

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Abercrombie honored with public safety funeral

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer



Brenda Abercrombie,
Union County 911
Dispatcher

Brenda Abercrombie dedicated more than 22 years of her life to public service in Union County, earning a solid reputation along the way as a calming voice in the center of any emergency.

Abercrombie worked as a night shift dispatcher at Union County E-911 Communications Center, and her colleagues thought of her as the mother of dispatch services.

Her untimely death last Tuesday, March 14, came by surprise, as she had been recovering nicely from a November 2016 double lung transplant surgery.

Funeral services for Abercrombie were held on Thursday, March 16, at

Mountain View Funeral Home, and dozens of first responders from Union and surrounding counties attended.

"You could never find anyone to say a negative thing about Brenda," said Union

County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, who eulogized Abercrombie. "Her infectious smile made everyone's life better, especially her family and coworkers.

"She dedicated the majority of her working life to making Union County a better place to live. She left coworkers, family and friends grieving, but there are many funny Brenda stories to last a long time, and it will provide a lot of joy to those here today."

Added the commissioner: "Our hearts have all been lifted by Brenda, and knowing she has a special telephone and headset in heaven should give us all a smile. Heaven is a better place now."

As a public safety officer, Abercrombie received all the

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Towns County Fire Chief Harold Copeland came over with a ladder truck to fly the American flag over Abercrombie's procession on Georgia 515

County, Union General team up for free emergency medical flights

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Starting June 1, all Union County residents will be eligible for free medical flights — as needed — through Union General Hospital's Air Methods helicopter service.

Residents will not have to sign up for the Air Methods service, but will be automatically enrolled countywide on June 1.

Union General Hospital initially reached out to the county to provide the service, which will be funded through a partnership between the county and the hospital.

The cost to the county to provide the service to all residents is currently estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$55,000.

Air Methods is a

company that provides air medical transport services to the nearest trauma center, such as Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville. Each patient must be evaluated by medical professionals, and their situation must be determined as sufficiently emergent for Air Methods to provide a flight.

The Air Methods service has actually been provided by the hospital and county for nearly a year, though previously, residents had to individually sign up for memberships.

While the automatic countywide memberships will go into effect this coming June, residents who signed up for the service last year will still be covered from now until the new memberships begin.

"This program is an agreement between Air Methods and the county," said Derrick Moody, Air Methods

Georgia Regional Business Manager. "The county and the hospital are going to be in a joint effort. They're purchasing the membership through Air Methods Advantage for the aircraft in Blairsville.

"We have an aircraft in Blairsville, Gainesville and Jasper; those are the ones closest to Blairsville. We're all Air Methods, through AirLife Georgia. They would be covered under them as well. This also covers them nationwide. If any Air Methods aircraft transports any of these citizens, they'll be covered."

According to Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, this will also cover residents who have summer homes in Union County.

Again, all residents will be automatically signed up for a

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Individuals from Union General Hospital, Air Methods, Union County and Towns County governments, gathered at the UGH helipad on Monday, March 13.

Vietnam Veterans 'Change of Command' ceremony



The Vietnam Veterans of America Georgia Chapter 1101 held a Change of Command luncheon on Thursday, March 16. Pictured here, L-R: VVA Secretary Bill Honaker, Treasurer Gerald Ippolito and President Ray Tiburski.

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Vietnam Veterans of America Georgia Chapter #1101 held a Change of Command Ceremony to welcome in a new slate of officers for the 2017-2018 year at the Union County Community Center on Thursday, March 16.

Former VVA President Mike Priven began the meeting by welcoming everyone to the luncheon, and thanking all of those who have supported the organization throughout his years of holding the office of president.

"It has been an honor to be your president for the last three years," said Priven. "We have accomplished things that I don't think anyone thought was even possible. We've

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UCSO makes seven drug arrests over the weekend



UCSO K9 Handler Deputy Drew Stewart and K9 Dexter.

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Drew Stewart has been a road deputy with the Union County Sheriff's Office for

about two years now, and already he's made a name for himself as an enemy of the drug trade.

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Law firm meets with residents to discuss Windstream claims

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Representatives from Birmingham Law, Alabama, held a Windstream Action Information Meeting at the Choestoe Schoolhouse on Thursday, March 16, to discuss pending investigations against the communications company.

There are currently 25 lawyers from Alabama working on the case concerning Windstream's advertised Internet speed. Dustin Kittle, one of the leading lawyers on the case, spoke with Union County residents during the



Attorney Dustin Kittle of the law firm Beckum Kittle LLP out of Birmingham, Alabama

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Phillips previews EMC policy changes ahead of town halls

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors will be hosting a town hall meeting on Thursday, March 23, at 6 p.m.

North Georgia Technical College will host the meeting, located at 121 Meeks Ave in Blairsville.

BRMEMC began its practice of holding town halls in January 2016. The meetings are meant to give the membership chances to speak directly with directors in order to have questions

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The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Board of Directors will host a town hall meeting on March 23 at the North Georgia Technical College campus, starting at 6 p.m. Pictured here, EMC directors in the 2016 Union County town hall meeting.

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Fri Mar 24 @ GAC 5:30 & 7:30
BASEBALL
Wed Mar 22 @ Dawson 5:55 PM
Fri Mar 24 vs. Dawson 5:55 PM