

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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July 5, 2017

EMA meets to discuss Aug. 21 eclipse expectations

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

It's not just once in a lifetime that a total solar eclipse makes its way across Union County soil - it's once in many lifetimes.

Come Monday, Aug. 21, this particular part of Appalachia will experience its first total solar eclipse since the year 1506, and the next one isn't expected to cut across Union County until the year 2591, according to Steve Morgan, Director of the O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium at Young Harris College.

Morgan delivered an eclipse presentation at the Union County Emergency Management Headquarters on Thursday, June 29, and he relayed a variety of facts about

the eclipse to a room full of first responders.

The Aug. 21 total solar eclipse is being called the Great American Eclipse because it will be visible from coast to coast across the continental United States, and though it will be visible in parts of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, the eclipse will only make landfall on American soil.

And while the continental U.S. does see total solar eclipses from time to time, most recently in 1979 in the Northwest, it's a simple fact that, lately, Union County falls into what is known as the "path of totality" about once in half a millennium, so residents will not want to miss it.

Of course, plenty of other people won't want to miss the Aug. 21 total solar eclipse, either - some 200 million

people live within a day's drive of the eclipse, which means that traffic will be worse than usual along the path of totality, which includes Union County.

Union County EMA Director David Dyer called the June 29 meeting to get an early gauge on where the other first responder agencies around the county and region stand in terms of eclipse safety.

Dyer said that he currently estimates between 5,000 and 7,500 more people will be traveling to Union County for the eclipse, and potentially for that entire weekend.

Tobie Chandler, tourism director for the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, concurred with Dyer's safety-first approach to the eclipse.

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The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce sporting eclipse gear. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

Griffin Young lives a dream in Cooperstown



Griffin belts his three-run homer. Tigers went on to win 20-3.

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
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Twelve-year-old Griffin Young of Blairsville just lived the dream of a lifetime - well,

a 12-year-old's lifetime.

He and his Tiger baseball teammates competed in Cooperstown, NY's Dreams Park, where players spend a week at Cooperstown Dreams Park learning, practicing, and

playing baseball together and against other teams. It is the opportunity of a lifetime, and a must-experience for any child who loves baseball.

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MRLS Board approves budget, elects new chair

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS - The Union County Public Library is a vibrant community partner serving residents of all ages.

Right now, children of the county are taking part in the summer reading program, which focuses on bridging the summer break with activities that reward literacy.

Senior citizens have access to several programs at the library to keep them active within their communities, and the library houses a variety of resources to assist residents who have vision and hearing impairments.

Families can take advantage of "ParkPasses" to get free parking at state parks, and the library even offers a Zoo Atlanta pass for families to get in free to the zoo.

These programs and

more are available to Union County residents thanks to local and state funds appropriated through the annual budget process.

In its regional board meeting at the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris on June 21, the Mountain Regional Library Board of Trustees passed its fiscal year 2017-2018 budget.

The library fiscal year mirrors the state fiscal year, and will run from July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018.

MRLS Director Vince Stone is responsible for preparing the budget each year, and he reported expected revenues of \$1,048,607.79 from all local, state and other funding sources, and projected expenditures of \$1,034,214.

Union County will be chipping in \$223,500 from local taxes to go toward those revenues, and SPLOST will kick in another \$16,000



2017-2019 MRLS Board Chair Karan Harper. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

from Union, with the City of Blairsville contributing \$5,000.

The rest of the revenues in the budget will come from local tax dollars and other

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UCSO continue search for four alleged meth distributors



James Cordle



Michael Parker



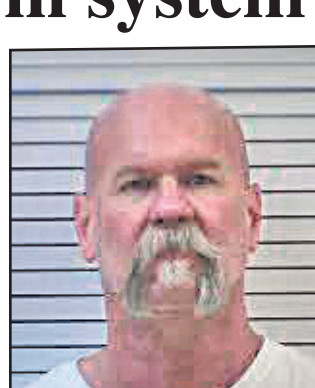
Bridgette Banks



Cameron Lawler



Mike Gowder



James Heaton

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
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Four people connected to the June 22 Operation Ghost sting are still on the lam, Union County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Tyler Miller said.

Michael Edward

Parker, James Keith Cordle, Cameron Maria Lawler, and Bridgette Banks, each charged with distribution of methamphetamine, are still fugitives from justice, Sgt. Miller said.

"We've had some pretty good tips, but they always seem

to be a day ahead of us," Sgt. Miller said. "I can say this, they are not in Union County."

The four were among the horde of people sought by law enforcement on June 22 for various drug-related offenses as part of Operation Ghost that was executed by the Union County

Sheriff's Office.

Operation Ghost became the biggest methamphetamine bust in terms of number of arrests in the history of the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Operation Ghost, See Meth, Page 2A

Gowder, Heaton arrest warrants drying up in system

From Staff Reports
North Georgia News

MURPHY, NC - Former Union General Hospital CEO Mike Gowder and Blairsville physician Dr. James Heaton were scheduled for appearances in North Carolina Superior

Court last week, though court documents were not available at press time.

In Union County, multiple arrest warrants have fallen by the wayside for

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Mountain View Farm a haven for fresh, natural foods

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

When it comes to local farm fresh fixin's, it doesn't get much fresher than Southern Mountain Livin' at Mountain View Farm.

"We want people to know this is as all natural as you can possibly get," said Ronnie Dyer, who runs the farm store with his family. "No hormones, no antibiotics, straight off the farm."

Nine out of 10 animals raised for slaughter are born on the farm, said Dyer, and those animals are fed with

corn crops from the farm, with all crops being fertilized by animal manure produced on the farm.

"This is pretty unique," said Dyer. "You go to a grocery store and buy a piece of meat, there's no telling where it came from. There's no telling how it's been raised, what it's been fed, how it was treated. Here, you know all of that."

Ronnie and Janie Dyer, now grandparents, raised their family on the 67-acre farm, and though the farm has been in business for decades, the farm's country store -

at Mountain View Livin' - recently celebrated its first anniversary in its current storefront location on the farm at 189 John Abernathy Rd. in Blairsville.

Dyers have owned much of the land that makes up the farm since 1923, when they came over from Owtown, and they bought the remainder of the 67 acres during World War II and started farming.

From the 1940s onward, the Dyer family has specialized in many areas of farming,

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Bottom Row, L-R: Kyle Williams, Travis Kerr, Madison Hart, Megan Kerr, Cooper Colwell and Trent Kerr. Top Row, L-R: Ronnie and Janie Dyer, with Jennifer and Willy Kerr. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

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Happy Independence Day

From the Staff of the

North Georgia News and West Printing Company