

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Faith and Courage reign at 2018 Junior-Senior Prom

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Following a long, strenuous year of books and teachers, students were able to put academics and athletics on the back burner for a night to just let loose at the Union County High School 2018 Prom on Saturday, April 21.

Hosted by Butternut Creek Golf Course and the Union County Community Center, along with an assortment of dance tunes provided by Carrollton's Just In Time DJ/Entertainment, students spent an evening dancing and celebrating at the "Enchanted Forest" themed Junior-Senior Prom.

Traditionally, prom night is highlighted by the crowning of a Prom King and Queen, and this year was no exception, with the honor getting bestowed upon a pair of

seniors: Courage Hull-Hatchett and Faith Smith.

"I was shocked," the newly crowned Smith said following the customary King-Queen dance. "I'm in chorus, and usually fine arts kids aren't thrown into the spotlight."

"We were not expecting this at all, it (the voting) must have been rigged," Hull-Hatchett jokingly added. "But this just shows the diversity of our school and the way everyone bonds together."

For Smith, being named UCHS royalty by her peers was the perfect ending to a stressful last couple of weeks of prom preparation that had her burning the candle at both ends.

"It's been hectic," Smith said. "There's been a lot of forgetting and a lot of last minute decisions."

Senior Prom had extra special significance for U.S.

Army recruit Hull-Hatchett, whose summer vacation will be cut short when he's shipped to Missouri in July.

Both Hull-Hatchett and Smith had plenty of gratitude to go around, thanking their friends, family and peers.

Hull-Hatchett sent a special thank you to his grandparents Terry and Joy Hatchett. Smith also thanked her parents, Sandy and Chip Gribble, for all of their help preparing for the big night.

As for the school's preparation, it didn't matter who you asked, everyone drove home the point that getting ready for Prom 2018 was a complete "team effort."

However, names that were consistently credited were Rhonda Colwell, Mandy Moore and Emily Cobb.

The food and beverages were definitely a team effort,

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Photo by Todd Forrest

Faith Smith and Courage Hull-Hatchett sharing a senior dance together after being crowned Queen and King of UCHS Prom 2018.

National Day of Prayer leads proclamations in county commission meeting

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris welcomed a variety of special guests for the signing of six proclamations in his April 19 regular county meeting.

Pastor Marty Duncan of Fellowship of the Hills Church kicked the meeting off by delivering an invocation, after which Commissioner Paris started in with the proclamations.

The National Day of Prayer is an idea as old as America herself, but it wasn't until 30 years ago, in 1988, that the U.S. Congress designated the first Thursday in May be set aside specifically for the national observance of prayer.

See County Meeting, Page 2A



Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Left to right: Lamar Paris, Marty Duncan, Jim Conley, Dave Wesche, Sharon Morrison, George Cline and Richard Morrison in the April 19 county meeting.

Early voting April 30 through May 18

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Early voting for the May 22 General Primary and Nonpartisan General Election begins on Monday, April 30.

Every weekday between April 30 and May 18, during the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., registered Union County voters will be able to walk into the Union County Registrar's Office to cast their votes.

The Registrar's Office is located within the Union County Courthouse and will be open to voters even during lunchtime.

There is one weekend day set aside for voters at the Registrar's Office, which will be Saturday, May 12, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., for those who find themselves too busy

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to vote during the scheduled weekdays of voting.

Since this is a primary, voters will need to declare a political party to receive a ballot, otherwise, voters will only be able to vote in the Nonpartisan General Election.

Election Day will be on Tuesday, May 22, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and that day, voters should report to one of the 11 pre-assigned Union County voting precincts.

Voters looking for absentee ballots will need to contact the Registrar's Office in the courthouse, or call (706) 439-6016.

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Business partners arrested again for stealing, says UCSO



Michael "Jerz Mike" Osborne

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Two former business associates are back behind bars after 22 people allege stolen property, according to the Union County Sheriff's



Dennis Lynn

Office.

Michael David Osborne, aka Jerz Mike, 46, of Towns County, and Dennis Lamar Lynn, 56, of Union County, have once more been arrested, and they now face 22 counts

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BOE budget hearings May 1 and 8

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

The Union County Board of Education will hold two public budget meetings in May before adopting the FY19 budget.

Those public meetings will take place at 8 a.m. on both May 1 and May 8 at the board office, as discussed in the April 17 board work session.

The stated purpose of the meetings is to allow the board to provide "an opportunity to receive public input on its proposed annual operating budget for FY 2019."

Following public input, the school board is expected to hold a first reading of the FY19 Tentative Budget in the May 15 board meeting, before final adoption of the budget in the June board meeting.

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Photo by Shawn Jarrard

The Union County Middle School boys' soccer team received recognition for their stellar season in the April BOE meeting.

Park Sterling becomes South State Bank

News Special
North Georgia News

Over the April 20 weekend, Park Sterling Bank transitioned to South State Bank.

The transition began on Friday with signage changes at the branch located at 20 S. Main Street in Hiawassee, and all former Park Sterling branches opened as South State Bank on Monday, April 23.

South State has been serving the financial needs of customers and communities since 1934.

Today, South State is one of the fastest growing regional banks in the South, serving more than 700,000 customers throughout the Carolinas,

Georgia and Virginia.

Customers now have access to more than 165 branches and 200 ATMs.

South State Corporation (NASDAQ: SSB) announced the completion of its merger with Park Sterling Corporation (NASDAQ: PSTB) in December 2017.

Under the terms of the merger agreement, Park Sterling shareholders received 0.14 shares of South State common stock in exchange for each Park Sterling share outstanding immediately prior to the merger.

Park Sterling Bank, the Park Sterling Corporation bank

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Photo by Lowell Nicholson

The new sign out front of the old Park Sterling Bank - welcome to Blairsville, South State Bank.

Sheriff's Office recovers \$30,000 in stolen property

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

Thanks to excellent interagency communication, Union County Sheriff's Office investigators have recovered more than \$30,000 in stolen property in the last week.

Thomas Elijah Hogan, 25, of Marble, North Carolina, has been charged in connection with the property, which had



Thomas Elijah Hogan

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PANTHERS GOLF

Girls Region Tournament
April 26 @ Victoria Bryant

Boys Region Tournament
April 28 @ Chestatee

RABIES CLINIC
Saturday April 28th
See Page 4C for locations

ROTARY SERVICE Above Self

OPEN HOUSE
Fire Stations 2, 6 & 9
Saturday April 28th
at STATION 2
15 Jones Creek Road
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VETERAN'S APPRECIATION FISHING RODEO
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