

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

## Anceberry Burnette, last local POW of World War II, dies at 94

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Anceberry Burnette, Union County's last surviving prisoner of war during World War II, passed away on Sept. 11 at the age of 94.

Services for the lifelong patriot were held at Mountain View Chapel on Saturday, Sept. 14, after which he was interred in the Owtown Church of God Cemetery, with Military Honors presented by the North Georgia Honor Guard.

Burnette is survived by sons Johnny, Benny and Ronnie; daughter Katherine Lloyd; sister Lela Stephens; 20 grandchildren; and "many great and great-great grandchildren, several nieces, nephews, many other relatives and friends,"

according to his obituary.

The Army veteran was involved in the Masonic Lodge and was a deeply respected member of the community.

As chronicled in a June 2018 article in the North Georgia News, Burnette took part in the Allied invasion of Italy at Salerno in 1943.

But it wasn't until after D-Day and the establishment of beachheads at Normandy that he became a POW when the Germans captured him and 64 of his fellow soldiers in nearby Le Havre, France, in 1944.

"They took us prisoner and hiked us on the pavement, marched us seven days and nights," Burnette said last summer. "That's rougher than hiking out there in the woods. Getting on the pavement, it

ruins your feet."

The American prisoners suffered extreme hardship during those long days and nights of marching, receiving no sleep, no food and very little to drink as they moved inland toward the German border.

"On the eighth day, it was in the evening, they put us on the train," Burnette said. "As quick as I got on it, I knew they were taking us to a prison camp. There were 65 of us total crammed in (one boxcar), and we couldn't even straighten our feet out. We were packed in like sardines."

Along with the POWs, the Germans were hauling a number of tanks and other military equipment, making the train a valuable target for Allied forces.

Unaware that there were American prisoners on board, members of the U.S. Army Air Forces strafed and fired upon the train as it made its way to Germany, punching bullet holes in the walls of the boxcar containing the 65 Americans.

Fortunately, no one was hurt in that initial bombardment, but Burnette decided that they should try their hands at escaping. It was about 3:45 a.m. according to his watch, heading toward sunrise, and he knew they didn't have much time to make their getaway.

None of the remaining prisoners wanted to go with Burnette, however, as all felt confident that the tide of the war had turned and that they would soon be liberated.

See Burnette, Page 8A



World War II Veteran Anceberry Burnette waving to area residents during the 2016 Memorial Day Ceremony in Blairsville. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Chief Judge Gunter to retire from Enotah Judicial Circuit at end of month

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Superior Court Chief Judge N. Stanley Gunter is retiring, with Sept. 30 serving as his last day on the Enotah Judicial Circuit.

And though he'll be leaving the circuit at the end of the month, Gunter said he has exciting plans that he looks forward to announcing publicly in the near future.

"It's kind of like when you graduate from high school, you know, what's the next phase in your life - that's kind of what this is," Gunter said. "I'm ready to retire from what I'm doing now, but I'm still pretty young, relatively speaking, and I have



Superior Court Chief Judge N. Stanley Gunter

See Gunter, Page 2A

## UCSO investigates bomb threat called in to Walmart on Friday, Sept. 13

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Management at the Blairsville Walmart evacuated the store last week after an unidentified person called in a bomb threat around 3 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 13, according to Capt. Doug Loyd of the Union County Sheriff's Office.

The caller hung up after making the threat, and the employee who received the call immediately dialed 911, at which time the Sheriff's Office, Fire Department and Emergency Management Agency responded to the scene, with Union General EMS on standby, Loyd said.

After evacuating the store

See Bomb Threat, Page 3A



Union County Firefighter Jake Mathis helping the Sheriff's Office direct traffic away from the Georgia 515 entrance to Walmart after the bomb threat on Sept. 13. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Allegheny Lodge, chamber remember 9/11 with commemorations

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The horrendous 9/11 terrorist attacks perpetrated by Islamic extremists in New York City and near Washington, D.C., occurred 18 years ago last week on Sept. 11.

Allegheny Masonic Lodge #114 and the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce held separate commemorative events last Wednesday to honor the 2,977 people murdered by 19 jihadis who took control of four civilian airliners and used them as weapons of mass destruction.

The Masons held their fourth 9/11 anniversary breakfast from 7-11 a.m. for first responders, firefighters and law enforcement officers here in Blairsville.

A couple minutes before 8:46 a.m., the time that hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 hit the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York, Masonic Worshipful Master Ronny Benfield stood before those having breakfast and asked for a moment of silence.

"It's to show our appreciation of these guys out here who put their lives on the line every day," Benfield said. "The Fire Department puts themselves in harm's way every day. The deputies do, too. This is just appreciation from Allegheny Lodge and the citizens of Union County for them."

Allegheny Lodge members served up scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, grits, biscuits and gravy, and lots of

coffee. At noon that Wednesday, the Chamber of Commerce held its "Monthly Mingle" luncheon, which happened to fall on Sept. 11 this year.

To commemorate the occasion, they hosted the Union County Fire Chief and Emergency Management Agency Director David Dyer and several local first responders and firefighters.

The luncheon was sponsored by John Chitwood, owner of Service Plumbing. All told, about 60 people attended the event.

Chamber President Steve Rowe said they felt the most appropriate speaker they could invite for the occasion was Chief Dyer to honor those

See 9/11 Commemorations, Page 2A



Local first responders attending the annual 9/11 breakfast at Allegheny Masonic Lodge #114 in Downtown Blairsville. Photo by Mark Smith

## Sue Ellen Pentecost honored at Reece's 102nd birthday celebration



The plaque attached to the front of the Pentecost Family Antique Toolshed at the Byron Herbert Reece Farm & Heritage Center. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

See Pentecost, Page 3A

## Honeybee Jubilee abuzz with beekeepers and local honey producers

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Union County Farmers Market showcased local beekeepers and honey producers at the annual Honeybee Jubilee on Saturday, Sept. 14.

"What we try to do is familiarize people with our local honey producers," said Farmers Market Manager Mickey Cummings in the leadup to the event. "They're going to give us some honey, and we're going to put some honey with some biscuits and let people try some of the different types of local honey so that they know if their preference is sourwood or poplar or wildflower."

Several local beekeepers attended the jubilee on Saturday with all their different types of honey, and Cummings brought in a large tray of biscuits for honey samples as people lined up to taste promptly at 10 a.m.



Glen Henderson of the Mountain Beekeepers Association during the Farmers Market's annual Honeybee Jubilee on Sept. 14. Photo by Mark Smith

Blairsville beekeeper Glen Henderson manned a display showcasing bees and beekeeping equipment, and he disseminated a fountain of information on bees and their

importance not only in the production of honey but also the pollination of fruit and vegetable plants.

See Honeybee, Page 8A

Vol. 110 No. 38  
4 Sections 28 Pages  
Weather  
Thurs: Cloudy Hi 77 Lo 51  
Fri: Sunny Hi 80 Lo 50  
Sat: Sunny Hi 84 Lo 52

Inside  
Arrests 7A  
Churches 2B  
Classifieds 3D  
Opinion 4A  
Legals 5D  
Obits 4B  
Sports 2C

### SPORTS

**FOOTBALL**  
Sep 20 vs. Monticell 7:30 PM

**SOFTBALL**  
Sep 17 vs. Rabun Co. 5:30 PM  
Senior Night

ROCK AGAINST VIOLENCE

S.A.F.E. Benefit Concert  
September 21

See page 7A

Woman's ENRICHMENT CENTER  
706-745-7518  
218 Jones Street • Blairsville, GA 30512

Talent Search Fundraiser  
Sept. 21

See page 3A

Union General Hospital  
Health Fair Sept. 21

See page 3A