

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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February 7, 2018

Gun Club seeks lawmakers' help on shooting range

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

It's been seven months since the formation of the Union County Gun Club, and already, the club is close to realizing its goal of establishing a local shooting range.

The club's board of directors has located a roughly 14-acre strip of U.S. Forest Service land off Georgia 180 that members think would be perfect for a range.

A key aspect of the range would be its ability to accommodate rifle shooting at 200-plus yards, pistols and potentially shotguns.

Club members would have regular access to the range, with limited hours for the public, and local peace officers from the Union County Sheriff's Office and Blairsville Police Department would have

a home to train for firearms qualification.

Furthermore, the club would consider opening the range to students on the Union County 4-H Shotguns and BB Gun Teams, which would be particularly helpful since development of the 4-H shooting range came to a halt last year.

And while the club has yet to acquire the land for the range, it's a no-brainer for Union County Sheriff Mack Mason. After all, there are four ranges in neighboring counties on public land controlled by the U.S. Forest Service.

"Half this county is Forest Service, and the U.S. in that, to me, means 'us,'" said Sheriff Mason, who advises the gun club. "We're the government, we're taxpayers, we're citizens. We don't see any problems. We've looked at this from every angle, and

we don't see a negative thing about it."

Situated about five miles east of US 129S, just across from Bob Creek Road on 180, the USFS land in question was once part of an old Union County homestead, so it's relatively flat and clear.

The area is at the base of a mountain ridge and has other natural boundaries in Bob Creek and a minor wet weather branch.

Should the range become a reality, it would be surrounded on all sides by USFS land while maintaining more than a mile and two small ridges between it and the nearest home.

Of course, all of this is dependent upon the club coming to terms with the Forest Service for use of the land, and Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris has pledged to act as a

See Gun Club, Page 2A



Photo by Shawn Jarrard

The Union County Gun Club Board of Directors with Sheriff Mack Mason, Commissioner Lamar Paris, Andrew Seaver of U.S. Sen. David Perdue's Office, and Joel Katz of U.S. Rep. Doug Collins' Office.

Montana Barnes crowned Queen of Woody Gap Homecoming

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The night of Saturday, Feb. 3, was a night that senior Montana Barnes will remember for the rest of her life.

In front of a packed house at the Eagles Nest, Barnes was crowned the 2018 Woody Gap School Homecoming Queen by last year's queen Haley Grizzle.

Joining Barnes on the Homecoming Court were First Runner-Up and fellow senior Eliza Wilkins, junior Chayil Aponte and freshman Rachel Alphon.

An afternoon of festivities at Woody Gap gymnasium led up to the crowning of a new queen, beginning with a silent auction along with women and men



Photo by Todd Forrest

The 2018 Woody Gap School Homecoming Court alumni basketball games. Gap's Homecoming, see the North Georgia News. For more on Woody Sports section in this edition of

Mayor Jim Conley one of 14 to achieve GMA 'Certificate of Distinction'



L-R: Georgia Municipal Association President Dorothy Hubbard, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, and Stacy Jones, Assistant Director of Training at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley knows the value of a good education – after all, he's been taking classes for more than a decade, now.

In his quest to become a better steward of the city, Mayor Conley decided back in 2007 to undertake a long-term training program with the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute, designed specifically for city officials.

The institute is a cooperative effort of the Georgia Municipal Association and the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, and its nationally

recognized series of training opportunities for elected city officials runs the gamut of municipal possibilities.

Course offerings include everything from economic development to emergency management, from municipal finance to community and media relations, all aimed at making city officials better at their jobs.

And the mayor's hard work has paid off, as he recently reached the institute's second highest level of program completion.

In honor of his accomplishment, he received the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute's prestigious

See Conley, Page 2A

HRWC makes improvements to Nottely River

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

In conjunction with the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center Community Council, the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition has taken on a project to improve a tributary to the Nottely River, beginning on Wednesday, Jan. 31.

Over the last several years, the watershed has experienced a greater than average amount of rainfall and flooding.

While rainfall is a necessity for vegetation to thrive and to avoid drought, this larger amount can cause erosion, especially in the smaller tributaries.

At the GMREC, or See Nottely River, Page 3A



Photo by Lily Avery

The Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition has teamed up with the GMREC Community Council to improve the banks of the Nottely River.

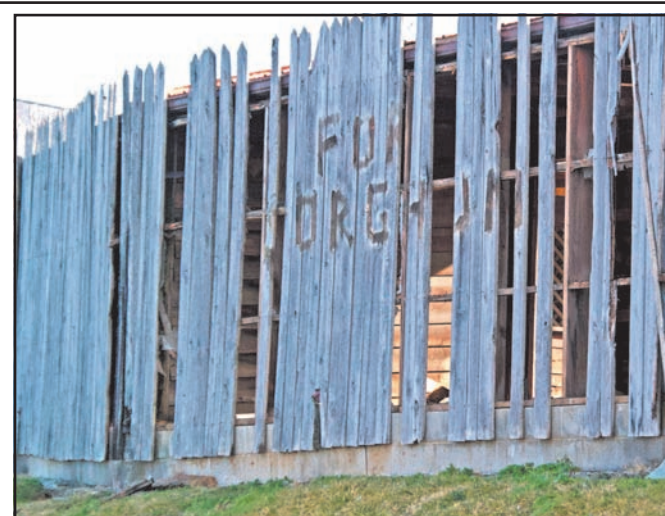


Photo by Lily Avery

The Blairsville Sorghum Festival Club has decided that it's time to let the old Fort Sorghum go.

Old Fort Sorghum to be demolished in the coming weeks

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The old Fort Sorghum soon will be saying its final farewell after nearly five decades standing in Downtown Blairsville.

Members of the Blairsville Sorghum Festival Club have decided to put the now defunct former Sorghum

Festival headquarters to rest. "It's been sitting there for several years now and it's getting very worn," said Club Treasurer Kim Bridges. "In a way, it's become a liability because if someone gets hurt down there, then we're all going to be responsible."

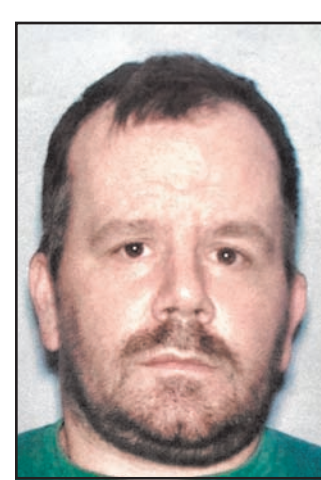
"It's kind of getting to the point where it's more of an eyesore now than it is a

See Fort, Page 2A

Business partners arrested for depositing counterfeit check



Dennis Lynn



Michael "Jerz Mike" Osborne

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Two business associates found themselves behind bars last weekend for having deposited a counterfeit check, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Michael David Osborne, aka Jerz Mike, 46, of Towns County, and Dennis Lamar Lynn, 56, of Union County, have both been arrested and charged with financial identity fraud, forgery in the third degree, and theft by deception,

according to the sheriff's office.

Last year, Osborne and Lynn entered into a lease-to-own agreement with a Blairsville business, and the original owners of the business reported the crime the week of Jan. 29, 2018, per UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn, no relation.

"These two gentlemen had a check that they deposited in a local bank here in Blairsville, and the check was a counterfeit, fraud check," said Lt. Osborn. "The check

See Counterfeit, Page 3A

Vol. 109 No. 06 Inside

4 Sections 24 Pages

Arrests 5B
Weather 3B
Churches 3D
Thurs: Sunny Hi 54 Lo 31
Fri: Sunny Hi 56 Lo 40
Sat: Rain Hi 54 Lo 48

Classified 3C
Opinion 4A
Legals 5D
Obits 5C
Sports 2B

PANTHERS

Basketball Region Tourney

Boys Feb 6 vs. North Hall @ East Hall 4:30

Girls Feb 7 vs. Dawson Co @ East Hall 4:30

NASCAR

NASCAR Schedule

See page B1 & 2D

Lions Club Annual

Yard Sale

Vendors Needed

See page 5B

UCHS

8th Grade Parent Night

February 13th

See page 2D