

# Lacey...from Page 1A

vehicle.”

Lacey then led officers onto an old logging road for approximately 500 feet, Deputy McConnell said.

“We then turned into the woods, and found another beer can matching the description of the open container inside the vehicle,” Deputy McConnell said. “We tracked about 500 feet into the woods, came to an old riverbed and she followed the riverbed to a culvert, to a driveway, and we found a half-full 12 pack carton of Budweiser.

“She went up the hill about 500 feet, alerted and found the injured person laying in a ditch,” Deputy McConnell said. “We believe he was possibly passed out.

“He was not moving until we got close to him,” the deputy said. “She alerted that was the person that we were looking for. The vehicle



Union County Deputy Sheriff Jeff McConnell proudly shows off his K-9 partner Lacey, a bloodhound tracking dog. Photo/Charles Duncan

was registered in his name as well.”

The temperature at the

time an unconscious Yebba was found was 28 degrees. The low that evening was 13

degrees.

“It’s possible that Lacey saved this man’s life,” Deputy McConnell said. “It was her first official on-duty track. Everything else, her experience has been training. This was her first official find.”

Trooper Phillips arrested Yebba on charges of leaving the scene of an accident, and Driving Under the Influence of alcohol, Union County Jail records show.

Lacey was donated to the Union County Sheriff’s Office six months ago by the Jimmy Ryce Center for Victims of Predatory Abduction, in Miami Beach, Fla., Sheriff Mason said.

“I think it’s good for folks in Union County to know that we have a dog with the capabilities of saving lives,” Sheriff Mason said.

# Historical...from Page 1A

the way, capturing the beauty of days gone by,” Akins said.

“Preservation is repairing and restoring something to its original state for the benefit of coming generations,” Akins said. “For example, our historic 1899 Courthouse that is today, enjoyed by young and old alike.”

Using Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax dollars, Paris of course made sure that the Choestoe Schoolhouse didn’t fade from memory in 2013.

In 1936, the one-room schoolhouse opened its doors to the children of Choestoe.

For almost 20 years, that building, sometimes converted to a two-room schoolhouse using a partition, became the foundation of education for children up to the seventh grade in Southern Union County.

As time progressed, and the schoolhouse closed to education, the building’s usage varied, and for many years was utilized at the Choestoe Campground.

As the 20th century

became the 21st century, in disrepair, targeted for demolition, and almost on the verge of collapse, the Choestoe Schoolhouse was offered to the county.

With the floors rotting, and almost all the windows were broken, Paris took on the challenge of transforming the historic structure and making it useful again.

“It was rotted everywhere – it was in extreme disrepair,” he said.

The commissioner then began to ask himself what would the county do with the building if it did accept it. Could the building even be moved?

Commissioner Paris got a nudge in his decision making process when Keith Jones offered to donate a piece of property on Collins Road if the building were relocated to that property.

The wheels began to turn as Paris realized that this could be the answer to two needs in the Choestoe community – first, a Choestoe voting precinct, and second, a

Choestoe Community Center.

He called David Looper, a house mover and asked for his advice. He asked Looper if the building could be moved, and second, could the county afford it.

The old schoolhouse was 46 feet wide. The first thing that would have to happen would be to widen Collins Road.

To begin the move, a beautiful historic dogwood tree would have to be moved 10 feet to make the move happen.

Paris received permission to move the dogwood. Unfortunately, the move was more than the old tree could tolerate.

Other hurdles had to be cleared with homeowners on Collins Road.

“People just kept agreeing to help, everything just kept happening,” Paris said. “And, here we are, we have a new Choestoe Voting Precinct and Community Center.”

Ethelene Dyer Jones spent many a day at the building better known for education from 1936 to 1954.

Ethelene Jones was one of the last teachers at the Choestoe Schoolhouse. Her son, Keith Jones, donated the land, on which the historic schoolhouse now sits.

The building was rededicated in her honor in October 2013.

Betty Jane Shuler has been an inspiration to the Union County Historical Society, Akins said.

“She is truly deserving of this honor,” Akins said.

“She continuously provides her vast knowledge, support and labor to the Union County Historical Society. She never tires in her effort to preserve the history and culture of Union County and its people,” Akins said.

In December, Akins was chosen to once again lead the Historical Society, this time in 2014.

“We’re looking forward to another exciting year of keeping the legacy of Union County, GA, alive and well,” Akins said.

“From shape note singing to our Friday night concerts at the Courthouse, to our Mountain Heritage Festival, we’ll continue our dedicated efforts of preserving the history of Union County,” he said.



The restored Choestoe School was dedicated in the honor of former teacher Ethelene Dyer Jones, above. Below, Jon Moon reminisces with Marie Knight. Photo/Lowell Nicholson



Union County Historical Society President Bud Akins, left, and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris at the historic and restored Choestoe School. Photo/Lowell Nicholson