

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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County to receive federal, state disaster funds

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

with President Barack Obama's Feb. 26 disaster declaration for Georgia.



Tara Teuta with GEMA-HS, left, leads Union County's disaster declaration kickoff meeting with Chris Nelson from FEMA

Representatives from Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA-HS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) held a disaster declaration kickoff meeting with county employees on Wednesday, April 6, in the Union County Courthouse.

According to that declaration, "the president's action makes federal funding available to state, tribal and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe storms and flooding in:

"Baker, Carroll, Chattahoochee, Crawford, Dade, Decatur, Douglas, Fannin, Fayette, Gilmer, Greene, Haralson, Harris, Jeff Davis, Lamar, Macon, Marion, Meriwether, Montgomery, Morgan, Muscogee, Newton, Oglethorpe, Pickens, Stewart, Talbot, Taliaferro, Taylor, Towns, Troup, Upson, Webster and Wilkes counties."

county's first meeting with FEMA on March 23 that "we went over as much as we could as far as damage and did our official Request for Public Assistance, which got Union County in the declaration for federal assistance from this damage period."

Hawkins added: "In that meeting, FEMA said that in order to have enough damage for a declaration, they have a figure of \$3.57 'per capita,' so with our last census number in 2010 of 21,356, that would put our minimum dollar amount for damages to be \$76,240.92.

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"After just an estimate with FEMA on that date, they came up with a potential dollar amount of approximately \$345,000 that we could potentially have in total reimbursements on the damage we have had. Some of the repairs have already been done and paid for and some have not been completed. We have already had to spend over \$128,000 in labor, materials and equipment for replacement of culverts and road repairs so far."

And as of April 6, Union County has officially begun working with FEMA and

GEMA-HS to gain a total accounting of costs associated with those damages, which include items like repairs to contracts, costs of construction and materials used explicitly for damage during this period, cost of labor, etc.

Once a final figure is determined, reimbursements for damages incurred from storms between the Dec. 22 and Jan. 13 timeframe will be handled using a cost-sharing funding formula of 75 percent federal, 10 percent state and 15 percent local.

Costs specifically pertaining to debris removal fall under a different funding formula, one that incorporates a scale via the Public Assistance Alternative Procedures Pilot Program, which is meant to serve as an

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Seabee Island X-3 celebrates a year of firsts

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer



2016 officers after having been sworn in at the April 8 meeting of the Seabee Island X-3.

Happy Birthday to Navy Seabee Veterans of America Island X-3, which turned a year old on Sunday, April 10.

Island X-3 members commemorated the anniversary two days prior, on Friday, April 8, during their regular monthly meeting, which takes place at 1300 hours the second Friday of every month at the Major Leon Davenport Veterans Center in Blairsville.

"The initial meeting we had, Mike Ruback, Richard Hoibraten and myself had discussed starting an Island, and we were hoping we could get the five members that we needed to start the Island," said Ed Crenshaw, who took over from Hoibraten as commander of Island X-3 in the most recent meeting.

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UCHS Alum Rogers elected NOCAD president

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer



Terry Rogers

In January, former Union County High School Head Football Coach and Athletic Director Terry Rogers was elected as President of the National Organization of Coaches Association Directors (NOCAD) after serving as its Vice President in 2015 and on the Board of Directors from 2012 to 2015.

After being elected President at the NOCAD national meeting in Phoenix back in January, Rogers still maintains his post as the Executive Director of the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association (GACA), a position he has held for the previous eight years.

"I'm still Executive Director in Georgia, but at

the national convention, the directors from each state have a vote to nominate an Executive Director from one of the other

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Cruise-in with Blairsville Cruisers

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer



All proceeds from ticket sales and donations go toward local children's charities, including the Blairsville Police Department's "Shop with a Cop" program.

The Blairsville Cruisers will be holding their first "Cruise-in on the Square" of the year this Saturday, April 16, from 4 p.m. until dusk.

As is always the case, loud music and good tunes will be heard, and patrons can take part in a 50/50 drawing and raffle prizes.

Of course, a Blairsville Cruisers Cruise-in wouldn't be complete without the annual car raffle, this year featuring a 2002 Silver Mustang GT Convertible, and tickets for the raffle are only a \$5 donation for one, or a \$20 donation for 5 tickets.

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With eyes to the future, Kiwanis takes down old signpost

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer



Highway, right before you get to Pruitt Circle, though no one would remember the fence that has

Members of the Blairsville Kiwanis Club gathered just after sunrise on Saturday, April 2, to conduct their annual "Kiwanis One Day" project.

The project this year was to take down an historic marker of sorts - the old signpost bearing the signs of local civic organizations, a few of which no longer maintain active representation.

Residents will remember the fence that has

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Brand new Nottely Trail ready for visitors



Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris cuts ribbon with TVA's Eastern Operations Manager Chris Cooper and friends, commemorating historic opening of Nottely Reservoir Trail on Friday, April 8.

By Shawn Jarrard
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Valley Authority opened the Nottely Reservoir Trail with a ribbon-cutting and much fanfare from a diverse gathering of community stakeholders on Friday, April 8.

"What TVA has done for Union County with this project is incredible," said Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris during his words of welcome. "It may take a year or two for people

to really have time to get out here and see it and realize what's out here, but I can tell you, even though standing right here it may not look all that impressive, this is an amazing trail and one of the most incredible pieces of property in Union County."

The trail, which is 2.6 miles round trip and located about a mile past Nottely Dam on the left, is the culmination of several years of planning and hard work that began with a single meeting.

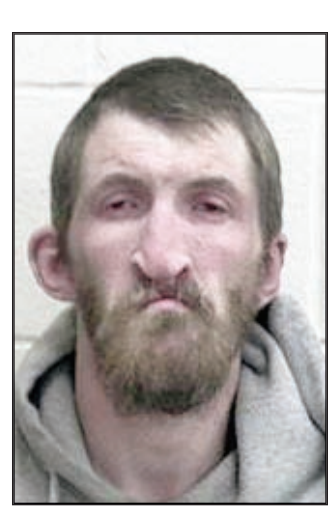
"Three years ago, Lamar, Larry (Garrett) and I sat down and started an overall scheme of how we could make public land available, where we could - this is the only place on the lake that belongs to TVA, so it set the wheels in motion," said TVA Watershed Representative Kemmy Garrett, explaining that the partnership started with the construction of a trail below the dam before moving on to begin the trail around Friday.

See Trail, Page 8A

UCSO takes more drugs off streets



Pamela Lynn Franklin



John Thornley

Two Blairsville residents were arrested in late March thanks to a pair of unrelated

investigations conducted by the Union County Sheriff's Office.

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Kevin Williams Memorial Bench Dedication
April 14th
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SPORTS BASEBALL
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Mon Apr 18 @ Murphy NC 4:30 PM
Soccer
Wed Apr 13 vs. Rabun Gap 5 & 7 PM
Fri Apr 15 vs. Washington Wilkes 5:30 & 7:30 PM