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North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Rain can't stop 45th Sorghum Fest

By Todd Forrest North Georgia News Staff Writer

Those who attended the 45th Annual Sorghum Festival were dodging raindrops on Saturday morning as the Sorghum Festival Parade rolled through Downtown Blairsville to kickoff the opening day of the traditional event.

The parade, featuring Grand Marshal U.S. Army Major (retired) Leon Davenport, began under a light mist at 11 a.m. and as soon as everyone finished his or her lap through town, the mist turned into a steady rain, as if Mother Nature was awaiting the parade's conclusion.

Meanwhile, at Meeks Park the festival was getting underway, and just like the parade, the precipitation didn't deter the crowds that were anxious to take part in

Sorghum Parade Grand Marshal Leon Davenport. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

the North Georgia tradition. With more than 100 vendors setting up at this year's event, the most ever, there was plenty to do.

the entertainment and contests that the festival is famous for. At 9 a.m. Saturday, the

mill began crushing and cooking sorghum, while vendors And that's not including began opening their booth and demonstrations began.

In the early afternoon the Biskit Eatin' contest took place followed by the Pole Climbin', the Log Sawin', the Rock Throw, and Baccur Spittin' contests.

There were plenty of musical acts performing during the first and second weekend, including everything from Gospel, Country, and Bluegrass music to suit just about everyone's musical preferences.

Following Grand Marshal Davenport, the most decorated soldier in Union County history, was the Union County High School Pride of the Mountains Marching Band and a John Deere tractor pulling a trailer full of cane, and youngsters representing the Young Cane Lodge 597.

See Sorghum, 6A

No tax dollars obligated for **Tan Yard Apartments**

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By Shawn Jarrard North Georgia News Staff Writer

Mayor Jim Conley and the Blairsville City Council held their regular meeting at city hall on Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 6 p.m.

ing Authority of Cordele, attorney Blake Sharpton held a public hearing in regards to a bond issuance extension to remodel the Tan Yard Branch Apartments, which is owned by the Cordele Housing Authority.

The Cordele Housing Authority owns other properties around the state, and was actually issued the bonds in question last year. "They just didn't get this

October 15, 2014

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Tony Dyer

project done in the time limit that they issued the bonds for, so they had to come back and update their bond time limit to get the project done," said

See Council, 2A

Schmidt, Passmore honored with Carnegie Hero Medals

Awake America continues at City Hall

By Shawn Jarrard North Georgia News Staff Writer

The "Awake America" monthly community prayer meeting took place on the first Thursday in October in the meeting room of Blairsville City Hall.

"I'm glad to see each and every one of you here this morning," said Mayor Jim Conley, who opened the meeting with an invocation. "We're still few in numbers, but we're here for the right reasons - we'll have to make our prayers loud for those who are not here, and maybe they'll hear us, too.

This local movement for prayer began when Lydia Long, who is the intercessory prayer leader at World Harvest Church North out of Blairsville, felt prompted by the Lord to Google "Awake America" back in 2009.

"It said that people were meeting around the



Locals pray for America at Blairsville City Hall on Oct. 7. Awake America is at City Hall the first Thursday of each month. Photo/Shawn Jarrard United States at noon on 9/11 Awake America movement in honor of remembering the that month." fallen, and to pray for Ameri-Not long after, the Copca on courthouse steps around

per Basin Ministerial Assothe United States," said Long. ciation approached Long about "So, we started our own holding the meeting monthly

instead of yearly, and she sought guidance from her pastor at WHC North, Asa Dockery, and his wife, Debbie.

"They said yes, I think this is a move of God," said Long. "So, we started then, and for six years, we've been meeting in Downtown Blue Ridge at the gazebo in the city park, monthly, praying, with all different denominations coming together. Every month, whether it's cold or hot, it doesn't matter, we're still there."

Long brought the Awake America meetings to Blairsville in June of 2013, when "the Lord laid it upon my heart.'

The meetings at first took place outside city hall, but because of variable weather conditions, Long asked Mayor Conley if they could move the meetings inside.

See Awake, 3A

By Charles Duncan

editor@nganews.com Tony Schmidt and Brannon Passmore had never met each other before Wednesday, May 29, 2013.

North Georgia News

As time moves forward, they'll never forget one another, and now, their heroics are well documented.

Schmidt, 52, of Hayesville, NC, and Passmore, 27, of Blairsville, each have been honored for their life-saving heroics in the Nottely River, off Georgia 515, with 2014 Carnegie Medals.

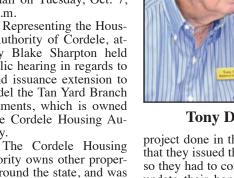
The medal is given throughout the United States and Canada to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Three of the 21 heroes lost their lives in the performance of their lifesaving acts.

Schmidt and Passmore join the 9,718 heroes that have earned awards since the Pittsburgh-based Fund's inception in 1904. Throughout the 110 years since industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie



Tony Schmidt





New Ivy Log Creek Bridge opens Thursday

By Charles Duncan North Georgia News editor@nganews.com

Surprise - the new bridge over Ivy Log Creek on the Jack C. Lance Memorial Highway is set to open on Thursday.

The 0.645-mile long bridge project was awarded to Talley Construction Company, Inc. of Rossville, for a contract price of \$3,578,685.77 with a completion date of Dec. 31.

Talley Construction blew that date out of the water.

"We are proud to finish this new bridge 2 and a half months early," said Georgia DOT District Engineer, Brent Cook. "Please use extra cau-



Weather permitting, traffic will shift to the new bridge over Ivy Log Creek on Thursday, Oct. 16, according to GDOT. The new bridge cost \$3.6 million. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

tion driving through the area as crews work to prepare for the traffic shift. Paving is underway. The change will be-gin at 9 a.m. and finish by 4 p.m. Thursday.

"Once traffic is using the new bridge, the original 1940 bridge will be strategically demolished," Cook said. 'The new bridge will have 11 feet wide lanes until demolition is complete to give the contractor more room to work in."

The existing bridge was built in 1940. The new bridge includes shoulders on both sides of the bridge and

See Bridge, 3A

established the Fund, \$36.4 million has been given in onetime grants, scholarship aid, death benefits, and continuing assistance.

Schmidt and Passmore rescued a motorist trapped inside his vehicle underneath the murky waters of the Not-

tely River off Georgia 515. "Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Passmore are the reason that young man was rescued," said Union County Fire and Rescue Lt. Jeff Fortenberry. "We didn't do anything compared to what they did.'

According to Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, Schmidt and Passmore saved the life of then 29-year-old Nicholas Adam Yebba of Morganton after his black, 2002 PT Cruiser traveled

Brannon Passmore

across four lanes of Georgia 515, including the median, left the highway's north shoulder, went airborne and plunged into Nottely River.

Schmidt and Passmore, strangers to each other before Yebba's life became in peril in Nottely River, are now forever linked as lifesavers. Yebba, who was life-flighted to Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tenn., survived the harrowing ordeal.

Both Schmidt and Passmore said they don't feel like heroes. Both said that if put in the same situation as Yebba, they just hope that there is

See Heroes, 2A

Good Neighbors Classic Car Show on Saturday at UCB North Georgia Motorcycle Show on Oct. 25 at North Georgia Technical College's Blairsville Campus

By Charles Duncan North Georgia News editor@nganews.com

For the 30th year, the Good Neighbors Auto Club is doing what it does best to do the good deeds it annually does.

The 30th Annual Classic Car and Truck Show is scheduled for Saturday, at United Community Bank off Georgia 515. Rain date: Oct. 19.

The show features street rods, special interest vehicles, antiques, new car class, rat rods, motorcycles, corvettes, and pickups, old and new. All vehicles must be driven to and from the show.

Registration is from 8 a.m. to noon. The show is expected to last until 3 p.m. "It's a day of fun for car enthusiasts," said member Marcus Tuschel.

The history behind the Good Neighbors Auto Club is unique

early 1980s with a mission, to maintain and preserve automotive history.

The group, made up of enthusiasts from Georgia and Western North Carolina, consisted of six charter members, three of which are still members today, Rufus Everett, Don Hughes and Ginger Abernathy.

was at Union County High School in 1984, followed by two years in front of the old

Milton Inn.

'Then we were fortunate enough that United Community Bank let us use their facilities and we've been there ever since," said Frankie Hughes. "We've been there for 27 years."

The focus of the club is to use the annual car show as a fundraiser to collect money to give back to the communities it serves in the form of scholarships. The club gives out six scholarships to students in Northeast Georgia and Western North Carolina.

The club also gives out special gifts throughout the year to worthy causes that include, the food banks, the animal shelter, and the Civil Air Patrol, Tuschel said.



Good Neighbors Auto Club Classic Car Show begins at 9 a.m. on Saturday at United Community Bank. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

For more details, call Tuschel at (706) 835-9010, or Joe McGinnis at (706) 781-2805, or (864) 980-1616.

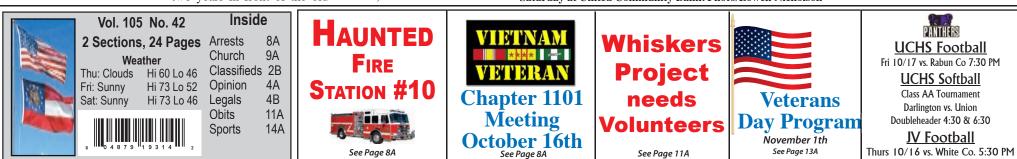
Meanwhile, over at North Georgia Technical College's Blairsville Campus, off Georgia 515, the 13th Annual North Georgia Motorcycle Show is back again on Oct. 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Organizer Dennis Bradley has been at the helm of this event since its inception.

The show features nine different classes that people can enter bikes in from modern up to vintage, Bradley said.

The event features sponsors, door prizes, and

See Shows, 3A



The club formed in the

The club's first car show