social networking site, Facebook, was a big asset to Anderson's weekend business.

"It was interesting because we had a couple of people from Atlanta that we had Facebooked about the parade and lighting of the Christmas tree," Tiger said. "They had never attended anything like that and they were just so excited taking part in something in a small town. It was a lot of fun. I love it and the cats love it."

During the parade, a jolly old elf dressed in red suit trimmed in snow white fur waved to passersby. Yes, it was Santa Claus himself, much to the delight of hundreds of children gathered along the parade route.

Santa encouraged locals to contribute to the Towns County Sheriff's Office Empty Stocking Fund.

Parade a hit...continued from page 1A

of toys from parade participants, a big help for those in need this holiday season, Sheriff Clinton said.

"We're getting a lot of calls about donations," Sheriff Clinton said. "We're getting some checks in and we're proud to get each and every one."

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 attempt to help at least the same number of children as in years past by taking the edge off of an otherwise dismal holiday season.

Sheriff Clinton 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 make 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 as we continue in this endeavor," Sheriff Clinton said.

For the most part,



Towns County High School Indians Raider Marching Band performed during Saturday's parade. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Saturday's event helped Christmas get a head start in Hiawassee. The crowd began to gather around 4 p.m., but the festivities didn't commence until 5:30 p.m. Even before the parade came down Highway 76, the Towns County High School Indian Raider Marching Band was heard playing from a distance.

Floats sponsored by the City of Hiawassee, Enotah Baptist Church, Towns County FFA, along with other local organizations and businesses lined the streets, lighting up the evening with their carefully arranged Christmas lights. Most floats threw out candy to the children along the streets, watching the festivities in awe.

Heading up the rear of the parade was the jolly old

elf himself, Santa Claus. The children watching the parade screamed and waved as he passed. Santa's presence marked the end of the Thanksgiving holiday and the beginning of the Christmas season.

Jay, Ruben, and Denise Fields of Jefferson, were in agreement when it came to the parade.

"We're from out of town so it was nice," Denise said.

Marilyn and William Long of Hayesville, NC, "loved the parade."

In short, the event was a hit with both children and adults, kicking off the Christmas season with some floats, candy, along with a little bit of Christmas cheer.

New vests for deputies



A pickup and camper trailer seized during a drug arrest and awarded to the Towns County Sheriff's Office has paid critical dividends that could save an officer's life.

Almost out of options on finding money to pay for ballistic vests worn by deputies, Sheriff Chris Clinton's personnel turned to Smyrna Police Distributors in Cobb County to try and work out a trade of goods.

The Sheriff's Office offered the pickup and camper trailer awarded the department by the courts in exchange for some desperately needed police equipment.

According to Sheriff Clinton, the ballistic vests were almost out of date, with expira-

tion to occur in 2010.

With a willing trade partner in Smyrna Police Distributors, the department was able to secure 15 new ballistic vests, 15 patrol shotguns, and 4 Stinger brand less than lethal devices. All of these items were obtained at no cost to taxpayers, as the two vehicles covered all costs, according to Sheriff Clinton.

This new equipment will be used to keep deputies safer on the streets and roads of Towns County in the continued effort to fight the illegal drugs coming into the county. The Stingers are also intended to allow deputies another level of defense without resorting to other weapons.

Carnegie Hall awaits Sandi Patty...continued from page 1A

which culminates with an appearance at Carnegie Hall on Dec. 18th.

Patty's fans weren't shy about their love and affection for the gifted, talented performer.

"Everything was my favorite part," said Barbara Glover of Clermont.

Her friend, Elise Head, also of Clermont, said her favorite tune of the evening was *Silent Night*.

No other Christian artist at work today is better suited to sing about life's journey than Patty. Still bursting with creative energy and magnetic talent three decades into her career, the Gospel Music Hall of Fame inductee with 39 Dove Awards, five Grammy Awards, and an armload of platinum and gold albums has seen professional peaks and personal valleys alike while in the spotlight,

all of them tempered by the grace of God.

Patty's church upbringing is evident on jubilant cuts like *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty and Joyful, Joyful*, featuring arrangements that rang with the excitement of Sunday morning worship and a holiday symphony respectively. Not shy about one of her most important influences whom she first heard in high school, Patty sang two Andrae Crouch songs, giving his close-to-heart *Through It All* a 1970s Rhythm & Blues flavor and the classic *My Tribute* its choir-driven due, culminating in a magnificent vocal note.

Throughout, the show was a success, leaving patrons of Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' Anderson Music Hall with the feeling that *It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas*.



Sandi Patty wows the Anderson Music Hall crowd with her rendition of *Silent Night* during the annual Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds' Christmas Show on Saturday evening. Her tour culminates Dec. 18 at Carnegie Hall. Fans lucky enough to see her performance said she was better in person than on compact disc. Photo/Lowell Nicholson