

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## UCSO to host class on 'Tweens and Teens in a Digital Age'

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Assistant Editor

Attention all parents, guardians and adult community members – the Union County Sheriff's Office is hosting a class called "A Parent's Guide to Tweens and Teens in a Digital Age."

The free class will take place on Monday, May 7, at 6:30 p.m. inside the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center.

"Law enforcement has seen an increase in sexting cases, cyberbullying cases and suicide threats among kids, pre-teens (tweens) and teens," per a UCSO statement on the class. "We hope to inform parents, guardians, families and communities as to what their kids are doing with digital devices."

Continued the statement: "This information is for parents, guardians, family and the community. We strongly advise you not to bring any kids, tweens or teens to this."

The sheriff's office has asked that members of the community not bring kids to the event because of the nature of the content that will be discussed, which is meant to give parents an advantage when dealing with the many digital dangers faced by children every day in Union County and beyond.

UCSO Lt. Tom Mangifesta and Det. Marc Pilote will lead the presentation, though the entire Criminal Investigations Division of the Union County Sheriff's Office will be on hand for the Q&A session at the end of the class.

The idea to host a

seminar-type event for parents concerning children and the dangers of digital communications has arisen organically over time, after repeated interactions between the schools and the sheriff's office.

"We dealt with the high school all last year, and this year it's been the middle school," said Pilote. "Just various things – sexting, talking to random people, bullying, the whole slew of problems."

Added Pilote: "It's gotten to the point where we're working so many cases now, we'd like to try to address the issue."

In putting the program together, the two detectives prepared for the class in a variety of ways. They did their homework, so to speak, on all

See UCSO, Page 2A



Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Partners in crimefighting Lt. Tom Mangifesta and Det. Marc Pilote of the Union County Sheriff's Office.

## Lady Panthers golf team clinch third consecutive Area/Region title

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

ROYSTON - The Union County Lady Panthers golf team climbed into some rarified air at UCHS with its third consecutive Area/Region title last week.

Hosted by Highland Walk Golf Course at Victoria Bryant State Park, Union County fired a 259, ending Second-Place Franklin County (273) by 14 strokes and Third-Place North Hall (298) by 39 shots.

Ally Horinek led the Panthers with an 81 – good enough for second overall – while Grace Wischmeyer turned in an 87.

The Lady Panthers will begin prepping for their fourth straight State Tournament, where seniors Megan Rowe,

See Golf, Page 2A



L-R: Seniors Grace Wischmeyer, Megan Rowe and Ally Horinek with junior Carson Chambers.

## Early voting continues through May 18

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Assistant Editor

Early voting for the May 22 General Primary and Nonpartisan General Election began on Monday, April 30.

Every weekday between now and May 18, during the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., registered Union County voters can cast their ballots at the Union County Registrar's Office.

The Registrar's Office is located within the Union County Courthouse and will be open to voters even during lunchtime.

There is one weekend day set aside for voters at the Registrar's Office, which will be Saturday, May 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., for people too busy to vote during the scheduled weekdays of

voting.

Since this is a primary, a political party to receive a ballot, otherwise, voters will only be able to vote in the Nonpartisan General Election.

Election Day will be on Tuesday, May 22, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and that day, voters should report to one of the 11 pre-assigned Union County voting precincts.

Voters looking for absentee ballots will need to contact the Registrar's Office in the courthouse, or call (706) 439-6016.

Tuesday, April 24, was the voter registration deadline heading into the election.

Each of the following candidates appears on the ballot of his or her respective political party:

See Voting, Page 2A

## Teacher, son turn themselves in



Gwen Sparkman

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Assistant Editor

A Union County speech teacher and her son turned themselves in to authorities on Friday, April 27, per the Union County Sheriff's Office.



Aidan Francis

Gwen Arlene Sparkman, 60, and Aidan James Francis, 17, both of Blairsville, were taken into custody by the sheriff's office on charges stemming from an incident that

See Sparkman, Page 2A

## Station 2 Open House a hit with kids, families

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

It was all about family and friends at the Union County Fire Station No. 2 Open House on Saturday, April 28.

The event was hosted and supported by local businesses and organizations that help to sponsor the fire department.

As always, the event proved to be a family-friendly affair that included a bounce house for the children to enjoy in the sunny weather of the afternoon.

Kids also had an opportunity to learn how to properly use a fire extinguisher, under the adult supervision of a Union County firefighter, of course.

A metal box was set up and filled with water that had propane gas released into it,

See Station 2, Page 3A



Photo by Jarrett Whitener

A Union County firefighter showing a youngster how putting out fires is done at Fire Station No. 2 at Jones Creek.

## Union County Confederate Memorial Day celebration draws a crowd

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Assistant Editor

Year after year, dozens of residents from around the region gather to recognize Confederate Memorial Day.

This year was no different, as guests joined local members of both the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy at the Union County War Memorial Park on Saturday, April 28.

"The Sons of Confederate Veterans is an organization started in 1896, and it is a genealogical, patriotic historical

See Memorial Day, Page 6A



Photo by Lowell Nicholson

Members of the local Sons of Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy with a memorial wreath at the Civil War Monument in Union County on Saturday, April 28.

## January Term 2018 Grand Jury Indictments continued

News Special  
North Georgia News

The following individuals, who are presumed innocent until proven guilty, were indicted during the January Term 2018 of the Union County Grand Jury, which met for a second time in April:

Amanda Timpson, violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act.

Nina Catherine Conlon, possession of methamphetamine.

Harold Lee Cooper Jr., possession of methamphetamine.

Marcia Louise Martinez,

possession of methamphetamine.

Izaiah Erik Dotson, carrying weapons within certain school areas; possession of drug-related objects; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce.

David Victor Light, burglary in the second degree; theft by taking.

Sarah Eliza Payne, AKA Sarah Eliza Weaver, possession of methamphetamine.

Chad Edward Anderson, escape.

Sherman Edward Beaver, possession of a controlled substance; crossing the guard lines with drugs; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce;

See Indictments, Page 3A

Vol. 109 No. 18 Inside

4 Sections 32 Pages

Weather

Thurs: Sunny Hi 81 Lo 54

Fri: Cloudy Hi 79 Lo 58

Sat: Cloudy Hi 76 Lo 55

Arrests 7A

Church 5C

Classifieds 4A

Opinion 4D

Legals 6D

Obits 7C

Sports 2B

FREE

Dahlia Bulbs

Farmers Market

May 5th

See page 7B

Parent Review Meeting

Primary School

May 16th

Elementary School

May 17th

See page 7A

Veteran's Fishing Rodeo

May 4th

See page 7A

CRUISE IN U.C. NURSING HOME

MAY 6TH

See page 7A