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Pipes & Drums bagpipe group. Shady Grove United Methodist Church Bluegrass Band shared classic gospel hymns and good ole country songs, while those in attendance clapped their hands and tapped their toes to the familiar tunes.

Juicy tomato sandwiches were dished out to guests by the dozens, accompanied by delicious chocolate chip cookies and fresh homemade oatmeal raisin bars.

Patrons talked, mingled, and in true Appalachia fashion, shared stories of family origins, childhood and what makes the mountains such a wonderful place to call home.

"It's a way to get people here to the farm," said Jones. "And it's a good way to get people to see the venue who might not have seen it before, especially local folks that haven't seen it."

"It's amazing how many people live in Fannin County, Union County, Towns County, Clay County, Cherokee County and Lumpkin County over the mountain, that have never been here. They've driven by it, and maybe wondered what it was, but never actually stopped in."

"When they come, though, they realize what it's all about and just how wonderful of a place this is. It's a great place to learn about what life was like on a farm in the first half of the 20th century."

The Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center has a lot to offer to the community, with its rich local history and plethora of antique farm and kitchen paraphernalia.

Everyone near and far is welcome to visit and learn more about Reece's work and home life, have a picnic by Wolf Creek or simply wander the beautiful land that has been so graciously restored in Reece's honor.



The Shady Grove United Methodist Church Bluegrass Band is a staple of 'Maters and Music every year, sharing Gospel hymns and old country tunes. Photo/Lily Avery



Folks from Union, Towns, Fannin counties and beyond attended the Third Annual 'Maters and Music extravaganza on Saturday, Aug. 20. Photo/Lily Avery

Those who missed this yearly extravaganza need not fret. 'Maters and Music is not the only event the Reece Society has up its sleeve this year.

"We always have an end of the season event, because we're not completely open to the public during the winter time," said Jones. "Around Thanksgiving, when we're getting ready to close up for the winter, we're going to have a weekend where we have a

blowout celebration. Folks can come by and celebrate a Reece Christmas.

"We'll have a scraggly tree that someone goes out and cuts, and we'll decorate it with actual Reece decorations. It's a fun thing to do, for us and the community."

More information on the Byron Herbert Reece Society and upcoming events can be found via Facebook or at www.byronherbertreesociety.wordpress.com.

4-H...continued from Page 1A

safety services and education. "Most of our banquets consist of a live and silent auction, games and opportunities to win guns and other merchandise," said NRA Field Representative Neely Raper. "Basically, you can see everything from furniture to optics to gear. We even have a shadow box with autographed duck calls. We really try to make sure we have a little bit of something for everybody."

The majority of the paraphernalia auctioned off came directly from the Friends of NRA through the organization's standard merchandise package. This package varies from year to year, consisting of different firearms, knives and gear, framed décor, and merchandise that includes blankets, practice ball sets and jewelry.

Supporters of the Friends of NRA and community members donated other equipment offered at the fundraiser, all in the name of helping the children and shooting sports across the board.

Funds raised at each Friends of NRA event is split evenly between the NRA Foundation – to fund national grants and projects – and the state, to supply similar projects and grants on a local level.

Foundation grants are an essential part of the Union County 4-H Shooting Sports Teams, allowing the students to develop these programs as well as expand their education on 4-H and team criteria. Without such grants, oftentimes students would not be able to pursue such a costly sport.

Grants support programs such as law enforcement training, hunter education,



A 4-H'er explains one of the many games to a pair of patrons during the 4-H/Friends of NRA banquet on Saturday, Aug. 13, at the Haralson Memorial Civic Center. Photo/Lily Avery

youth education, safety, conservation, and firearms and marksmanship training.

Last year, the money raised from the banquet provided the students involved in both Towns and Union County 4-H Shooting Sports (BB, shotgun and archery) the means to buy ammunition, targets, sights, kneeling mats, hearing and eye protection, along with BB guns.

While the money raised at the banquet does not directly benefit the Union County 4-H Shooting Teams, it does give them a higher chance of receiving a requested grant, due to their interest and investment in the organization.

The banquet itself was a mouthwatering concoction of homemade barbeque pork and grilled chicken dinner served up with veggies, all provided by Sweet House BBQ from Cornelia, and plenty of desserts to go around. Blairsville Zaxby's also assisted in the

event by donating plates, cutlery and drinks.

Patrons filled the Blairsville civic center, playing games and placing bids on the coveted displayed items. Most importantly, though, everyone gathered together to honor the students.

"There's no organization in the state or in the country that returns the kind of dollars back to the community that we do," said Raper. "These people here and the people that get involved, they understand our mission and why we do this. We do this for the future of shooting sports and for the future of the kids."

Typically, a Friend of NRA fundraising banquet will raise between \$5,000 and \$100,000 depending on the mood of the crowd. The amount raised from Saturday's event has not been released, though all parties involved expect a substantial amount.

Cruise-In at Union County Nursing Home September 4



Previous Cruise-In at Union County Nursing Home

Mark your calendar September 4th, 2-4 p.m. for the Fall Cruise-In at Union County Nursing Home. The residents have a good time looking at the vehicles and voting for the one they like, which

gets a trophy. So bring those vehicles out and let the folks enjoy them. You will have a good time and let's put some smiles on the resident's faces. Thanks to the Blairsville Cruisers and the Good Neighbors Car Club for their help. For more information call 706-994-2500.

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