



• NOV. 11TH •

# VETERANS DAY

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# North Georgia News

2 Sections 24 Pages

Hometown Newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Wednesday, November 6, 2024

## Schools, local groups to recognize Veterans Day

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

It's important to recognize the sacrifices veterans have made to keep America free, and in keeping with the patriotic spirit of the area, Union County is offering multiple events for members of the public to show their appreciation for local military heroes in honor of Veterans Day 2024.

Kicking things off, the Salute to Veterans Car Show cruised into town Nov. 2. Organized by the Blairsville Cruisers Car Club, the annual event at the Union County Farmers Market raises money for local veterans, serving as

both a family-friendly car show and a bringer of awareness.

Veteran-centric events continue this week with the Appalachian Veterans Memorial Park flag raising on Nov. 7 at 11 a.m. behind the upper ballfields in Meeks Park.

Eight flag poles were recently erected at the site to represent each branch of the U.S. military, along with the Georgia flag and, of course, the American flag. The public is invited and encouraged to attend the flag-raising ceremony.

The Union County School District will hold its annual student-led Veterans Day Ceremony at the Fine Arts Center on Nov. 11 at 10

a.m., and likewise, the public is encouraged to attend.

Prior to the ceremony, veterans and their spouses are invited to a free full breakfast from 8:15-9:40 a.m. at the Union County High School Cafeteria.

Ceremony parking will be available adjacent to the Fine Arts Center, and there will also be a bus for transportation to and from the cafeteria for those who choose to park at the Fine Arts Center and want to eat breakfast.

"The students and staff of Union County School District work hard every year to provide a quality performance," the district said. "This year's See *Veterans Day*, Page 10A



The Union County Schools Veterans Day Ceremony is an incredibly popular community event, pictured here in 2023. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

## Halloween 'Boo Bash' a sweet affair at Meeks

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The spooky season culminated in one chilling night when much of the community gathered at Meeks Park to celebrate Halloween at the annual Blairsville Boo Bash on Thursday, Oct. 31.

All sorts of creatures came out to play, haunting the park and trick-or-treating at booths set up by local organizations and businesses. Estimates put the total number of trick-or-treaters at about 4,000 – up from last year, according to Chamber of Commerce President Steve Rowe.

People of all ages enjoyed a walk around the event field,



Young Keira Glazier assembled multiple costume ideas to attend the Blairsville Boo Bash. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

stopping at booths for candy. Jim's Smokin' Que and the Southern Sips lemonade truck were also present that evening

to offer food and drink. "We had probably about a half-dozen vendors that ran See *Boo Bash*, Page 6A

## HOPE champion Miller honored in dedication



Shirley Miller and others applauding the unveiling of the new Georgia Lottery Corporation Historical Marker, which is dedicated in the memory of Young Harris' own Zell Miller for creating the HOPE Scholarship. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

YOUNG HARRIS – History was made Nov. 1 when the Georgia Historical Society and Georgia Lottery Corporation unveiled a new local marker recognizing the impact the lottery has had in

educating Georgia students – and, by proxy, honoring the man who helped make the program possible: Zell Miller.

The historical marker on Main Street at Young Harris College is dedicated to the legacy of the late Gov. Miller, whose vision and steadfast support of Georgia students

resulted in the creation of the HOPE Scholarship Program, which stands for Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally.

Miller's is a familiar name in the state, and that's especially true in his hometown of Young Harris. The native See *Zell Miller Honored*, Page 6A

## FFA Trunk or Treat event delights schoolchildren



Arlie Mounts and Gunner Crowley were the "Cutest Chicks in the Coop" at the 2024 Union County FFA Trunk or Treat. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Cowboys, dinosaurs, fairies and even hit video game creatures like Pokémon and "Among Us" aliens invaded Union County Middle School the evening of Oct. 26 for the Future Farmers of America's Trunk or Treat.

Organizer and High

School FFA Adviser Katie Rittenhouse said the event started six years ago with just 10 trunks and has grown into one of the biggest local Halloween celebrations, outgrowing two locations since its inception: the Agriscience Center and the High School.

This year saw the heaviest attendance "by far" when it came to trick-or-treaters

and community support, with some 2,000 guests and 37 trunks. Those trunks are usually manned by teachers, other in-school organizations, clubs and classes, or older students.

"It has grown so much that this has become a full Union County School District effort," Rittenhouse said. Indeed, chorus kids and sports players See *FFA Trunk or Treat*, Page 12A

## Authorities search for hiker missing since Friday

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

SUCHES – As of press time Monday, area rescue workers were continuing a major search operation for a Forsyth County man who went missing Friday while hiking Gooch Gap on the Appalachian Trail.

Timothy McCain, 71, is a white male of 5 feet, 8 inches in height and weighs approximately 200 pounds. He was last seen wearing khaki pants, a long-sleeve shirt, Salomon hiking boots and a fanny pack.

Anyone who sees McCain is asked to call the Union County Fire Department at 706-439-6091 or 911.

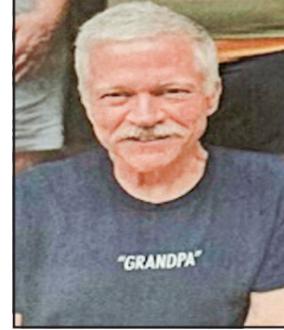
McCain was last seen at his home in Forsyth County

Friday morning when he told his wife he was leaving to hike the trail in Union County, Fire Chief David Dyer said.

He was only supposed to be gone a few hours, and when his wife got home around 4 p.m. Friday and saw that he had not returned, she tried and failed to reach him over the phone, Dyer said.

She contacted local authorities, who responded to the area where he was supposed to be and found his vehicle parked at Gooch Gap the evening of Friday, Nov. 1, Dyer said.

McCain is an avid hiker who knows that portion of the trail well. In fact, he had been out hiking the dense and challenging terrain of Gooch Gap every day but Thursday of last week.



Timothy McCain Missing Hiker

"He's familiar with the area, knows what to do," Dyer said. "He hikes this area a lot, so much so that people on the trail know who he is. People like U.S. Forestry know that he hikes this area, so he's a very See *Search Operation*, Page 2A

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# Search Operation...from Page 1A

popular guy who has been on this trail many times and talked to a lot of people on it.

"So, we're thinking he may have gotten hurt, and we're trying to find him."

In addition to the possibility that McCain got hurt on the trail, he also could have experienced a medical

emergency that has prevented his return. And while they have no reason to suspect foul play currently, Dyer said it is being considered as a potential explanation for his disappearance.

McCain was only going for a short hike, so he has been without food and water since Friday. Dyer said exposure to the elements is a concern as well; temperatures have been mild overnight, dipping into the 50s Sunday, but it did rain Friday, introducing the possibility of hypothermia.

Dyer, who also serves as director of the local Emergency Management Agency, opened the Emergency Operations Center Friday to coordinate the response, and searchers have kept busy combing the area during daylight hours.

On Friday evening, emergency personnel covered the trail McCain was supposed to have been on plus several adjacent trails.

The search resumed early Saturday morning, expanding to an initial 300 meters around McCain's car. Law enforcement entered his vehicle to see what they could learn; a K-9 team began assisting in the operation; and horseback riders responded to cover more ground quickly.

A Georgia Department of Natural Resources helicopter looked from the air as others undertook "road containment," which means various searchers patrolled nearby roadways in

vehicles in case he emerged from the woods, and the few private properties near there were explored.

The effort has expanded to account for more than 20 miles of the Appalachian Trail — "from one end of it to the other" — and rescuers transitioned Sunday to "grid searches," where people spread out so many feet apart from each other to better survey the landscape.

Union County EMA has issued a social media alert, and authorities have also sent out a federal alert to area cellphones via the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System.

Additionally, law enforcement has entered McCain into the Georgia Crime Information Center database, which will be helpful if he turns up somewhere else, and searchers have checked area hospitals to see if he has been admitted anywhere for medical reasons.

By press time, multiple agencies had responded to assist Union County Fire, including personnel from the Union County Sheriff's Office, Lumpkin County, White County, Fannin County, DNR, the Forest Service, GBI and others.

"We've pulled out all the stops that we can right now," Dyer said. "Once we get to where we have searched every area we can think of and we're out of resources, it may get to the point where we suspend the land search and turn it

over to a law enforcement investigation."

This is the county's third major search operation on the Appalachian Trail this year, which Dyer said was "extremely unusual." All three have been in the Suches area, and Dyer is hoping for the same outcome as the other two operations in which the lost individuals were found safe.

"We usually don't do these but once every two to three, maybe five years," Dyer said. "People just don't understand; they think that you can come up here and walk this trail in a few hours and be fine, but it's dangerous.

"I would not recommend anybody ever hike on these trails alone, because you never know what can happen to you. If you were to get lost or injured, it helps having more people there to help you and at least then let us know what's going on so we can come help you."

Dyer said he is proud of his department and all searchers who have been putting in the hours and miles to try to locate McCain on the trail.

"It takes a lot of effort, and it takes a lot of heart for these people to spend their whole entire weekend out here going through the woods," Dyer said. "It makes for very hard days, and we've got a lot of great volunteers who do that, and we've got great career staff who are really trained.

"And the counties around us have really pulled together and put in resources to help us locate this person."

## American Pickers to film in Georgia in December 2024



Cast of American Pickers

The American Pickers are excited to return to Georgia! They plan to film episodes of The History Channel hit television series throughout your area in December 2024.

American Pickers is a documentary series that explores the fascinating world of antique "picking" on The History Channel. The hit show follows skilled pickers in the business, as they hunt for America's most valuable antiques. They are always excited to find historically significant or rare items, in addition to unforgettable Characters and their collections.

As they hit the back roads from coast to coast, the Pickers are on a mission to recycle and rescue forgotten relics. Along the way, they want to meet characters with amazing stories and fun items. They hope to give historically significant objects a new lease on life while learning a thing or two about America's past along the way. The Pickers have seen a lot of rusty gold over the years and are always looking to discover something they've never seen before. They are ready to find extraordinary items and hear fascinating tales about them.

The American Pickers TV Show is looking for leads and would love to explore your hidden treasure. If you or someone you know has a unique item, story to tell, and is ready to sell...we would love to hear from you! Please note, the Pickers do not pick stores, flea markets, malls, auction businesses, museums, or anything open to the public.

If interested, please send us your name, phone number, location, and description of the collection with photos to: americanpickers@cineflix.com or call (646) 493-2184 facebook: @GotAPick.

## Georgia has the opportunity for big-ticket tax reform

I was in kindergarten when I got my first allowance — complete with a contract between my parents and me. Among its wise provisions was that I couldn't spend a single week's allowance all at once, but if I saved for multiple weeks I could spend all my money on one item.

Even in 1984 one could only buy so much with my weekly stipend — one whole U.S. dollar — so the provision was somewhat superfluous. Still, it taught me not to let money "burn a hole in my pocket." Over the years I saved up to buy toys, video games, eventually a mountain bike.

The state of Georgia doesn't talk about \$1 unless the words "million" or "billion" follow it. But the same principle applies: State leaders have spent tax dollars cautiously, and they've accumulated quite the nest egg on behalf of the taxpayers.

When fiscal 2024 ended back on June 30, Georgia had more money in the bank than ever before. A recent report by the State Accounting Office showed the official rainy-day fund grew to almost \$5.5 billion, lottery reserves surpassed \$2.4 billion, and the undesignated surplus reached an incredible \$11 billion.

That growth happened even though tax revenues were slightly lower than the year before. Spending went up but, as in other recent years, remained substantially lower than revenues.

That prudence presents the opportunity for a big-ticket

tax reform.

Georgia's biggest competitive disadvantage compared to other states is probably its out-of-control legal environment.

That's something legislators ought to address when they return to the Gold Dome in January. But not far behind is our tax code.

Florida and Tennessee charge no personal income tax. North Carolina has steadily chipped away at its personal and corporate income taxes over the past decade-plus, and both are now lower than our rates. Alabama's personal income tax rate is already below ours, and South Carolina has begun cutting its rate. And that's just our neighbors.

Georgia has also been in tax-cutting mode. Over the past few years, lawmakers have flattened our personal income tax into a single rate, expanded personal exemptions to the particular benefit of lower-income workers and cut both the personal and corporate tax rates. Georgia's personal income tax rate now stands at 5.39% and is slated to fall by a tenth of a point per year until it hits 4.99%.

But with \$11 billion in the bank above and beyond the official reserves, Georgia can afford to cut further and faster.

Earlier this year, the Georgia Public Policy Foundation and the Buckeye Institute of Ohio published a study illustrating four possible tax reforms. These possibilities include cutting either the personal income tax or the corpo-

rate income tax at faster rates than current law provides. Implementing any of them would spur billions of dollars of new economic growth and create thousands of new jobs.

All of them would be easier to implement if lawmakers used some of our \$11 billion undesignated surplus to finance the tax cuts. Following the lead of Iowa, a state that has cut taxes aggressively in recent years, Georgia could place the surplus dollars in a "taxpayer relief fund."

Lawmakers could draw from the taxpayer relief fund to maintain modest spending growth in the face of lower revenues — after all, people continue to flock to Georgia every day, leading to larger expenses for items such as K-12 education.

Or they could use the money to hedge against the possibility of revenues slowing more than expected. Putting at least half of the \$11 billion surplus into such a fund would be a good start, and would leave a large chunk of extra funding for needs such as new transportation infrastructure.

Sound fiscal management has brought Georgia to an opportune moment. Seizing on the opportunity to make lasting changes will take Georgia from strength to strength.

**Kyle Wingfield**  
President and CEO  
Georgia Public  
Policy Foundation  
[www.georgiapolicy.org](http://www.georgiapolicy.org)



# Boo Bash...from Page 1A



**For the second year in a row, David Goyette donned stilts to impress children at the Boo Bash, with assistance from pirate wife Vicky Goyette.** Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

out of candy,” said Rowe before quickly adding that there were backup candy stashes ready to ensure that all children received a good haul.

Everybody, no matter their costume, had something to show for it, but some of the diabolical disguises required out-of-the-box thinking to come up with. Take, for example, Shyloh Anderson, who was dressed as a pickle.

“My best friend is a pickle, and I was inspired,” said Anderson, giggling. “I don’t know – she just liked (my costume), and I like it too, and I think it’s really funny.”

Little Keira Glazier couldn’t decide if she wanted to be a witch, a dinosaur or ride a dinosaur, so the 4-year-old’s parents got creative. She was able to go to the Boo Bash as a witch riding a dinosaur, combining two costumes into one unique take.

Other faces were more familiar, like Phyllis Darden, who attended as a Pokémon trainer. When Darden’s son was younger, he would dress up with her as one of the pocket monsters, but now that he’s older and wants to follow other ideas, she’s found another way to step up her game.

Hanging off her trusty backpack filled with Poké Balls

and berries that evening were multiple Pokémon plushies – including her favorite, Charizard. As she said, the stuffed animals may belong to her son, but she has fun using them as part of her costume.

David Goyette returned this year with his impressive set of stilts. Last year, he was a clown, but 2024’s pumpkin monster towered several heads above the rest. Amazingly, Goyette navigated the crowd well with help from his wife Vicky Goyette, who was dressed as a pirate.

“I’m 59 years old and I’d never worn them until last year. It was two days before I came to the park,” said David, adding that he hasn’t fallen from his perch. “This is the second time in my life that I’ve worn them.”

“(He dresses up for) the kids, and people seem to like it,” Vicky added.

And it wasn’t just the people who were dressed up. The award for the best booth went to Moonflower Boutique, decorated in high detail befitting the business’s name. Boutique owner Breanna Carroll said it took hours to properly set up the display, which included a photo booth.

And it was easy to see how Carroll put that time to good use. Silk flowers hung

suspended in strands, easily appearing to float thanks to the “invisible” string. Out front stood mushrooms and even bigger flowers handcrafted by Carroll, adding to the magic of her very own fairy garden.

Of course, the other setups on display that night were nothing to shake a tibia at. Ibis Electric may be new to the community, but sisters Megan and Jennifer Brott were happy to represent their company and give back to the people that have helped them thrive in the mountains.

“Union County’s been very kind to us,” noted Megan, dressed as a witch and handing out candy. She added that she looks forward to Boo Bash all year, especially seeing all the creative costumes. “Halloween is my favorite; I love the kids.”

Union County 911 also had a tent set up, with Dispatcher Holly Kemp dressed as the ghostly dog Zero from Tim Burton’s “The Nightmare Before Christmas.” She and Sally the love-struck ragdoll handed out candy readily.

“I love to do it every year,” said Kemp, commending kids like Keira for their creative costume ideas. “I absolutely love it. (You’ve got to see the babies come in their costumes.”

# Zell Miller Honored...from Page 1A



**L-R: Georgia Historical Society President Dr. W. Todd Groce, Shirley Miller, YHC President Dr. Drew Van Horn, and Georgia Lottery Corporation President Gretchen Corbin.** Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

son is well known for having honorably served as a U.S. Marine, lieutenant governor, governor and U.S. Senator.

His many successes have meant a great deal to his small mountain community and beyond, with his work having broadened the horizons of countless students who might not have otherwise had a chance for success themselves.

In 1991, the General Assembly adopted Miller’s promise of instituting a state lottery to fund college tuition for Georgia’s hardworking students, and it became official in the fall of ‘92 with a ratification vote by the people.

Between 1993 and 2023, proceeds from the Georgia Lottery covered HOPE Scholarships for over 2.1 million students and allowed two million 4-year-olds access to pre-kindergarten programs. That accounts for some \$28 billion in profits.

In the words of Gretchen Corbin, President and CEO of the Georgia Lottery Corporation, “It’s impossible to reflect on the Georgia Lottery without recognizing and acknowledging the incredible foresight of Gov. Zell Miller.”

It was fitting, then, that alongside the podium set aside for dedication speakers stood students currently benefiting from the scholarships funded by lottery returns. One of these students, Towns County’s own Liam King, is a Zell Miller Scholar and senior at Young

Harris College.

King has overcome a great deal of tragedy but still strives for success. A few years after his mother passed away from cancer, King also lost his father. Despite that, King is graduating with degrees in marketing, accounting and finance and is a member of the Young Harris Cross Country Team.

“The common theme is we’re all chasing time,” King said as part of his address to the audience, adding that, “You have given me the ability to use my time well ... to be able to actually obtain a college education that I didn’t think was going to be possible after losing my parents.”

Shirley Miller, former First Lady of Georgia and widow of Miller, had her turn at the podium as well. King’s success and that of so many other students is the result of a vision that began long ago with her husband’s prompting, and she was grateful to hear

how the program has benefited Georgia’s youth.

She was also thankful to the Georgia Historical Society for helping chronicle her husband’s legacy, the Georgia Lottery for keeping it going, and Young Harris College for giving the monument – a sizable plaque detailing how the lottery came to be – a home.

“Many people, now over more than 30 years, created the numbers on this monument ... We honor the dreamer that visualized HOPE and pre-K, risked his political career to make it happen, and got them started,” Miller said. “All of our family says thanks to you all. Thank you.”

Following Miller’s expression of gratitude, there was a brief photoshoot in front of the monument, which is located at the Alumni House on campus, signifying Zell Miller’s status as a Young Harris alum himself who went on to accomplish great things.

## Flag Burning Ceremony Nov. 16th



The Ira Weaver American Legion Post 121 of Blairsville invites all veterans and their families along with the public to attend a Flag Burning Ceremony on Saturday, November 16th at 10 AM at 78 Blue Ridge Hwy., Blairsville, GA. This event is to respect, honor and retire flags no longer able to represent their nation. Refreshments will be served. Hope to see you there.

# Veterans Day ...from Page 1A

ceremony will include the High School Chorus led by Alicia Covington, the Middle School Chorus led by Melissa Pilote, and the High School Band led by Will Stafford.

"The Elementary and Primary School students along with students from Woody Gap School will present Veterans with letters of appreciation for their service to our country.

"Our keynote speaker is Union County High School Senior Kendyl McBride, and assisting in the ceremony is Union County High School Senior Caleb Sheffield.

"Woody Gap Senior Mia Roberts and Woody Gap Junior Ryan Marsh will orchestrate the Quilt of Valor ceremony along with Union County High

School Junior Ava Lloyd. We will award deserving Veterans the Quilt of Valor sewn by the ladies of the Misty Mountain Quilters.

"The American Legion Ira Weaver Post 121 will be a part of our ceremony this year along with students representing the 152nd Civil Air Patrol. We will also have a special Veterans presentation by Union County Elementary School fifth-graders Jaxon Lee and Haylen Davis. "Our Veterans deserve the recognition, and our School District takes pride in presenting this great event."

The point of contact for this year's ceremony is Art McCann, who can be reached with questions at 706-745-2216, ext. 1112, or via email at

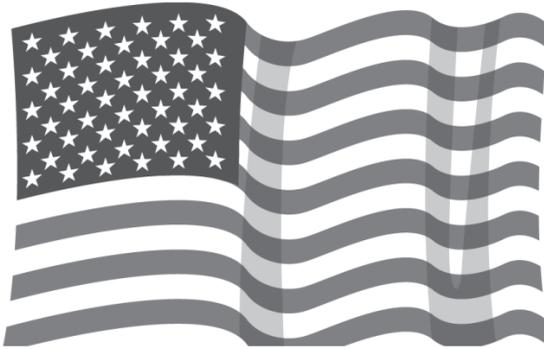
amccann@ucschools.org.

Following the school program, the Rotary Club of Union County will be hosting its Fourth Annual Veterans Luncheon in the upstairs portion of the Union County Community Center at approximately 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 11.

Seating is limited, so be sure to go ahead and purchase tickets by stopping into the Union County Pet Hospital or calling Denise Windham at 706-781-9771. This year's guest speaker will be Lt. Col. Bob Stone, Commanding Officer of U.S. Army Camp Frank D. Merrill in Dahlonega.

The North Georgia News thanks all veterans for their service and sacrifices.

## Soon the Flags will Fly on Meeks Park's new Flag Poles



Derek Nagel, AVMP Media Manager

We of the committee of the Appalachian Veterans Memorial Park are thrilled to announce that the 8 newly installed flag poles at Meeks Park will soon have flags representing every branch of military service, the Georgia State flag, and of course, the American flag, which will wave 5' above the others. The flag poles were graciously donated by George "Skip" Fischbach and his wife Susan, in memory of their son, Evan Paul, who recently passed away. Skip was a Navy Corpsman in Vietnam and has been very active in local are Veterans Service Organizations, and we dearly appreciate his family's generous gift.

This is a momentous occasion, as we've been actively working on building this beautiful park for the last 3 years, and now everyone in the community will know exactly where it is as the flags will be easily visible to anyone passing by the front entrance on Hwy 515. The new flag poles adorn the outer circle of the 60' diameter compass rose, a brilliantly designed piece of concrete art completed by Ben's Concrete Creations.

None of this would be possible if it weren't for the incredible support we've received from area businesses and the entire community. To date, we've sold 162 bricks, and have had acquired some great corporate sponsors such as our Congressman Andrew Clyde of Clyde's Armory, Leon's Floors, United Community Bank, Nottely Marina, Modern Mountain LLC, the Union County Rotary Club, Budget Blinds, Blairsville Printing, River

City Bank, and Harmony Gove Baptist Church. We also would like to recognize TLW Drone Services for the spectacular footage of the construction, Blairsville Web Design for providing digital services, County Manager Larry Garrett, and the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce for their fundraiser at Noontootla Creek Farms benefitting the park. Last, but certainly not least, we are incredibly grateful to Union County Sole Commissioner, Lamar Paris, for his overwhelming support and for providing the land on behalf of the county in March of 2022.

Anyone who wishes to attend are more than welcome

to join us on Thursday, Nov. 7, at 11 a.m. AVMP commemorative bricks are \$100 for a 4"x8" brick, or \$200 for an 8"x8". The bricks will be placed in a wall that will be constructed directly behind the flag poles. Bricks can be designed and ordered online by going to our website, TheVeteransPark.org. If anyone has questions about purchasing a brick, or becoming a corporate sponsor, please contact Derek Nagel at (706) 970-4466, or email him at derek@appalachianveteransmemorialpark.org.

Mission Statement: Appalachian Veterans Memorial Park is a dedicated space for residents, their families, loved ones, members of the community and visitors to Meeks Park. Its purpose is to remember those who are serving or have served our nation's military.

The park will be a place of solitude, one of reflection and a gathering place for the recognition of honoring all military branches and Veterans Service organizations of Appalachia, located at the beautiful Union County Meeks Park at 490 Meeks Park Road in Blairsville, GA.

### Your Patriot Reflection



#### Declaration of Independence and Constitution

Alex George, Author of "A Good American", had some very positive thoughts on our Founding Fathers documents. He said, "As a writer, I think that the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution are two of the most exciting and inspiring documents ever written. The principles and beliefs upon which this country was

founded are unimpeachable. I am a lawyer and a novelist, and so I have a reverence for words. They are the tools of both my trades. America's founding documents provide the guiding light by which much of the world sets its course for the future. In 1630, as he stood on the deck of the Arabella, just before landing in New England for the first time, John Winthrop preached a sermon that talked of the new settlement as a "City on a hill." Winthrop knew that the eyes of the world would be upon them. Nothing has changed. The world still looks to America for hope, for inspiration and for guidance. It's one reason people have always dreamed of coming here, by fair means or foul.

Let's be about the business of preserving what our forefathers knew and fought for.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuaswarriors.org.

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## Union County Christmas Parade

Saturday, December 7, 2024 • 6:00 PM  
 Sponsored By Union County Historical Society

Theme: "Cheers To 125 Years"  
 "Christmas Through The Years"  
 Celebrating The 125th Anniversary of the Historic Courthouse

### PARADE APPLICATION

Name Of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Type Of Entry: Float    Automobile    Walkers    Animals  
 Motorcycle

\*\*\*\*\*All Entries Must Have Christmas Lights\*\*\*\*\*

Entry forms must be received in the Historical Society office by noon on December 6th.

Send completed form by email:  
 history1@windstream.net

or drop off at the Old Courthouse on the Square.

For more information call the office at 706-745-5493

# FFA Trunk or Treat...from Page 1A



The Youngblood Family had a blast at the FFA Trunk or Treat, sporting a collective “Toy Story” theme.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

could be found dressed up as ghosts and goblins alongside the usual FFA participants.

Local entities like the Union County Fire Department and businesses such as Ag-Pro set up in the parking lot, too, with the former giving demonstrations of its impressive ladder truck and the latter offering tractor rides by Curtis Stephens.

Thanks to Lisa Nelson’s efforts, the haunted bus returned this year, serving as a unique schoolyard twist on the classic haunted house. Inside, seats were covered in green gunk, and cobwebs hung from the ceiling as skeletal dogs bayed

and motion-activated ghouls popped out at unsuspecting wanderers.

Some guests, such as Gracie Mounts, were there for the first time. Mounts attended with friend Allie Crowley, and together, the two dressed up their babies in matching costumes. Arlie Mounts and Gunner Crowley rode together in a wagon labeled “Cutest Chicks in the Coop.”

“I enjoy it, I really do,” said Mounts, who has been Crowley’s best friend for a decade. Between the two, they not only enjoyed a chance to bring their little ones out to have fun, but they also enjoyed

They’ve attended every year and have come to regard it as a Halloween staple. It serves as their primary source of trick-or-treating fun along with events by Liberty Baptist and First Baptist Church.

Theodore Peters was dressed as a dinosaur rider, while older sister Eleanor rode an inflatable axolotl. Eleanor

wants one of the amphibians as a pet, but mom Paige thought having one as part of a unique costume would be a better option.

“We absolutely love it. We want to support the school,” said Paige, adding that the Trunk or Treat was a great event for adults too because of the opportunities to hang out

and talk.

At any rate, Rittenhouse hopes to continue to expand the Trunk or Treat experience. She would one day like to bring back Halloween on the Square by stretching the event out of the Middle School parking lot, so long as everyone remains safe and happy.

**VFW Post 7394 and American Red Cross Blood Drive**



**American Red Cross**



VFW Post 7394 and the American Red Cross are hosting an upcoming blood drive on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 9 AM - 1:30 PM at the Major Leon Davenport Building located at 78 Blue Ridge Hwy, Blairsville, GA 30512. Please join our lifesaving mission and schedule an appointment today! Go to [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) to make an appointment.