

## Relay...continued from Page 1A

grams for all types of cancers, education and patient information programs, advocacy efforts, and patient services like Hope Lodge, Look Good Feel Better, Prostate Support Groups, Patient Navigators, Road To Recovery Transportation and Reach To Recovery Breast Cancer Outreach.

Those efforts equaled \$72,000.

"The excitement of returning to the Union County Farmers Market has created a good bit of interest," said Sue Upchurch, event co-chair and logistics chair. "Our committee is so appreciative of the cooperation we have gotten from Union County government, who has been working with us to get the Market location ready for the invasion of dedicated cancer fighters this weekend."

Teams will begin setting up their "campsites" at 8 a.m. on Friday and will be ready for the action to begin at 2 p.m. when the DJ begins music and announcements.

The Cancer Survivors picnic begins at 4:30 p.m. with picnic foods provided by G & G Bakery along with some soothing entertainment.

Head said that all this will take place at the far end of the market. Signage will direct cancer survivors to the area so they can also pick up their 2013 survivor shirts for the Opening Ceremony at 6 p.m. at the Celebration Stage.

Volunteer Vee Laffoon has coordinated the inspired Kids Korner Activities locat-

ed in specially marked sites at the Market. Activities include go fishing for the younger set, train rides for little ones, face painting and hair painting, and a petting zoo featuring a pink pony. Also, there will be Bingo and other children's games.

A crowd favorite, Jimmy The Clown, also returns this year.

The Take It To The Track Time has been refocused to include more school age children to be part of a special lap at 7 p.m. that evening.

Jessica Frechette coordinated this family friendly segment to pay tribute to our area's childhood cancer fighters.

Earlier this year the various teams helped with a book drive to mark the 100th Day until Relay For Life.

"More than 100 books were collected and have been sent to Childrens HealthCare of Atlanta facilities," said Allyson McGraw.

McGraw, event co-chair, said the Traditional Opening Ceremony begins at 6 p.m. and includes the invocation, national anthem, presentation of colors, special music and the Survivors Lap.

The Team Parade begins just after the Survivors Lap.

Laffoon has set up a nice array of entertainment which will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Celebration Stage with the Sweetheart Cloggers, followed at 7:30 p.m. with local entertainer and story teller Nelson Thomas.

The Traditional Candle Lighting or Luminaria Ceremony is slated for 9 p.m. During this quiet time, the pro-

gram includes the audience candle ceremony and special music ending with a quiet lap around the Market.

Activities at campsites and other areas will stop during this quiet time.

Back on the Celebration Stage at 10 p.m., the fun resumes with the Memorial Carlton Shaw Bare Legs contest with two divisions this year, men and young men under 12.

Great prizes will be earned for the Prettiest, Ugliest and Hairiest Legs in each division.

"The Team Midnite Madness activities will start of course at midnight," Laffoon said.

Teams will earn special passport points this year as part of the Team Spirit Trophy competition. Included in this time will be a Corn Hole Tournament, and the 2013 RFL Olympics. The Best combined Team Score for all four Olympic events will win a prize.

"You will want to stay around to enjoy the fun as teams compete in balloon toss, egg run, three-legged race and a scavenger hunt," Laffoon said.

McGraw said special prize incentives are available for team members who accepted the challenge issued by American Cancer Society Staff member Rena Pendley at our May 9th Team Rally.

Team members who get signatures on an old RFL shirt and bring in \$100 in donations will be entered in a drawing for five-piece set of luggage.

The drawing for this challenge takes place just prior to the 2 a.m. Closing Ceremony.

Food items of all sorts will be available. High Mountain Healthcare Team is reportedly bringing back their frozen drinks. There will be Papa's Pizza for the teams at midnight. In addition, there will be brownies from Ruby Warren Hogsed, as well as lots of delicious treats and food items for donations.

The Blairsville Kiwanis Club members will be on hand with hamburgers, hot dogs and drinks.

The Upchurch family will oversee the Barbecue Ribs and Sauce competition, which is back again this year.

The judged event begins around 4 p.m. so that the food will be ready for judging and tasting donations from the public at 6:30 p.m.

Award-winning teams will be adding other food items to their menu so that they can entice more donations for Relay For Life.

"As you can see there will be lots of family friendly activities for the Relay For Life team members and the general public to enjoy, all done in the spirit of fighting all types of cancers and lessening the burden of cancer on families and our communities," McGraw said. "This is a tobacco-free event in keeping with the American Cancer Society guidelines. There will be no political campaigning at the event. We will be sharing our common ground of hope and healing as we all join together to Relay For Life and Celebrate the Journey."

For more details, contact McGraw at (706) 835-8384 or check out the local Relay Facebook page at Union County Relay For Life.

## Tax...continued from Page 1A

the Commissioner's Office is responsible for enforcing the ordinance."

A letter from Commissioner Paris and the Tax Commissioner Lee Knight was sent to all known properties informing them of the new ordinance, the need for registration with the Commissioner's Office, and the legal requirement to collect and remit the tax.

The new ordinance ensures that all accommodations are in compliance with state and county laws.

It also levels the playing field for all accommodations

and should generate additional revenue to promote travel and tourism in Blairsville and Union County, which is one of our biggest industries, Commissioner Paris said.

Chamber President Cindy Williams said that proper compliance with the Hotel/Motel Tax law is in everyone's best interest.

"Outside of the fact that it is a legal matter, the money that is collected is in turn spent to further promote travel and tourism to Union County," she said. "This positively impacts our lodging partners as well as all businesses who benefit from increased tourist traffic."

"The money that we receive from the Hotel/Motel Tax is used for things like print and web advertising, visitor's guide distribution throughout the state, travel and trade show expenses, and expenses associated with hosting travel writers."

Paris said the new ordinance is necessary because that the Hotel/Motel Tax

wasn't raising enough to offset Chamber costs.

"The whole focus is to get the people who should be paying, to pay the Hotel/Motel Tax," Paris said. "These dollars generated by the tax are used to promote the county. Everyone benefits from that promotion, which is why the state set this up in the 1990s in the first place."

"There's two points to discuss, there is a history in Northeast Georgia, Fanning County in particular, where the tax has been charged, and not paid to the local governments," Paris said. "Secondly, it's not fair if one lodge owner charges, and another doesn't. The latter has an unfair benefit."

"You hate to call it a tax, but, that's what it is, a bed tax," he said. "But, it's a tax that gives us the chance to promote ourselves and draw in more revenues. As long as our rate is in line with surrounding counties, I think it makes it a fair tax."

## K-9...continued from Page 1A

flight into Atlanta, and then experienced a truck ride to Blairsville, Union County sheriff's Lt. Tim Derflinger said.

However, during her first day on the job, Cagney was a little reluctant to meet her new co-workers last week.

After almost three years in the deserts of New Mexico, it took her a few moments to adjust to the North Georgia Mountains and all the new faces waiting to greet her.

But she eventually warmed up to her surroundings and basked in all the attention she was receiving.

"Due to budgeting pressures New Mexico is disbanding their bloodhound program and Cagney was one of their working dogs," Lt. Derflinger said. "We contacted the Jimmy Ryce Foundation, which is a group that provides bloodhounds, free to law enforcement, to find abducted and lost children. In a couple of months they are going to send us a puppy that can tag along with (Cagney) and learn how to do the job from her."

On Sept. 11, 1995, a 9-year-old Florida boy named Jimmy Ryce was kidnapped at gunpoint from his school bus stop, abused, and shot as he was trying to escape.

To free more children from the clutches of sexual predators, the Jimmy Ryce Center for Victims of Predatory Abduction was established in June 1996 in honor of Jimmy and his courage in trying to get home even after hours of pain and humiliation.

According to Lt. Derflinger, Cagney's path to Union County began when she went months without being used. New Mexico Gov.



**Cagney**

Susana Martinez (R) signed her back over to the Ryce Foundation, who then turned her over to the UCSO.

Cagney will still undergo training in Georgia before she will be put to use. First she must go through a dog handling school, which is currently in the works, but the main priority is simply familiarizing her with her handler and the new locale.

"Right now she's got to get used to her handler, Union County sheriff's Deputy Jeff McConnell, the area, and the different smells," Lt. Derflinger said. "She's coming from a dry air environment so she must acclimate to this area. It won't take her long and then we'll be using her to track kids, the elderly, and suspects."

Lt. Derflinger also thanked Bunker Hill Kennels who donated funds to help to cover Cagney's transportation costs.

"The dog didn't cost the county anything, except \$200 for shipping costs," he said. "We're grateful that we're able to get an experienced dog, with some service life left. She has about three or four more years of service life left, and then she'll be retired, but as for now, she's come here to work."