

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

May 15, 2013

## Rohrbaugh to bid largest class in UCHS history farewell

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Approximately 165 graduates will walk the aisles in Union County this weekend.

On Friday, May 17th, at 8 p.m., 161 Union County High School graduates will flip their tassels and become alumni of their alma mater. The ceremonies will take place at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

It is the largest graduating class in UCHS history.

The ceremonies are sure to be emotional. UCHS Principal Ed Rohrbaugh bids adieu to his last graduating class as principal.

Rohrbaugh will return to the classroom next year.

Rohrbaugh said he knows this is an exciting day for the 161 UCHS seniors.

"We hope your graduation from UCHS is the first of many major accomplishments you will have during your lifetime," Rohrbaugh said. "Your leadership has set a standard for the classes that follow, and your presence at Union County High School will be missed."

Air Force Academy-bound senior T Bentley is the Valedictorian for the Class of 2013. The Salutatorian is Gloria Bowen.

On Saturday, May 18th, at 11 a.m., four Woody Gap Falcons will bid adieu



T Bentley



Gloria Bowen



Amber Gooch



Haley Aponte

to the Suches campus and take that giant step into the real world. The ceremonies will be held in the Woody Gap High School Auditorium.

Amber Gooch is the WGHS Valedictorian for

the Class of 2013, and Haley Aponte, also the Class of 2013 STAR Student, is the Class of 2013 Salutatorian.

Like Rohrbaugh, WGHS Principal Jinjer Taylor will bid farewell

to her last graduating class in Suches. Taylor will return to the classroom in Union County next fall.

Taylor had nothing but high praise for her 2013 graduating class.

"You are an amaz-

ing group of students who seem to always pave your own path in your own way," Taylor said. "I hope each individual path you follow takes you to some

See Grads, Page 2A

## CCC Boys return to Vogel State Park

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

As Woodrow Grant's son drove him across Blood Mountain on Saturday, Grant began to see the faces of the countless young men he worked with to build Vogel State Park.

Grant, now 96, was just a young man when he first encountered the North Georgia Mountains.

He was one of more than 2.5 million young men, ages 18-25 that helped America climb out of The Great Depression in the 1930s.

On Saturday, Grant, from Raleigh, NC, was joined by Herbert Brimer, C.H. Brown, Lewis Wilson, and William Davis as Vogel State Park held its annual CCC Boys Reunion.

The first Civilian Conservation Corps reunion, held 17 years ago, attracted 75 former CCC Boys. Time has taken a toll on the group, with only five attending this year, down three from eight in 2012.

Beginning 80 years ago, the CCC boys built history, planting the grounds at Vogel, planting trees, working the trails, creating a 20-acre lake and building the structures that make the second oldest state park in Georgia so popular today.

Grant remembers helping clear cut the grounds that were to make up Vogel State Park, making way for cabins, planting trees, helping build the 20-acre lake called Trahlyta, boat houses, and other amenities that completed Georgia's second state park.



C.H. Brown, Lewis Wilson, Herbert Brimer, Woodrow Grant and William Davis, all members of the Civilian Conservation Corps that built state and national landmarks in the 1930s, reunite at Vogel State Park in Union County. It's the CCC's 80th anniversary. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Grant never met a stranger, and the countless young men who made up the Civilian Conservation Corps were his friends.

He painfully remembers a young boy named Sam Lester, who tried to swim across the lake after it became a reality.

"He got near about across it and came up," Grant said. "He's the only CCC Boy to die while helping build this park; it's the only bad thing that really happened here."

The days were long, the hours crept by and the work was not even close to easy, Grant said.

"When we first came here, we cleaned up all around what became the lake," Grant said. "After we got it all cleaned up, we started to build the dam. We dug down to the bedrock, and then we started putting in the clay. The clay came from right here (pointing at the park

grounds near the Group Shelter).

"The first job I had was carrying shingles," he said. "Some of the crew was working on top of Blood Mountain. I worked up there until that job was done (work that included building the road across Neel's Gap). We also cleaned up the trail.

"The first wiring (electrical), I wired the cottages that we built here," Grant said. "A boy named Nick Nicholson from Young Harris, he was here and showing me how to wire. I didn't really care if I learned or not at that time, but later in life, I became an electrician.

"I was an electrical contractor for the rest of my life, and it really started right here," he said.

The CCC provided unskilled manual labor jobs for about 2.5 million unmarried young men, ages 18-25, many of whom might otherwise have

See CCC, 2A

## BOE taps Hill as UCHS principal

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

John Hill has switched jobs again.

The recently named assistant principal of Union County Middle School has raised the bar one more time.

The Union County Board of Education has named the 1999 Union County High School alum as the next principal of its high school.

"During the interview process, John was very impressive," said Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe. "He wanted to be principal at Union County High School. It's been one of his dreams."

Last month Hill, then principal of the Mountain Education Charter High School, was named the new assistant principal at Union County Middle School.

This month, he was selected to be the principal at Union County High School.

After the interview process, Hill had only one request if he was named principal, and his wish was granted when C.T. Hussion was named as the new assistant principal.



John Hill and C.T. Hussion are the new braintrust at Union County High School. Photo/Todd Forrest

"C.T. Hussion is an extremely talented, forward thinking individual with a tremendous amount of experience in athletics and curriculum, said Hill, a 1999 graduate of Union County High School, "The two of us have a complimentary skill set. I am very thankful for the opportunity to hire him as my assistant principal. He is probably one of the best teachers in the state of Georgia and I feel like he's going to be a leader in academics and athletics. We're

going to take a very good high school and try and make it better."

Hill replaces Ed Rohrbaugh, who stepped down to reenter the classroom. Hussion replaces Angie Burns, who retired from the school system.

Both Hill and Hussion were informed of their new positions around 10:30 p.m. on Thursday following the school board meeting.

See Principal 3A

## Buy Local Extravaganza a hit

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Union County Community Center was the place to be last week as the annual Buy Local Extravaganza, featuring local businesses and restaurants, came together to let folks get to know them.

Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President Cindy Williams said she was thrilled by the turnout of local businesses and countless members of the community.

"The most encouraging part is that people turned out to buy local," Williams said. "This whole event is all about buying local, supporting chamber members, supporting local businesses. It's why we do what we do."

"Local business is the lifeblood of our chamber," Williams said. "It's the lifeblood of our community. We have 40 businesses represented here today, restaurants, gift shops, service industry, a wide variety of businesses.



Local businesses got a little more familiar with their customer base during last week's Buy Local Extravaganza created by the Chamber of Commerce. Photo/Charles Duncan

"This event is all about them," she said. "Buying local is so, so important. The benefits of buying local benefit the community, not just the businesses, but those who depend on businesses.

They depend on local businesses for a job, or sponsorship of some event, whatever it may be, that's why we support those local businesses."

See Buy Local, Page 3A

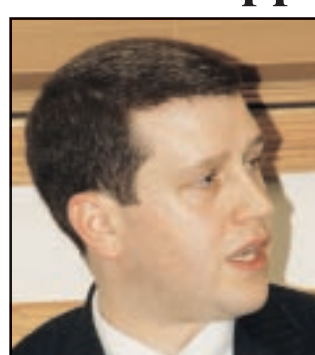
## Union County Schools apply for Charter

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Union County Board of Education voted last week to pursue a Charter System for all local schools.

Assistant School Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams said that the Charter System is different from the Charter Schools.

"We're exploring a Charter System now that will allow us the flexibility to develop a charter with the state on waivers that we think will benefit our needs," Dr. Williams said. "There are a lot



Dr. Jeremy Williams

of waivers that we already receive as a district. But this basically puts the accountability back in our hands, as opposed

to somebody else setting goals and targets for us.

"We get to set the goals under the Charter System," Williams said. "It's one of many options that the Department of Education is providing over the next few years."

Becoming a Charter System exempts schools from mandated testing such as Adequate Yearly Progress, the federal No Child Left Behind program.

The Charter System would require the school system to set goals based on the

See Charter, Page 3A

## UCSO investigates home invasion

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Union County sheriff's investigators are working to solve a May 3rd home invasion, robbery and aggravated assault on a 24-year-old Blairsville man, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

"We've got an active investigation ongoing," Sheriff Mason said. "We've got a young man that was beaten up, his home broken into, and he was robbed."

"All indications are that he knew his attackers," the sheriff said. "We're building a case and we'll release details about this as we can."

"Everything is still under investigation," the sheriff said.

Sheriff Mason said that investigators seek to identify two masked men who attacked the victim, Christopher Scott Hampton, and duct taped him to the stairwell in his living room.

The two masked men beat Hampton severely and subsequently robbed him, Detective Darren Osborn said.

"It happened on May 3rd around 12:30 a.m.," Osborn said. "The incident happened at a home at 339 McIntosh Road."

"Basically, the assailants busted in, caught the victim by

surprise and duct taped him to the stairwell," Osborn said. "He was severely beaten by two men wearing masks and gloves. They stole \$300 and other items."

"We are investigating this thoroughly," Osborn said. "We've interviewed and question several people. We're doing everything within our means to solve this crime."

"If anyone has any information regarding this crime, call us at the Union County Sheriff's Office, (706) 439-6066," Osborn said. "All calls will remain confidential."

See Attack, Page 3A

Vol. 104 No. 21  
3 Sections, 30 Pages  
Weather  
Wed: Clouds Hi 83 Lo 59  
Thu: Clouds Hi 77 Lo 57  
Fri: Sunny Hi 77 Lo 58

**Inside**  
Arrests 8A  
Church 9A  
Classified 2B  
Opinion 4A  
Legals 4B  
Obits 11A  
Sports 12A, 13A

**Tri-State Business Women 7th Annual Business Expo**  
Sat., May 18  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Union County Farmer's Market  
Free to the Public  
See page 4A

**Angels Among Us**  
  
See page 4A

**Reece Center Celebration**  
Southern Literacy Trail "Trailfest"  
Saturday, May 18  
1-4 p.m.  
1 Mile North of Vogel State Park on U.S. Hwy. 129  
Free Admission  
See page 8A

**Woody Gap Graduation**  
Saturday, May 18  
11 a.m.  
Auditorium

**UCHS Honor Night**  
Tuesday, May 14 • 7 p.m. @ Gym

**UCHS Graduation**  
Friday, May 17 • 8 p.m.  
@ Football Field

**UCHS Golf**  
State Golf Match  
Mon., May 20 @ Vidalia