

Burglary...from Page 1A

a flashlight. The male first tries yanking on the door to the store before moving out of view from the camera, and in another clip, he approaches from around the corner with a dumbbell workout weight.

Switching to an interior view of the store, another surveillance clip captures the smashing of the front door as the bottom half of the door's glass is shattered using the suspect's dumbbell.

The man then ducks through the hole he's created in the glass and rushes to the register, where he quickly opens the drawer and removes all the cash, even checking below the register before bolting from the premises.

An undisclosed amount of cash was taken from the store, though the cost to repair the door will be more than what was stolen, according to UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn.

The whole operation, from smashing through the door to leaving with the cash, took the suspect about 10 seconds, according to Lt. Osborn.

Later that same morning, the red/orange Jeep from the Food Heaven video pulled into the Nantahala General Store in Swain County, North Carolina, according to surveillance footage shared by the Swain County Sheriff's Office Facebook page.

The same white male can be seen exiting the parked Jeep, from which he pulls the same dumbbell to smash the door to the General Store.

An accomplice is clearly illuminated by the interior light of the Jeep during the commission of the Swain County burglary, and can be seen interacting with the man who smashed the glass doors of both locations.

No cash was available for stealing at the Swain County store, but according to the Nantahala General Store Facebook page, repairing the damage done by the burglar may cost upwards of \$1,000.

The Union County Sheriff's Office is currently tracking a person of interest they believe to be native to



The burglar used a dumbbell to break into the store.



Investigators are confident that this burglar will be caught. The cost of the damage the thief did to the store's door was greater than the amount he was able to steal in cash.

North Carolina, though the individuals involved had yet to be located as of press time Monday.

Lt. Osborn is confident that the suspects will soon be apprehended, and when they are, those involved are looking to face burglary and criminal

damage to property charges, according to Lt. Osborn.

Investigators have asked that anyone with information contact the Union County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division at (706) 439-6066, and ask for Lt. Osborn.

Festival...from Page 1A

Festival is the only festival that occurs around the courthouse each year, and that one of the reasons it continues to draw crowds is that traffic is allowed to flow during the festival, giving curious motorists who are out for a nice spring cruise something to think about.

The DDA has been successful in recent years in encouraging downtown merchants to open their doors specifically for the festival.

"It's very profitable for our downtown merchants, and this year we've got a lot more that are participating," said Harper. "For example, Foodland is going to be participating. They're going to be doing a food booth, and it's the first time they've ever done it."

"We try to encourage downtown businesses to either have specials or to stay open later, or to open on a day they normally don't, such as a

Sunday. It's good all-around for everybody, and the tax dollars that get generated from it are obviously good for the community."

Continued Harper: "I work with the Historical Society - I couldn't do this on my own, and they couldn't do it on their own. So, we work together and we split the proceeds."

The festival is free to attend, with plenty of free downtown parking available.

"It's a great way to get out and spend a weekend, come rain or shine," said Harper.

Coinciding with the start of the festival will be the Blairsville-Union County Memorial Day Parade that will start at 10 a.m. that Saturday, May 27. The parade will make its way around the Downtown Blairsville Square and ultimately over to the Union County War Memorial.

Blairsville's own World

War II Army Veteran John Hoyt Hamby will be the Grand Marshal of the parade, and retired Maj. Gen. Maria Britt of the Army National Guard will serve as the keynote speaker of the Memorial Day Ceremony that will take place at the War Memorial shortly after the conclusion of the parade.

Traffic will be closed to the parade route, but the roads will be opened back up following the parade.

Other festivals coming up this year include the Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games, on June 10 and June 11; the Butternut Creek Arts & Crafts Festival, July 15 and July 16; the Mountain Heritage Festival on Labor Day Weekend; the Indian Summer Festival of Suches, the first weekend in October; and the Blairsville Sorghum Festival, the second and third weekends in October.

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