

Shop with a Cop...from Page 1A

Department.

Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll welcomed the donation, which will go toward making sure children in need get the best Christmas possible when the chief and his helpers take the kids shopping soon.

"These are fine people," said Chief Carroll of Corridor Mortgage. "We're still accepting donations, and businesses have been good to us."

Rebecca King, branch manager of Corridor Mortgage Group's Blairsville office, said that she's proud to work for a company that donates so freely to worthy causes within its offices' communities.

"Corridor Mortgage is a mortgage company that was founded in 2000," said King. "They have grown along the Eastern seaboard, and in 2014, decided to move to the South. Georgia's first office was opened here in Blairsville with myself, Lisa Baxter and Teresa Lockaby. We service North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee."

"We are a mortgage bank that deals directly with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. We offer all types of mortgage lending - FHA, VA, conventional, anything that's out there."

The Blairsville office, having just opened in 2014, is giving to Shop With a Cop for the first time this year, and

Chief Carroll looks forward to that continuing gift-giving spirit Corridor Mortgage has already shown within the community.

"This season, as part of giving back, we're working with some cancer patients," said King of the company's overarching charitable endeavors. "We do a golf tournament every year where we raise money for Special Olympics, and I think we raised over \$50,000 in one day this year. It's a very giving-back company."

As far as why they're giving to Shop With a Cop for a more local donation, King said she and her staff appreciate the local law enforcement and everything they do, including Shop With a Cop and keeping the community safe.

"Given what's going on in our world right now and in our country, it's very important for us to support our law officers, and let them know that we appreciate the job they do," said King. "In Hiwassee and Blairsville's case, these guys take it back to the community even further with their Shop With a Cop program."

"And we think it's important that they go with those children shopping. They help them shop, and rather than somebody just buying the kid a gift and handing it to them, the

children have an opportunity to choose what they want and to use that money to buy for the other people in their family."

Baxter, a loan officer with Corridor Mortgage, agreed with King, adding that she's always amazed by the children's capacity for sharing.

"They want to get for their families, and pretty much they know what they want to get when they get there," said Baxter. "They know what they want to get for their parents, and if they have siblings, so it's not like they just want to go and blow that money on themselves. They think about others. I think that's what it's all about, and it's rewarding to see the kids do that."

When it comes to children, those working at Corridor Mortgage are very much aware of the fact that families need places to live, and that homes are an integral part of continuing to build a community.

"We are very interested in being a part of this community," said King. "Our business is putting people in homes. We want to continue to help families find homes, whether they're a first-time home buyer, whether it's a construction loan, or whether it's someone moving into the area. Home ownership is our business, and it's important to the growth of our area."

Give a Gift...from Page 1A



L-R: Lt. Craig Davenport, Pete Barley, Chief Deputy John George, John Fusco, Charlie Brown and Lt. Daren Osborn meet at the Union County Sheriff's Office for Give-A-Gift donation from Blairsville Cruisers.

program. "Throughout the year, we do a raffling on a car, and all the money and proceeds we get from the cars and our picnics and sponsor donations, charitable donations, we turn everything back over to the community," said Barley. "We donate money to the Shop With a Cop program, we do Shop With a Cruiser to take kids shopping also, and we donate proceeds to the sheriff's office for the Give-A-Gift program."

Just as the Union County Sheriff's Office and the Blairsville Police Department do, the Cruisers work with the school system to make sure that no child goes without for Christmas.

Wayne Tanner, founder of the Blairsville Cruisers and current chairman of the club's board, started the Shop With a Cruiser program, and the club's members have been happy to take part in that program and others ever since.

"If we didn't do a part of it, a lot of kids wouldn't have a Christmas," said Barley.

The Cruisers conduct two car shows a month from April through October, one at the Blairsville Square and another at the Union County Farmers Market, and this year they raffled off a 2004 Mustang Convertible to help raise money.

Along with its aid to various Christmas programs for children, the Blairsville Cruisers also give to the Union County Food Bank and give scholarships to seniors graduating from Union County High School.

For more information about the Blairsville Cruisers and how to join or become involved, call Barley at (678) 773-5934.

Also donating last week were students from North Georgia Tech, which conducts an annual toy drive to go toward Give-A-Gift.

The students delivered the toys, many of them interactive for fun with the whole family, as well as food bundles to be distributed by the sheriff's office.

"In a couple of weeks,

these hallways will be lined with bags of gifts for the families," said Chief Deputy John George with the Union County Sheriff's Office. "We collect, through the schools and some of the different programs, names of families, and they come in and basically give a list of what they'd like their child to get for Christmas."

"And through the charitable contributions and the gifts that people donate, we try to match that up and give them as much as we can from that list. Just before Christmas, the families will come in and collect all the bags - sometimes there are three or four bags of toys and gifts and things that go to the family."

Chief Deputy George

knows that, without the support of groups like the Blairsville Cruisers and the students of North Georgia Tech, there would be many more children doing without for Christmas each year.

"It's groups like North Georgia Technical College that do their toy drives, and Blairsville Cruisers - the churches bring in gifts," said Chief Deputy George. "We really don't make any phone calls. Most of this is donations out of the kindness of people's hearts and the different groups. They are cooperating partners. We reach a lot of children through the efforts of the staff at the sheriff's office."

City Council...from Page 1A

the mayor and council that the off ramp of the Haralson Development Project was on time and under budget, with the next scheduled meeting of the DDA to be held on Tuesday, Dec. 8.

Mayor Conley also discussed employee evaluations and recommended a 3 percent raise for all full-time employees effective the next pay period, which was approved unanimously by the council.

Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll distributed the police department's report on

call volume and miles driven, which showed 87 calls for the month of November, bringing the year's total number through November to 1,227 calls.

Total patrol miles for the month of November were 4,950, per the report, and Chief Carroll also handed out copies of a letter from Col. Mark W. McDonough, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

"I want to take this opportunity to extend my personal appreciation to you for your gracious assistance

to Georgia State Patrol Post 27-Blue Ridge," read the letter. "Your kind donation of a Taser with holster, cartridge and battery pack will help our Troopers keep the roads safe for the citizens we serve."

In a previous meeting, the Blairsville City Council had approved the purchase of the Taser to be donated to the Blue Ridge GSP Post, an action that was in line with what other cities had done in the area to support the efforts of Troopers on patrol within city limits.

Add a needy child to your Christmas gift list this year

The collection of Toys for Kids in Union County continues until December 15th. New unwrapped toys can be dropped off at the following locations between now and Wednesday, December 15th: Ingles, Food City, Radio Shack, The Dollar Store on Mulky Gap, The Dollar Store on Gum Log, The Dollar Store on Hwy 515, Community & Southern Bank, Unit-

ed Community Bank, CVS, Blairsville Restaurant, Galaxy Bowling, Southern Bank and Trust, Grinds and Glazes, The Book Cellar/Early Bird Antiques, Nani's Restaurant, Manzanilla Restaurant and Wendy's Restaurant.

Toys will be given out at specific local churches. To sign up to receive toys for your needy child, you can call Charlie Sowers at 706-745-5123.

He will need your name, address, phone number, number of kids, ages and gender. Also any church affiliation you may have. Church affiliation is not a requirement but will help at distribution time. If you leave a message and don't hear back, call again. Elf Charlie has his hands full!

You can also call Charlie if you have any questions about this local veteran project.

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