WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2015

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Community Experiences 'Winter Wonderland'



SUN PHOTO BY MICHAEL S. RENEAU

Eight-month-old Kruze Cutshaw sits on Santa's lap at the Holston United Methodist Home for Children's Winter Wonderland community event, featuring pictures with Santa, s'mores around a bonfire, hot chocolate and treats.

Holston Home Hosts Christmas Festivities

BY MICHAEL S. RENEAU
EDITOR

Santa Claus got to snack on cookies early this year at Holston United Methodist Home for Children's Winter Wonderland event Tuesday night.

Guests were able to enjoy an outdoor light display, a bonfire with s'mores, hot chocolate, cookies and pictures with Santa.

The public was invited to walk or drive through the campus from 6:30 until 7:30 p.m. to enjoy the festivities — all at no cost.

Holston Home President Bradley Williams said the event was a way staff and students there could give back to the larger Greene County community.

"We're so blessed to have such a supportive community," he said. "We wanted to look for opportunities to give back and love others in our community."

The gymnasium of the Beacon School was decked out with inflatables, Christmas trees and other Christmas decorations. Youth from

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SUN PHOTO
BY MICHAEL S. RENEAU

Nicholai Rigler, 4, shared cookies with Santa Claus a little early Tuesday night at the Holston United Methodist Home for Children's Winter Wonderland community event, featuring pictures with Santa, s'mores around a bonfire, hot chocolate and treats.



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Outdoor decorations and light displays were part of the Holston United Methodist Home for Children's Winter Wonderland event Tuesday.

Festivities

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Holston Home served popcorn, cookies and drinks to guests.

Planning for the event got underway in late October. Williams said he doesn't remember whose idea it was, but both youth and staff at Holston Home were enthusiastic about it.

"That's probably the mark of a good idea," he said. "It was kind of a team idea."

Holston Home youth have several Christmas events for the facility's immediate neighbors, but Williams said the idea behind Winter Wonderland was to do something for the entire Greene County community. And he plans on it becoming an annual occurrence.

"This allows our kids to be good hosts," he said. "This is just a celebration of God's love."

"Some of the children who come to Holston Home have never experienced the peace and joy of Christmas," a news release announcing the event said.

"In addition to showing the love of Jesus and sharing with our kids what this season is about, we also want to create a magical environment for some of those who have never decorated a tree, placed a wreath on the front door or lights on the house," Williams said in the release.