

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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Happy Thanksgiving!

Annual Christmas Parade Dec. 7

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Thanksgiving gives way to Christmas, almost as soon as the last turkey is carved.

On Friday, Dec. 6, the Union County Historical Society kicks off its Christmas Season with a Christmas Concert featuring the North Georgia Chamber Symphony at 7 p.m. The concert will be held in the Historic Courtroom upstairs in the Historic Union County Courthouse. Admission is free, but donations are welcomed.

On Saturday, Dec. 7, Downtown becomes part of the North Pole Experience.

It features an Open House at the Historic Union County Courthouse, a Live Nativity Scene at the Mountain Life Museum, an opportunity for pictures with Santa Claus at the Historic Courthouse, and of



You can take it to the bank, Santa Claus is coming to town on Dec. 7th. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

course the Annual Christmas Parade in Downtown Blairsville.

The parade starts at 2 p.m. and it's the quote, unquote, kick-off of the Christmas season here in Blairsville. This

will be a prime time to bring the kids out because Santa Claus will be here.

The annual Christmas Parade winds its way through the streets of Downtown Blairsville. It features holiday floats,

antique cars, horses, local civic groups, churches, the Union County High School Marching Band, and of course, Santa, and Mrs. Claus.

"It's a big time in Blairsville. See *Parade*, 2A

Floyd, Riley talk Firewise to GMRC in Young Harris

By Mason Mitcham
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Young Harris - The Georgia Mountain Regional Council's monthly meeting took place with Blue Ridge Mountain EMC hosting at its new facility last week.

Fifty-one government entities from the Georgia Mountain region came together for the business meeting, catered by Enrico's Restaurant.

The Council included representatives from Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White Counties, all gathered to learn about one very important initiative - Fire Adapted.

The Fire Adapted program is a large umbrella program which seeks to keep



Mitch Floyd and Frank Riley counties safe from wildfire and includes other, smaller initiatives.

Examples of the programs that make up the Fire Adapted umbrella are fuel mitigation measures, prevention education, forest management

See *Firewise*, 2A

Holiday opportunities abound in Union County in December

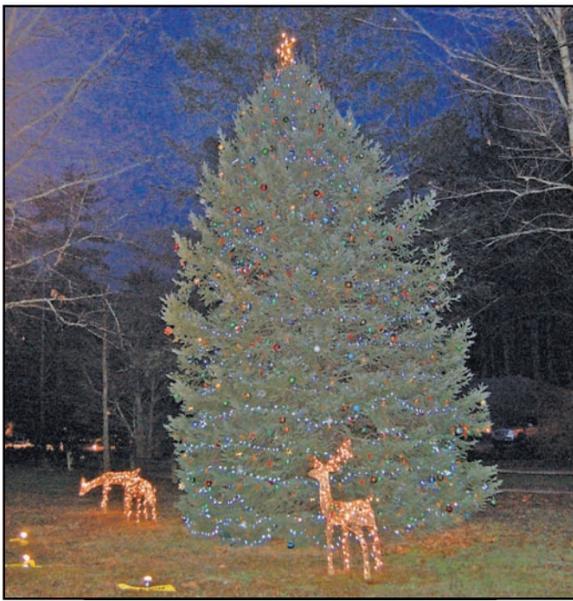
By Charles Duncan
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It's time to find out if you're in shopping shape as the Christmas Season is upon us.

For those not traveling to partake in the Black Friday events throughout the region, the doors will be open at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 30 and Dec. 1.

The occasion is the last chance of the 2013 season to visit the Reece Farm and Heritage Center.

In celebration of the season of Advent and Christmas, the Reece Center's annual Open House will be observed on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1. The hours will be the usual open hours, from 10



The Christmas Tree Lighting at Vogel State Park is just one of the many Holiday events in December. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

See *Events*, 2A

Senior Center Christmas Bazaar a hit

By Azure Welch
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Kathy Hill was all smiles on Saturday as the Union County Senior Center hosted its Fourth Annual Christmas Bazaar.

The annual event is a fundraiser for programs at the Senior Center, particularly, the Meals on Wheels program.

Hill, director of the Senior Center, was very pleased with the turnout at this year's Bazaar. The strong showing was a relief to Hill, who is a bit anxious over the funding cuts for many of the programs at the Senior Center. She is worried about the effects these funding cuts will have on the Senior Citizens of Union County.

According to Hill, there is currently a state imposed freeze on the Meals on Wheels program, which means that "no new people" can be signed up for the program.

The freeze is a direct result of a "\$20,000 budget cut" to the county's funding to operate the Meals on Wheels program.

This is the reason that this Annual Christmas Bazaar is so important because the funds are desperately needed, so that the Senior Center can provide as many seniors as possible with a place where they can enjoy a "hot lunch served daily," seminars on wellness topics, help with gro-



Shoppers and vendors at the Fourth Annual Christmas Bazaar were pleased with Saturday's shopping sprees. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

cery shopping and transportation to and from appointments, or to run errands.

The center also has a nutritionist who visits the center to provide assistance to those who may be on strict diet regimens, for diabetes, kidney, or for whatevers, kidney. Besides acting as a place for medical and legal advice, the center also provides a place for

companionship and to learn or enjoy new activities.

Unfortunately, with the budget cuts that are happening, Hill is more worried than ever for what it means for the Senior Center in the long run. She also pointed out that the activities, such as the delivery of the meals, the transporta-

See *Bazaar*, 3A

Shuler, Ensley honored as 2013 Volunteers of the Year

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
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Union County Historical Society honored two of its hardest workers last week in a luncheon at the Union County Community Center.

The Society honored Betty Jane Shuler and Sam Ensley with its 2013 Volunteer of the Year Awards.

Society President Bud Akins did the presentation honors much to the surprise of Shuler and Ensley.

According to Akins, a volunteer is someone who gives of his or her time, effort and talents to a need or a cause without profiting monetarily.

"Being a volunteer transforms people's percep-



Betty Jane Shuler

tions of themselves, their fellow man and their knowledge of the world around them," Akins said. "It also gives the satisfaction of giving back to the community.

"One of our 2013 volun-



Sam Ensley

teer awards goes to a Society member who has for so many years been a stabilizing force of the Union County Historical Society," Akins said. "She has often served as an officer.

See *Awards*, 3A

Mistletoe kicks off shopping season

By Azure Welch
and Mason Mitcham
North Georgia News
Staff Writers

The 13th Annual Mistletoe Market & Sugarplum Tearoom was a huge success kicking off the Christmas Shopping Season, and for the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild, a huge success for support of Hiawassee's ArtWorks Artisan Center's, Children's Arts and Crafts Summer Program.

Joy Garcia, president of the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild was extremely pleased with the success of the fundraiser and emphasized that this year is the "best turnout we have ever had."

This is a huge boost for the more than 85 exceptional artists and craftsman from the local and surrounding areas who rely on this annual event to support their handiwork.

Although, this is a fundraising event, the proceeds for ArtWork's Artisan Center stem from the actual sales of vending space.

Garcia said that the vendors had the option of purchasing a "table" display area for \$45 or various sizes of display space ranging up to \$125, but the "funds generated independently from the vendor sales is theirs to keep," although Garcia graciously expressed her gratitude for the many vendors who donate additional monies at the conclusion of the event.



There was something for everyone at the weekend Mistletoe Market at North Georgia Technical College. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

In addition to the proceeds received from the Mistletoe Market & Sugarplum Tearoom, the Mountain Regional Arts and Crafts Guild sponsor's two other annual fundraising events: the Mountain Fling which happens the last week of Autumn, and their Celebrate June fundraiser which happens the third week in September.

Between the three arts

and crafts events, the guild is able to provide support for the future artists and crafters in the area through their summer program for kids.

The proceeds from the event benefit the Children's Arts and Crafts Summer Program which starts when the school year ends and continues throughout the summer until the new school year begins.

See *Market*, 6A

Vol. 104 No. 48
3 Sections, 30 Pages
Weather
Thu: Sunny Hi 44 Lo 23
Fri: Cloudy Hi 50 Lo 24
Sat: Sunny Hi 51 Lo 27

Arrests 8A
Church 12A
Classified 4B
Opinion 4A
Legals 6B
Obits 13A
Sports 15A

Farmer's Market Christmas Baking Contest

See Page 8A

Marine Corps League Toy Drive

See Page 9A

S.A.F.E. Angel Trees are Back!

Your help is needed!

Page 17A

Sponsor a Foster Child for Christmas

BASKETBALL:
Monday, Dec. 2nd
@ Andrews
6 & 7:30 PM