

Perren rocks Old Courthouse as Elvis Presley in Christmas concert

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
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The Union County Historical Society hosted Elvis Presley at the Old Courthouse on the Downtown Blairsville Square on Friday, Dec. 13.

Performing live in concert as “The King” himself, Roy Perren sang a selection of Elvis songs along with a few other well-known tunes to get people in the holiday spirit.

Despite the bad weather that Friday night, the event was still well attended by fans wanting to support Perren and his passion for music, as well as support the Historical Society for hosting the event.

“I really enjoy singing, and I enjoy it when you connect to the audience and they connect to me and we feed off of each other,” Perren said. “It’s just a lot of fun when you see people smiling and singing along with you.”

“I believe that music touches people’s hearts and you kind of forget everything going on in the world because we are busy having a good time. And that’s why I do these shows, is to have a good time.”

Perren has been singing his entire life, having gotten into it during his childhood



Roy “Elvis” Perren live in concert at the Old Union County Courthouse on Dec. 13.
Photo by Jarrett Whitener

years, and he’s pushed his voice further ever since.

He found out early on that singing was a passion for him, but he did not get into Elvis songs until his friends and family pushed him to try.

“I wasn’t a big Elvis fan growing up, but people kept telling me that I sound like him, so I started listening to his music,” Perren said, noting that he’s now been singing Elvis for the last 20 years or so.

Since becoming an Elvis fan later in life, Perren has performed countless shows over the years and become a bit of a local celebrity whom people follow and enjoy listening to.

The Dec. 13 Christmas concert had audience members cheering at the high notes and singing right along with each of the songs as they applauded Perren’s performance, and the entire evening proved to be a fun experience that some said

they couldn’t get at a bigger venue.

“This was my first time watching him do Elvis,” Alvin Tanner said. “We are up visiting some family this time of year, and he did a really good job.”

“I like Elvis pretty good, and I think he does a great impression and he knows how to get the audience involved. I think that’s what I like the most about these small shows like this, is that you can interact and meet the person singing and have a conversation with them.”

“At the large concert, you would never get to have this kind of fun interacting with the person singing and definitely not be able to talk to them afterward. I think this is a really neat thing to have, and it is definitely something that I wish we had back home.”

At the end of the show, Perren handed out red and green scarves to audience members while he took some pictures with his fans.

The Elvis performer hopes to do more Christmas shows like this in the future, because he enjoys the holiday

and the people who come to watch him perform.

“Hopefully next time we can fill this place up and have everyone singing with me and have a great time,”

Perren said.

Roy Perren is the principal of Towns County High School, and he serves as a director on the Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board.

County Meeting...from Page 1A

12 acres of soccer fields to the county. Panel Built, Inc. has purchased the other 15.749 acres and is converting the property and making improvements for their business purposes.

“The county had been trying to get a lease or an agreement or something on those soccer fields for years,” Paris said.

The county will lease the soccer fields to the Mountain United Soccer Association on a long-term basis. MUSA, which has been in the county since 1988, will now be able to apply for loans and grants to improve their program by having long-term control over the soccer fields.

In other county news, the Sons of the American Revolution, represented by Jared Ogden and Steve Weaver in the county meeting, presented Union County Fire Battalion Chief Richard Jones with a Fire Safety Commendation Award.

Jones was a volunteer firefighter before being hired full time in 1990. He is also an emergency medical technician.

It was conveyed in the meeting that Jones is a huge asset to the Fire Department and is the epitome of a top-notch firefighter, first responder and department chief. He is well respected by his peers, cool under pressure and indispensable to the whole department’s operation.

Kendra King, on behalf of SAR, honored Corey Parks with the Murray S. King Emergency Medical Services Award. King said the spirit of the award is respect for elders, hard work and timeliness.

Murray S. King was a member of the Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter SAR who suffered a massive heart attack several years ago to which Union General EMS responded.

And though he did not survive the heart attack, his wife, Kendra, was so impressed with the emergency response that she asked the Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter to establish a memorial award in recognition of the EMS.



Union County Fire Battalion Chief Richard Jones receiving an award from Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter Sons of the American Revolution on Dec. 17.
Photo by Mark Smith

“As for work ethic: help others, be informed of your job and be the best you can be,” King said, adding that, according to his supervisor, Parks personified all those things and more. “Congratulations,” she said.

Parks started with Union General EMS in May of 2015 as an EMT. He completed paramedic school this month and has accepted the higher level of responsibility. Parks said a family tragedy inspired him to pursue this field of work.

Ogden and Weaver, in a surprise move, presented Paris with a SAR Good Citizenship Award.

Moving along, Paris accepted an Association County Commissioners of Georgia Employee Safety Grant in the amount of \$5,000. Paris said the money will be used to purchase two new sets of firefighter turnout gear and one new helmet.

Paris also accepted a Georgia Hospital Association Ebola Grant in the amount of \$1,700.82 for the purchase of protective eyewear, masks, gloves and sharps containers for local first responders.

The commissioner approved an agreement between the county and Rushton & Company to perform the 2019 audit of the county financial

statements in an amount not to exceed \$54,000.

In his 2019 report on Projects Funded Through Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, Paris said the county is in great shape.

“When this last six-year SPLOST started, we budgeted for about \$260,000 per month,” Paris said. “This year, I think six or seven of the 12 months we’ve exceeded the \$400,000 mark.”

An agreement between Union County and Correctional Resource Group was also approved for the food service contract at the Union County Jail. New prices will go into effect on Jan. 4, 2020, and will reflect a 2% increase.

Paris said food drive buckets will be placed on both the upper and lower lobbies of the courthouse, the Union County Library and Blairsville City Hall again this year. Canned goods and dry goods will be accepted beginning Jan. 1, 2020.

The food drive by the county and county employees will replenish food supplies after the holiday season at the Union County Food Pantry located at the Civic Center, Paris said.

The Union County Courthouse will be closed Dec. 24-25 for Christmas and on Jan. 1, 2020, for New Year’s Day.

Winner drawn for quilt at Castoff Pet Rescue Benefit



Congratulations Vicki Prillaman for winning the quilt.

The lucky winner of the quilt was a teacher, Vicki Prillaman, at William Holland School of Lapidary Arts. The cute dog quilt, showing dogs in costumes at the beach, was created by a Misty Mountain Quilter. The raffle tickets were sold at CPR’s Wednesday Night Bingo located at 165 Wellborn St., Blairsville Civic Center; at William Holland School in Young Harris; and at the Towns County Farmers Market. Thank you for your donations for the animals.

Recipient of the raffle money of over \$600 was Union County’s Castoff Pet Rescue (CPR), one of the many animal rescue organizations in Union and Towns counties. When asked what CPR would do with the money, President Shannon Elliott said she would be able to treat 3-4 heart worm positive dogs and then be able to find them forever homes. Way to go, everyone wins!

Please support CPR and all your pet rescues with your donations this year; they all rescue and/or spay & neuter animals with no government support and save so many from homelessness. NT(Dec25.F3)SH