

Christmas...from Page 1

Mayor Mathis. "The Bank of Hiwassee, Rebecca King, when she left, she said, 'Barbara, I want to leave those big ornaments for you. I want you to carry on the tradition of having a Christmas lighting every year.'"

Towns County Schools Facilities Director Roy Perren sang Christmas carols, including an especially Elvis-like "Blue Christmas."

And Pastor Sam Hamby of the Hiwassee United Methodist Church led prayer for the event, and everyone present was thankful for the occasion.

Mayor Mathis thanked those in attendance for com-

ing, and expressed her desire to make the lighting an annual event.

"I just wanted to thank everyone that had anything to do with preparing for it," said Mayor Mathis. "The people that rode on our float, I just want to thank everybody for helping us with this, helping us pull it together."

Next year will feature refreshments and greater publicity for the lighting ceremony.

"Next year, we'll spend more time with it," said Mayor Mathis. "We'll be prepared before Halloween, even, to have the lighting of the Christmas tree."

Plants...from Page 1

candidate for endangered species listing."

Moore and TVA Biologist David Brewster will give brief presentations followed by an open question and answer session on Dec. 18 at the Commission meeting at the Towns County Conference and Recreation Center.

TVA has a treatment program for invasive aquatic plants in many other reservoirs across the Tennessee Valley, and if a significant infestation occurs in the spring, TVA would likely begin a treatment program in

Lake Chatuge as well, Commissioner Kendall said.

Moore said that the Watershed Coalition would serve as a central location for tracking infestations of nuisance invasive plants in the spring.

"HRWC will coordinate with TVA to get plants identified and help determine the need for treatment," Moore said. "But, the organization needs your help. Join us on Dec. 18 if you would like to participate in this important program or if you just want to learn more about this topic."

Parade...from Page 1

Empty Stocking Fund.

"We had a good bit of people bringing toys in, and we've gotten some donations since - we're off to a pretty decent start," said Sheriff Clinton.

"Hopefully, we'll continue to do that and be able to take care of all these kids that need help."

James Batye of Towns County watched the parade from a street corner near the end of the route.

mas music kept the festivities rolling right along.

"We wanted to do something to reach out to the community and do a service," said Pastor Steven Taylor of McConnell Baptist Church.

Pastor Taylor commented that Christ was the reason for the season, and that they at the church just wanted to let the community know that "the church loves them."

This year marked his second year attending the parade, and his wife and three daughters were all on floats - two of his girls rode with the Girl Scouts, while one daughter and his wife rode with the Leo Club.

"I told all of them to bundle up warm," said Batye.

After the parade, the community was invited to meet Santa Claus for pictures and refreshments.

Hot cocoa, coffee and cider were prepared by McConnell Baptist Church, as well as Santa's favorite - cookies.

Santa made an appearance to the delight of children and parents alike in the church's Family Life Center, and Christ-

Church members aboard the float during the parade handed out invites, and the pictures with the real, live Santa Claus were provided free of charge.

On the whole, the parade was a huge success.

"I can't say enough how much I appreciate the folks that participated and the folks that came out to watch, and just being involved," said Sheriff Clinton.

"It's just a great community, and to see people get that involved, especially for the cause it's for - people really came out, and I think everybody had a good time. We're really thankful for that," he said.



Pearl...from Page 1

Missouri floats forever watchful over the memorial of the USS Arizona. Johnson served on the Missouri just three months following the Japanese surrender aboard the same ship.

"I'm going to go back," said Johnson. "My daughter promised me she's going to take me back to Pearl. I've been a donor from day one to the beautiful memorial and museum and everything out there that's built right there over the Arizona."

And Johnson remembers where he was the day the Japanese surrendered.



"The war had been over in June in Europe, and it was a long time coming," said Johnson. "But it was absolute mayhem. I was in New York, and I went up to Times Square. I was waiting to be reassigned to duty over here, and I got on the subway, a bunch of us, and went up to Times Square, and that's where we celebrated for 12 hours."

Many World War II photos are now famous, but one photo in particular captures the pure elation over the end of the war - the photo by Alfred Eisenstaedt of the sailor kissing the nurse in Times Square. Johnson's not the one kissing the nurse, but he shared in that excitement right along with his fellow Americans.

For Johnson, remembering Pearl Harbor is as important now as it was in 1941.

"People tend to forget the heroes out there, so that's why I always make sure that we recognize that," said Johnson. "They don't get them much in history anymore, do they? They don't. It's a shame that we have lost the ability to give our heirs and our children things like this that happened, because it's a lesson. It's always a lesson."

Having served in the Navy for 36 years, four months and four days, Johnson spent much of his life on military ships.

He retired as a chief petty officer, and during World War II, he saw the raising of both flags at Iwo Jima from the wa-

ter, and survived the detonation of a German mine off the U.S. East Coast on the YMS-21, a minesweeper ship.

"I made first class petty officer on there, and she got deployed to Europe, and she got sunk," said Johnson of the YMS-21 after his transfer to another ship. "Out of a crew of 48, only two men survived."

A man of strong faith, 92-year-old Bud Johnson puts his good fortune and long life down to having a purpose.

"God has been with me," said Johnson. "God blessed me and has given me the years he has, because I've been kamikazed, I've been torpedoed, mines, gunshot - a survivor."

Johnson has compiled books on Pearl Harbor, Iwo Jima and is working on his extensive autobiography. He has taken up a call to arms in serving veterans within the community, and that has become a large part of his purpose these days.

"As long as God gives me breath, I will honor these precious people out there who sacrificed for our freedom," said Johnson. "They paid the full price."

Reece...from Page 1

ample of Hub Reece's life, and what he had to do to survive before the first word of poetic prose was penned. The Reece Farm and Heritage Center is a prime example of Appalachian heritage. Farming was a way of life in early Appalachia.

From the sweat of his brow, to the ink of his pen, Reece is more celebrated today than the moments he toiled behind a plow, or endeavored to capture the thoughts inside his head on paper.

That much was evident on Friday. Yes, on Black Friday, the biggest shopping day of the year, those books and all



things Reece began to fly off the shelves of the Gift Shop at the Reece Farm.

Many visitors saw the event as an opportunity to purchase a unique Christmas

gift for someone special in their lives.

The Gift and Craft Shop feature books by and about Reece and others on subjects pertinent to Appalachia such as Zell Miller's *Purt Nigh Gone*, *The Old Mountain Ways*.

Other hot items included note cards; homemade and handcrafted items including jewelry, baskets, soap, scarves, wooden bowls, pottery, ornaments, quilts, and Reece Farm embroidered towels and pillows. Like his volumes of poetry and fiction, Reece hats, jackets and t-shirts also were weekend best sellers.

Rouse spreads word about energy efficiency

By Shawn Jarrard
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer



Karen Campbell and her husband, Brad Rouse at Whiteside Mountain.

Brad Rouse is Towns County's energy efficiency advocate, and he is doing everything he can to spread the message about climate change and sustainability.

Rouse, along with Dr. Vernon and Mary Joyce Dixon, marched in the People's Climate March in New York City earlier this year.

"I've gotten involved and become aware of a lot of different initiatives and a lot of different groups that are in the climate movement," said Rouse.

One such group is Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, of which Rouse is a member. The SACE advocates for clean energy policies, and Rouse is also involved with the Sierra Club, GreenLaw and the Climate Reality Project.

In particular, Rouse attended the march as a part of the Citizen's Climate Lobby.

"If you look at what the fossil fuel companies pay for lobbying, it is in the hundreds of millions of dollars, and they have people that live in Washington that are on their payroll," said Rouse. "They get paid big bucks, and they entertain these Congressman. And we're trying to combat it with a grassroots people's movement."

The main idea of the Citizen's Climate Lobby is to lobby Congress to pass a carbon fee.

"Their idea is, you put a fee on carbon, and you gradually increase that over time," said Rouse. "It's assessed at the mine or at the oil well or at the gas well or at the import terminal, and it's based on the carbon content of the fuel when burned. And that's basically making the assumption if we bring up fossil fuels out of the ground, we're going to burn them, so we might as well just charge them when they come up out of the ground."

"And the money that is collected through that program would be paid back to households. So, that's why they call it the Carbon Fee and Dividend - it's revenue neutral, it's not a tax increase, because all of the money, it bypasses the general fund and is set up to go into a trust, and then it will be rebated to people."

The purpose of the carbon fee would be to incentivize the private sector to reduce its carbon footprint, and CCL is trying to set up chapters in each Congressional district to aid in the cause.

"We fight the war against fossil fuels - that's what it is - with the Congress we've got," said Rouse. "So, they don't get involved in trying to elect members of Congress in particular. Every member of the Citizen's Climate Lobby has their preferences, and I'm sure most of them are Democrats, but I know there are some Republicans in Citizen's Climate Lobby, also."

"But we will go and try to work on the members of Congress and try to get them to consider bringing up carbon tax. There have been some carbon tax bills that have been introduced in this lame-duck session already. And I think when you talk to Republican members of Congress privately, a lot of them are very concerned about climate change."

CCL commissioned a study through Regional Economic Models, Inc., to model the effects of the Carbon Fee and Dividend proposal.

"What came out of that was very interesting, because what the study showed is that it would, by 2030, dramatically

cut carbon emissions," said Rouse. "It would improve employment by 2 million jobs, it would reduce the number of deaths due to asthma - 200,000 over that period of time. This would save 200,000 lives. That's four times the number of people we lost in Vietnam. And it saves money. So it's like, why wouldn't you do it?"

And while the CCL is of a national concern, Rouse is also involved in some local efforts to help people in the community.

"I'm doing something called Energy Saving Volunteers," said Rouse. "It's actually through Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Hayesville. This is where I'm most closely attuned to sort of boots-on-the-ground action in all of this."

Energy Saving Volunteers serves people of Clay, Cherokee, Towns and Union counties. Much of the work is done through referrals from crisis agencies trying to help people who can't afford to pay their electric bills in the winter, and the group will come in and, after an assessment, make energy efficient improvements to households for free or for a donation if a family can afford it.

"We do things like energy efficient light bulbs or low-flow shower heads," said Rouse.

And the group will add weather stripping and caulking where needed, plus add insulation to water heaters.

"One of the tests you can do is you can just run your hand over the faucet, and if you can't keep your hand under the hot water without pulling it back because it's too hot to just run full on hot water, it's too high - you can turn it down," said Rouse.

"When you take a shower you shouldn't have to blend the hot and the cold water."

LED bulbs in particular can save families hundreds or thousands of dollars over the course of the life expectancy of the bulbs, which is more than 20 years.

"It's a local group, working with people in the local community to save energy," said Rouse. "If we all got together and did that, the local economy would be better off, and if we all had more money to spend on the local economy, that's got to be better for everybody."

And Rouse knows a thing or two about the economy, having graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics from Yale and attained his master's degree in finance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He worked for years performing economic modeling in the utilities industry, helping to build software that is still relevant today in long-range energy planning.