

Tisha Wilson, Voices, compete on Sing Off Lions...from 1A Toys...from 1A

Towns County's own Tisha Wilson and Lee University's Voice of Lee are enjoying the national spotlight on NBC's *The Sing Off*.

Voices of Lee, from Cleveland, Tenn. and Lee University, is a very religious co-ed group of 10, which is characterized by their unique variety of vocal harmonies, high-energy patriotic numbers, fun-filled audience participation, and heart-felt gospel favorites. The group has appeared on Good Morning America, Bill Gaither's Familyfest, and Praise Gathering, and has sung in the Christ Church of Nashville. They have traveled from Ontario to Israel and now grace the stage of The Sing-Off.

Tisha, the daughter of Pastor Raburn and Lynn Wilson of North Mount Zion Church of God, and Voice of Lee are part of an eight-team cappella competition currently airing on *The Sing Off*. The show continues tonight at 8 p.m. EST.

Tisha, is a 2005 graduate of Towns County High School, a 2007 graduate of Young Harris College and a 2008 gradu-



Towns County's Tisha Wilson, center, kneeling, competes on NBC's *The Sing Off* tonight at 8 p.m. with Voices of Lee.

ate of Lee University.

Called the "ultimate a cappella competition" by NBC, the program will air again tonight and ends Dec. 21 with the grand live finale.

Voices has made it to the final six groups from around the country competing for \$100,000 and an Epic Records/Sony recording contract in a four-episode competition. The first two episodes aired Monday and Tuesday. The groups

rehearse and sing today's most popular songs arranged and performed with no lip-synching, no back-up bands and no safety net.

In front of a panel of professional experts, the groups compete for the title of the nation's best a cappella group.

The competition will conclude with the final two groups competing in a live finale, airing on Dec. 21, with America calling in to vote for

their favorite group.

Auditions were held during September 2009 in four US cities: New York, Chicago, Atlanta and Los Angeles.

Voices traveled to Atlanta to audition for the show. Following the a cappella style, no instruments of any kind were allowed. Each member of the group had to include a completed application with video.

Paul Telegdy, an executive vice president for NBC calls the show a "fantastic feel-good series that viewers of all ages can enjoy," he said, "To hear these singing groups recreate a popular song with only the sounds of their voices is truly amazing."

Voices of Lee, under the direction of Danny Murray, debuted in 1994 and recently celebrated their 15th anniversary.

This 16-member a cappella group is competing with 10 of its outstanding members. The group has a unique variety of rich vocal harmonies, including patriotic numbers, jazz and hymns. Voices of Lee strives for excellence in harmony, spirit and performance.

the event, talking to each child as he joined them in a picture that was developed on the spot. Handmade, wooden-toy trains were gladly being handed out by the crafter himself. Neatly wrapped gifts and grab bags were toted off by endlessly thankful boys and girls.

With more than 100 members, the Towns County Lions club could always use a few more helping hands.

"We love to welcome new members in the community. Each Lions Club member puts in hundreds of hours with seasonal events, raising as well as donating some of their own money or gifts for these types of things," said Vice President of the Towns County Lions Club Ralph Grady. "Some of us may be retired but we never stop working."

On their way out, families picked up signed vouchers, which could in turn be used for clothing and food purchases at a select group of stores in the area.

"This is unbelievable," said one Hiawassee resident with her son in one arm and her young daughter at her side holding onto her hand. "This is really the only Christmas my kids will have."

The Towns County Lions Club meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Their next regular meeting will be held on Jan. 12, at 6:30 p.m. at Anderson Music Hall.

Angelica anticipates the surprise her daughter will have in the days leading up to Christmas Morning.

"She has no idea I'm here," she said.

As she made her way to her car, carrying as many toys as she could hold in two arms, the gentleman from the Marine Corps League grabbed one of their last remaining gift certificates for the day and ran it out to her.

"Thank you so much for the gift-certificate," Angelica Ledford said. "This will really help. Merry Christmas and thanks again, you guys."

The gentleman with the Marine Corps League deflected all of the credit to the generous and giving nature of the residents of Towns County.

"That's what this is about," Jarrard said. "It represents how good this community is for supplying all of this."

The Marine Corps League and the Towns County Toys-for-Tots program will be out in full force again on Saturday, Dec. 19th from 8 a.m. until noon. The League will be handing out Christmas Cheer until the last toy is gone.

Brasstown Valley Resort & Spa continues to team up with the Marine Corps League's Toys-for-Tots campaign to help needy children. The Resort is offering special pricing on its mountain golf course to do so.

Bring a new, unwrapped toy with a value of at least \$10 between now and Dec. 23 to the Pro Shop at the Resort's Golf Club and enjoy a round of golf, including a cart for only \$25.

The Pro Shop also is collecting gently used and new coats and outerwear for children through March 1st. Golfers also can enjoy a round of golf and a cart for \$25 when they bring a donation of outerwear. For more details, including tee times, contact Brasstown Valley Resort at (800) 201-3205, or online at brasstownvalley.com.

Shop...from page 1A

portunity," Chief Wright said. "We're even more excited that 40 more kids are going to experience that first-hand this week."

This year was expected to be 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. We're feeling pretty good about this year. And maybe it's a sign the economy is going to turn around."

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Mountain Christmas was supposed to be that bridge, but it fell way short of its 2009 goal. Each year, entrants are asked to bring a new unwrapped toy to the event to benefit the annual Empty Stocking Fund toy drive.

"We served 192 children from 70 local families last year, depleting our Empty Stocking funds," Sheriff Clinton said. "Things were looking pretty dire there for a while. Then all of the sudden, we started getting money and toys from everywhere. It's enough to warm a lawman's heart."

The true benefits are putting a smile on a child's

face at Christmas that might otherwise go without. Sheriff Clinton got help from all over, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Ladies Auxiliary as well as an anonymous donation or two.

"I can't say enough good things about the VFW," he said. "They do the work and the children of Towns County are the beneficiaries of their efforts. I don't know if there is another VFW group like them anywhere. The Marine Corps League has been a blessing to this community. When this is all said and done, we've got a lot of people to thank for their generosity."

TC detectives crack case

By Charles Duncan
TOWNS COUNTY HERALD
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A Hayesville, NC man is in trouble with the law following some crack police work by Towns County sheriff's detectives Brian Wilson and Mike Davis.

Wilson and Davis became involved on the case of an entering auto report on Dec. 2. The detectives worked in tandem and utilized information received into a lead that led them to North Carolina. It was here that they served a felony arrest warrant on Raymond Maney, age 50, of Hayesville N.C.

The entering auto case was reported near Bill's Barber shop on Hwy. 76, just west of Hiawassee.

The detectives made quick work of the information they uncovered and followed their hard work up with a quick arrest.

The detectives recovered all the stolen property at the residence of Raymond Maney, sheriff's reports show. Controlled substances were also found in the residence, but due to jurisdictional boundaries the drug arrest is credited to the Clay County Sheriff's Office.

According to Towns County Sheriff Chris Clinton, the tandem work of detectives Wilson and Davis once again proves that law enforcement as a team is a powerful tool in the protection of local residents, no matter the jurisdiction.

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years in a row. We decided to give back to the community through the Marine Corps League Toys-for-Tots program because we have a lot of people in our workforce who are veterans, so it seemed to be a perfect fit," said Alan Kotch, Director of the CDC's Atlanta operations.

And as this flu season peaks, so does the goodwill in Towns County. Jeff Napier of the CDC spoke of the positive experience everyone in his group had throughout the week while preparing the gifts.

"We had a good time putting all of these bicycles together," Napier said. "The whole crowd here worked on them. We even had one guy who used to work at a toy store do quality control."

The bolts and break-pads on the bikes weren't the only thing that remained tight at Brasstown Valley Resort as a room full of 75 close-knit CDC participants, mostly from Atlanta and a smaller group from Pittsburgh, PA gathered together.

Each CDC participant donated at least one toy or more to the very active and dedicated Marine Corps League of Towns County managing the local Toys-for-Tots program.

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Floodplain...from page 1A

charts and a narrative report of local flooding to be used by permit officials for development in the floodplain.

Commissioner Kendall explained the importance of citizens attending the meeting and familiarizing themselves with the map and have input in correcting any errors that may need to be made with the new maps.

A new proposed Ordinance will be discussed which Towns County must adopt in 2010 if citizens living in a floodplain are to be eligible to acquire flood insurance at a discounted rate.

Kendall re-emphasized

the importance that citizens attend the meeting who have or want to apply for a federally backed loan; that they could in the future receive a letter from the lender stating they are in a flood plain and will be required to obtain flood insurance to get or keep their loan.

Citizens attending the meeting will have an opportunity to inspect and correct any error that FEMA mapping may have made. It will be too late to make any changes in the maps prepared by FEMA after the hearings.