

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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October 23, 2013

44th Annual Blairsville Sorghum Festival sees record attendance

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The 44th Annual Blairsville Sorghum Festival concluded the weekend with one of the largest two-weekend turnouts in the history of the iconic event.

After the first weekend saw record crowds, the second weekend had a tough act to follow, but had little trouble competing with the first weekend.

"The festival reminds you that the best things in life don't come at a high price, it represents a love of the land and a love of your neighbor," Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President Cindy Blair said. "There is no place like Blairsville and nothing like the Sorghum Festival."

On Saturday, the music began at 10 a.m. with Blairsville's own Tommy Townsend



The Log-Sawing competition was a feature event this weekend.

and Waymore's Outlaws headlining the day's entertainment. Also performing were Hiawassee's Steven Phillips and Midnight Express, Remnant, Blairsville's John Nix and the Country Cousins, Sweetheart, and the Tiny Tart Cloggers.

At noon the "Biskit"

Eatin' contest, another festival favorite took place as competitors put away "biskits" by the dozens as spectators cheered their favorites, while respecting all who were in such a strenuous competition.

Back again this week

were Vernon and Karen Keef of Hammondville, Ala.

The couple made a special trip up last weekend before going back to Alabama.

However, the lure of the sweet sorghum syrup brought them back.

"We only planned on coming for one weekend, but we decided, what the heck, we had a lot of fun last weekend, why not go back," Karen Keef said. "We usually just come once a year but it's a two-weekend festival. So why miss out on a second weekend if you know you're going to have a good time?"

When the festival came to a close at 5 p.m. that didn't mean that the fun had ended.

Just like the previous week, the Square Dance opened at 8 p.m. at the Old Middle School gym for those anxious to cut a rug – Union County style.

See *Sorghum*, 6A

Redford to direct, star in Appalachian Trail film

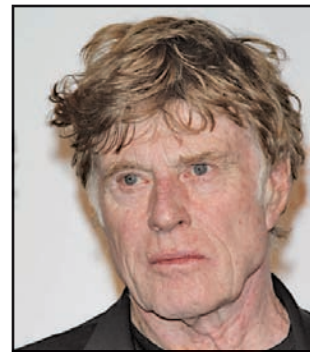
By Charles Duncan
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Bill Bryson's journey that started in the North Georgia Mountains and ended on Mount Katahdin, in Maine, is headed to the Silver Screen.

Part of that journey took place right here in Union County, at Walasi-Yi Inn, the Appalachian Trail's Wal-Mart, and the place where Bryson and his travel companion Stephen Katz got a taste of the best Coca Cola and best egg salad sandwiches that they ever experienced.

The adventure is based on Bryson's 1998 best-selling book *A Walk In The Woods*, a 244-page travel experience through the Appalachian Trail by two overweight, middle-aged and out of shape friends who hope to experience 2,100 miles of the AT.

Robert Redford will di-



Robert Redford

rect and star in the film, expected to begin filming in summer, 2014. Nick Nolte will co-star in the movie that is sure-to-be a film classic.

Throughout their travels that began on Springer Mountain, Bryson, Springering to reconnect with America after years of living in Great Britain, and his loyal friend Katz, find

See *Walk*, 2A

Fiddle Queen steals show at Music Hall

By Mason Mitcham
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Hiawassee - Emma DeJarnette made Snellville proud during her weekend visit to the Fall Festival at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

When the dust settled close to midnight on Saturday, 16-year-old DeJarnette was on Cloud Nine celebrating her new claim to fame, Georgia State Fiddle King, uh, Georgia State Fiddle Queen.

DeJarnette has been a regular at Fiddlers' conventions since she was 7 years old. She won the Beginning Fiddlers' competition in 2011 at Anderson Music Hall. She has also traveled the Southeast competing in fiddle competitions.

But not in her wild-



Emma DeJarnette performs during the Georgia State Fiddlers' Convention. She was named Fiddle Queen on Saturday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

est dreams did she expect to earn the title of "Fiddle King," at least not this year.

As Saturday turned to Sunday, DeJarnette had a night to remember at Anderson Music Hall. By the end of the night,

even Charlie Daniels would have been proud.

Alex Thomlinson of Suches flexed fourth in Junior Fiddle.

The 2013 Fall Festival See *Fiddle* 3A

Time for Hometown Halloween, Haunted Fire House

By Charles Duncan
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Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley warns that traffic will be on Saturday.

That's because Downtown Blairsville is celebrating its annual Hometown Halloween from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

"Look for everything from free candy, creative Halloween decorations, lots of games and activities, food and drinks," Mayor Conley said.

Back by popular demand is the Hometown Halloween Costume Contest.

Beginning at 5:10 p.m., those interested in competing in the "most original," "spookiest," "most crafty," and "most hilarious," should gather on the Courthouse lawn



Winning Artwork by Makayla Ann Beavers

for the judging and prizes.

Also this weekend, Fire Station 10 is hosting its Haunted Fire House on Friday and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., Fire Chief Charles Worden said.

"Please join us for this exciting event," Chief Worden said. "It's all about making sure our children have a safe and Happy Halloween."

See *Halloween*, 2A

Liberty lands at Blairsville Municipal Airport

By Azure Welch
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Wings of Freedom Tour arrived shortly before noon at Blairsville Municipal Airport's North Ramp on Monday.

The three warbirds came here from Greenville, SC.

The event was organized by Blairsville's Sherry Beth Dyer, a former volunteer for the Collings Foundation, which sponsors the Wings of Freedom tours.

Vietta Mae Dyer, of Blairsville, also helped Sherry Beth Dyer organize the event. "We contacted the Foundation to have Blairsville as one of the stops to allow local residents to come and tour the birds," Vietta Mae Dyer said. "Otherwise, our local folks wouldn't be able to witness such a slice of history."

More than 100 people greeted the warbirds as they



The Wings of Freedom Tour is underway at Blairsville Municipal Airport. arrived at Blairsville Municipal Airport on Monday.

The tour travels the country paying a lasting tribute to the flight crews who flew this glamorous planes.

The tour also is a tribute to the ground crews who main-

tained them, and the workers who built them.

The B-17 and B-24 bombers were the backbone of the American air effort during the war from 1942 to 1945.

See *Wings*, 2A

Theriot crowned Queen

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The smile on senior Amy Theriot's face was wider than the Union County Panthers' 42-point margin of victory on Friday night as 2012 Homecoming Queen Cassidy Davis placed the Homecoming Queen crown upon her head.

The reaction from the crowd was one of the loudest of the evening, and the Panther faithful had a lot to cheer about.

Second Runner-Up Madison Rich and First Runner-Up Lauren Zollinger were all Homecoming Court as the entire Homecoming Court was in agreement that the students at Union County High School couldn't have selected a more fitting queen than Theriot.

"I'm so proud to be given this honor," an elated Theriot said as she posed for pictures after being named Queen. "I would like to thank everyone at the high school for their support."

What's so unique about being named Homecoming



Amy Theriot, left, is crowned 2013 Homecoming Queen Friday night at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium. Photo/Todd Forrest

Queen, compared to other competitions at the school that requires the students to vote, is that the Queen is voted on by all students at Union County High School.

"The girls of Homecom-

ing are all so excited to represent their class," Homecoming Coordinator Rhonda Colwell said. "I heard (senior) Angel Gochenor say that, 'it's not

See *Homecoming*, 3A

Eastern Band of Cherokees break ground on new Casino in Murphy

By Charles Duncan
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Murphy, NC - Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris says without a doubt, the new casino in Murphy, NC will bring jobs to the region.

"About 900 jobs to be exact, and that's not counting the jobs that will come with the construction of the casino," Paris said.

The \$110 million project to build a new casino in Cherokee County, NC is officially under way.

A ground breaking ceremony was held last week at the future site of the casino just outside the Murphy City Limits.

The casino will be owned by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and will be managed by Caesars Entertainment Corp.

The Eastern Band of Cherokee already owns Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort in Cherokee, NC, about an hour's drive from the new casino location.

The new Cherokee County, NC casino will be located about 30 minutes from Union County, and just a slightly longer drive from Hiawassee.

It also will target patrons from Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tenn., and the Metro Atlanta area.



The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians celebrate another casino, this time in Murphy, NC. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"Our winning partnership with Caesars Entertainment gives us a proven track record in the gaming industry," said Principal Chief Mitchell Hicks. "This is an ambitious project, but we are confident that it will be a success - for our customers, our tribe and for the surrounding communities."

Casino games featured at the new facility include traditional favorites as well as the most popular slot games available on the market when the new casino opens.

"The Cherokee County Casino will certainly bear the high standards of the Caesar's

love and brand," said Gary Loveman, chairman and chief executive officer and president of Caesars Entertainment Corp. "We are an industry leader, and we implement the full expectations of that status into every facility that we manage. Hopefully, that will translate into continued success for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the residents and other businesses of Cherokee County and the surrounding communities."

The casino will create an estimated 900 jobs and inject up to \$39 million in wages into the surrounding communities.

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North Georgia Motorcycle Show
Saturday, Oct. 26th
North Georgia Technical College
Blairsville, GA

HOMETOWN HALLOWEEN ON THE SQUARE
OCTOBER 26TH

Roads around the Square will be closed

MISTY MOUNTAIN QUILT GUILD'S QUILT FEST 2013
OCT 25TH AND 26TH
UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

VARSITY FOOTBALL:
FRIDAY, Oct 25th 7:30 PM
vs. Rabun County

CROSS COUNTRY:
WED. Oct 23rd 7:00 PM
@ St. Francis