

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## BOE seats contested; Fontaine challenges Collins; Allison has opposition

By Charles Duncan  
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Three Board of Education seats as well as the District 8 House seat occupied by State Rep. Stephen Allison and the 9th District Congressional seat of U.S. Rep. Doug Collins.

All the races will be settled during the May 20 Primary as no Democrats tossed a hat into the ring to qualify for that party's Primary.

In District 2, Tsali Bentley is challenging Incumbent BOE member Tony Hunter in the District 4 Primary.

In District 4, Incumbent BOE member John Strickland is being challenged by William Keith Potts in the GOP Primary.

In District 5, Patrick White, Kenneth Wilburn Etheridge, and Amber Nicole Deyton Pruitt all vie for the Republican nomination in the May 20, GOP Primary.

The winner of the GOP Primary will succeed Julie



Stephen Allison

Barton, a Suches Democrat, who did not seek reelection to the District 5 seat.

With Barton's departure from the BOE in December, it means only one Democrat will remain on the Union County Board of Education, Chairman Gary Davenport.

In the District 8 House race, Allison, a Blairsville Republican, faces a challenge from political newcomer John Crumpton, a dentist, who re-



U.S. Rep. Doug Collins

sides in Sautee-Nacoochee in White County.

In the 9th Congressional District, Collins, a Gainesville Republican, a freshman representative, faces opposition from Suches Republican Brig. Gen. Bernard A. "Bernie" Fontaine, a retired military man.

The nomination of the Republican winner of the District 8 House race, Democrat David Vogel of Hull.



Bernard Fontaine

"Why am I running?" Fontaine asked during an interview with the *North Georgia News* on Monday.

"Like so many of us in the 9th District, I'm disgusted by the lack of leadership," he said. "The federal government is an out-of-control freight train. The president is taking over and Congress is inert."

Fontaine, a volunteer firefighter with Union



Jeff Langley

County Fire & Rescue, is a retired Brigadier General and Airborne Ranger. He served in Vietnam as a Second Lieutenant. He lives and works in Suches with his wife. He has four grown children and 12 grandchildren.

"Things have to change in America, and it starts with Congress," he said. "Washington Bureaucrats will never learn to think outside the box and do what's best for the

people they represent."

Meanwhile, District 51 State Sen. Steve Gooch (R-Dahlonega) faces no opposition, Democrat, or Republican in 2014.

In the Enotah Judicial Circuit, Superior Court judges Stan Gunter and Raymond George will run unopposed in those nonpartisan races.

As for the District Attorney's race, no one opposed Incumbent Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley as he completes his first term of office.

In Towns County, Senate District 50 Incumbent, State Sen. John Wilkinson, (R-Toccoa) faces no opposition, Democrat or Republican in that senate race.

The state race drawing the most interest is state school superintendent.

Nine Republicans and six Democrats have qualified to succeed Dr. John Barge, who will face Gov. Nathan Deal in the GOP Primary on May 20.

## Fox death investigation continues

By Charles Duncan  
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Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said his department is awaiting toxicology reports in the death of 54-year-old Jeff Fox.

Sheriff Mason said the case is a death investigation and it's still under investigation.

"We're awaiting tests back from the medical examiner," Sheriff Mason said. "I can't comment on anything right now, it's all still under investigation."

Fox was found dead at his home on Brown Ridge Road off Fairview Church Road on March 1.

His sister-in-law, Betsy Fox responded to the *North Georgia News*' coverage of the story with a letter to the newspaper on Monday.

"My name is Betsy Fox, See Fox, 2A



Union County Sheriff Mack Mason talks with Detective Sgt. Andrew Hammond near the scene of Jeff Fox's death. Photo/Charles Duncan

## City, Townley Construction strike a deal

By Charles Duncan  
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Townley Construction has signed its construction contract with the City of Blairsville, Mayor Jim Conley announced last week.

In late September 2013, Townley Construction came in with a \$1.441 million low bid to do water system improvements that include the Haralson Drive water project.

Buckeye Construction out of Canton, NC bid \$1.940 million on the project. The second lowest bidder was Gainesville-based Strickland & Sons Pipeline at \$1.787 million.

The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority awarded a \$1,693,000 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan to the city of Blairsville to pay for the improvements, Mayor Conley said.



Mayor Jim Conley

The money will be used for the water system improvement project that includes upgrading undersized and aging waterlines along Pat Haralson Memorial Drive and Deep South Farm Road for improved flow and pressure and reduced water leaks.

The city also plans to replace its existing water meters with a wireless automatic smart reading system for its 1,310 customers, which will improve meter reading ef-

iciency, reduce labor costs, and provide a more accurate measurement of water usage throughout the system.

The project involves replacement of aging 2-inch PVC water lines with modern 6-inch lines that withstand the need for water pressure.

Simultaneously, it also entails upgrading water meters with uber modern Automated Meter Reading technology, Mayor Conley said.

The largest part of the project will be water system improvements from Pat Haralson Drive to Deep South Farm Road, which entails larger water lines going under Pat Haralson Drive and to the end of Deep South Farm Road, Mayor Conley said.

"The truth is, we don't know exactly how old those water lines really are out Haralson Drive and Deep South Farm Road," the Mayor said.

See City 2A

## Davenport honored with QOV

By Charles Duncan  
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Union County's most decorated veteran received yet another honor last week.

Misty Mountain Quilts of Valor Outreach presented a Quilt of Valor to U.S. Army Major (retired) Leon Davenport, for his honor, fidelity and service to his country.

Davenport is one of the most decorated soldiers in the history of the United States, having served in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Davenport graduated from Union County High School in 1945, but had already joined the U.S. Army and went on active duty before coming back to Blairsville to receive his high school diploma.

Davenport served in Japan during the end of World War II, where he stayed with



Leon Davenport shares his Quilt of Valor with his wife on March 5th.

See Davenport, 3A

## Full-time Narcotics Division pays off

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
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The decision to leave the Appalachian Drug Task Force continues to pay dividends for the Union County Sheriff's Office.

In February, the Narcotics Division made 30 drug-related arrests, and any property seizures from subsequent convictions, 90 percent goes to the Sheriff's Office and 10 percent goes to the Enotah Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office.

If the Drug Force had made the arrests, 90 percent would go to the Task Force, and 10 percent to the District Attorney's Office.

The Sheriff's Office was recently awarded a 2011 Shelby Mustang GT. King

See Seized, 3A



Drug-related seized vehicles like this one are paying dividends for the Union County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Mason will continue to smile with a full-time Narcotics Division.

## Everett was perfect: 21 up, 21 down

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Lane Everett was perfect on Friday, March 7th - literally.

The Union County senior right-hander gave the hometown crowd a Friday night treat with one of most impressive athletic feats ever accomplished at Union County High School.

The senior retired all 21 Oglethorpe County Patriot batters he faced, requiring just 79 pitches to achieve perfection.

Union's ace was dead- See Perfect, 3A



Panthers' senior right-hander Lane Everett tossed a perfect game.

## Historical Society Open House April 5

By Charles Duncan  
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The Union County Historical Society will host an Open House and fundraiser on April 5 on the lawn of the Historic Union County Courthouse.

The event is scheduled to include music, food, and an auction, with merchandise and gift items for sale.

Union County His-

torical Society President Bud Akins said the event also would include activities for children and tours of the Historic Courthouse.

"If you would like to bake something for our bake sale, please call Frances Partin at (706) 745-2078," Akins said. "If you have an item that you would like to donate for the merchandise and gift sale, please call Joanne at the Historical Society at (706) 745-5493."



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