

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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April 16, 2014

Easter Bunny had no problem finding Meeks Park

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

According to the Meeks Park staff, the Easter Bunny was spotted at the park around 8 a.m. on Saturday, hiding nearly 10,000 holiday eggs around the upper ball fields before any children arrived.

When the dust settled shortly after 10 a.m., every one of the eggs had disappeared just as quickly as Peter Cottontail scattered them about.

Dozens of children, along with parents and family were gathered at Meeks Park waiting for their cue to tear through the grass and quickly fill their baskets with as many of the small plastic eggs as possible.

With the children divided into age groups, three separate hunts were held to make certain that everyone, regardless of age got a fair share of the eggs.

Each of the hunts went off with a hitch and that



Saturday was a big day for egg hunters at Meeks Park as this group of youngsters scrambled to find their share of 10,000 eggs. Photo/Todd Forrest

had grown ups smiling right alongside their youngsters.

"This egg hunt is very well organized and it's a great thing that they do for the kids," said Alex Ortiz, whose daughter Adrianna sported a basket full of eggs.

"We've been coming here for five years and this is the only Easter Egg hunt that we go to since they do such a great job and have so many eggs, which means all of the kids get a lot," Ortiz said.

At the conclusion of the hunt, each one of the boys and girls who participated were given a chance to win a giant Easter Basket filled with all kinds of treats and goodies.

The day's participants looked extremely excited that they had made it this far.

There was one boy winner and one girl winner chosen from each of the three age groups.

The grand prize at the

See *Easter Eggs*, 2A

Passion Play draws a crowd at Blairsville's First Baptist Church

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

If you weren't moved by First Baptist Church of Blairsville's performance of the Georgia Mountain Passion Play, you might want to check your pulse.

Spring is in the air, flowers are blooming, and trees are blossoming.

However, spring never feels like it's completely upon us until we celebrate Easter Sunday.

Despite Easter Sunday being just a few days away, the Passion Play gives a sense as if you were right there in Jerusalem, some 2,000 years ago, watching the events leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ unfold right before your very eyes.

While hiding eggs, family gatherings, and cooking Easter hams are some of the holiday's annual traditions,



Jesus (Michael Medori), left, heals a blind man during his many miracles documented in the Holy Bible. Photo/Todd Forrest

the cross and empty tomb that followed is the real reason for Easter Sunday.

Here in Union County, it's hard to believe that the true meaning of Easter has been forgotten.

Especially after attending the Georgia Mountain Passion Play presented by First Baptist Church of Blairsville.

The play has become quite a tradition itself in Blairsville, and this year's performance didn't disappoint.

As usual, First Baptist went above and beyond and provided three spectacular performances over the weekend.

Everything was spot on, from the singing and acting, to the lighting, costumes, and beyond.

All of it came together to present a moving, yet enlightening story of Jesus' ministry, from the calling of his disciples, his miracles, return to Jerusalem, the days leading

up to the crucifixion, and concluding with Mary Magdalene finding the empty tomb and Jesus' ascension into Heaven.

The role of the *Son of God* was aptly performed by Michael Medori, while Dr. Michelle Thompson took on the task of portraying *Mary Magdalene*, a schizophrenic loner and outcast whose life was forever changed after experiencing the healing power of Christ, first hand.

Kristen Digney played *Johanna*, the adulterous woman who was sentenced to death by stoning until Jesus intervened.

Dr. Cindy Libert portrayed *Salome, the widow of Iain*; Faith Womay played *Miriam*, the woman with issue of blood.

The role of Mary, mother of Jesus, belonged to Pat Morales. Matt Harper and Walt

See *Play*, 2A

Fine Arts Center deal finalized by BOE

By Charles Duncan
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The Union County Board of Education and Toccoa-based Bowen & Watson, Inc. have finalized the construction contract to build the school system's \$8.49 million Fine Arts Center.

The Union County Board of Education is ready to move forward with the Fine Arts Center ESPLOST project as Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Stepe put the final touches on the deal with Bowen & Watson last week following the county's monthly Board of Education meeting.

The five-member board unanimously approved the project, including the construction management con-



Gary Stepe, left, and Kevin Watson, CEO of Bowen & Watson Inc., right, finalize the contract that will result in an \$8.49 million Fine Arts Center. Photo/Charles Duncan

See *Center*, 2A

Seized guns to go up for auction



Union County Sheriff Mack Mason and deputies show off the 54 seized weapons to be auctioned later this summer at Jeff Dobson Auctions in Jasper. Photo/Charles Duncan

By Charles Duncan
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Weapons confiscated during a drug-related arrest have been awarded to the Union County Sheriff's Office by Union County Superior Court.

The 54 low-end weapons, mostly older guns, will be auctioned off later this year,

Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

"These weapons (long guns and handguns) have been awarded to us through the courts," Sheriff Mason said. "They have to go through a licensed FFL dealer, so they will be taken to Jeff Dobson Auctions in Jasper, and auctioned off early July."

You don't have to be

present to bid on the weapons, the sheriff said.

"People can access the auction at jeffdobson.com; about two weeks prior to the auction these weapons will appear on the website," Sheriff Mason said. "They will have a brief description of the firearms, a picture of the gun, and people can register and bid on-

See *Guns*, 3A

Trash and Treasures has 2014 debut

By Todd Forrest
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Some were antiquing and some were picking, while others were just hunting a good bargain, but all were in agreement that Trash and Treasures Yard Sale at the Union County Farmers Market is a good deal in more ways than one.

For two days every month, the Farmers Market turns into a flea market



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UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

BASEBALL:
Tues. Apr 15 vs. Riverside 5 PM
Sat. Apr 19 @ Washington Wilkes NOON (DH)

Soccer:
Tues. Apr 15 @ Rabun 5 PM
Fri. Apr 18 @ Olgethorpe 5:30 PM
Mon. Apr 21 vs. Towns 5 PM