

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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April 20, 2016

Union honored as 'Four for the Future' community

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Athens - Local leaders and community partners represented Union County and Blairsville in receiving the prestigious "Four for the Future Award" at the University of Georgia's 25th Annual Public Service and Outreach Awards Luncheon on Monday, April 11, at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

In attendance for the ceremony were the highest levels of UGA leadership, including University President Jere W. Morehead, Provost Pamela S. Whitten, and Jennifer Frum, vice president for Public Service and Outreach, as well as elected officials from the area. The luncheon arrived on the heels of a recent *Georgia Trend* magazine article highlighting the accomplishments of the county and why it was

chosen as one of four communities in a statewide pool of possible award recipients.

"For the fourth year, *Georgia Trend* magazine and the University of Georgia's outreach programs will present the 'Four for the Future Awards,' recognizing community collaboration, leadership and innovation across Georgia," said Frum as an introduction to the award.

Frum and Neely Young, who is the publisher and editor-in-chief of *Georgia Trend*, presented the awards, and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, and Tourism Director Tobie Chandler of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce joined Frum, Neely and Whitten on stage when it came time to accept Union County's "Four for the Future Award."

"The purpose of these awards is to acknowledge



L-R: Joey Swanson, Darren Harper, Tobie Chandler, Commissioner Lamar Paris, Jim Conley, Jennifer Frum, Mitch Griggs and Regina Allison were in Athens on Monday, April 11, to receive the "Four for the Future Award." Photo/Shannah Cahoe Montgomery.

communities and regions that have worked with the private

sector and with nonprofits for challenging issues," said Young. "The award recipients represent across-community

partnership and the promise of long-term community benefits, and the work reflects the land-grant mission of the University of Georgia."

The occasion marked a celebratory milestone for Union County, as it was handpicked for its work with UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government on a community rebranding project that wrapped up in August 2015.

In a public meeting last August, key community stakeholders and several of the Carl Vinson staff revealed the "Believe It" tagline to represent the collective branding effort of Union County moving forward. Those stakeholders were Commissioner Paris, Mayor Conley, Union County Development Authority Director Mitch Griggs and then-President of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of

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Moonshine and museum just around the corner

By Charles Duncan
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In early 2012, Tommy Townsend learned that making moonshine in Georgia was now legal.

He passed along that information to his wife Christy Townsend. He also told her of his passion to bring his Granddaddy Mimm's family recipe back to life.

"Tommy is a musician and I thought he was just kidding," Christy Townsend said. "After spending 32 years with him (we started dating when I was a sophomore and he was a junior in high school), I began to realize he was very serious."

Tommy Townsend, the front man for Waymore's Outlaws, the band that backed Country Music Hall of Famer Waylon Jennings, and who tours the continent with Jennings' son, Shooter Jennings,



Tommy Townsend's dream coming to fruition. Photo/Charles Duncan

was very serious.

And four years later, the Townsends, who work in tandem to make the moonshine business work, are anticipating an early summer opening of tours at their "Back in Time" moonshine museum, at 161 Pappy's Plaza, Blairsville.

"We opened the gift shop last year, and we've been busy converting that into the museum during that time frame," Tommy Townsend said. "It's all about the heritage, my Granddaddy Mimm from Young Harris, the tourism it should bring in, along with the tax revenues."

"It will mean a lot to this community," he said. "It's a special place in our heart. I've lived in Nashville, Tenn., for 27 years, but Blairsville has always been home. No matter where I am,

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4-H shotgun teams headed to state

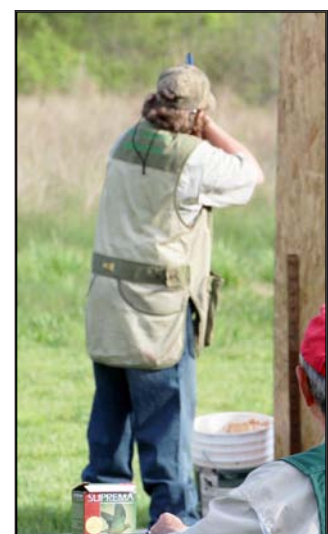
By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

All 33 4-H'ers who competed in the 2016 4-H S.A.F.E. District Shotgun Qualifying Match qualified for the State Modified Trap Meet, which will be on Saturday, May 7, down near the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton.

The District Match took place at the Industrial Park area in Union County on Saturday, April 16, and 140 shooters from eight different counties participated in the event.

Ten Junior teams, featuring seventh- and eighth-graders and 19 Senior teams, composed of fresh-

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Junior team member Travis Kerr, a first-time competitor, qualified for the State Meet with his 22 of 25 score in the modified trap shoot District Qualifying event on Saturday, April 16.

City hears retirement presentation

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Rusty Walker and David Atkins, both officers with the Blairsville Police Department and both military veterans, made a presentation to the Blairsville City Council at the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 5.

Their presentation had to do with retirement for city employees with military experience, and the two made it clear that they were submitting their presentation for the council's consideration at that time, and not for immediate approval at the April 5 meeting.

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Blairsville Police Officers David Atkins, credit, and Rusty Walker discuss the possibility of military service credits toward their city retirement plans at the regular meeting of Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley and city council on Tuesday, April 5. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

Kiwanis fair a hit with families

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Everyone's favorite fair - the Blairsville Kiwanis Fair - may have come and gone already, but for six glorious, topsy-turvy days, children and grown-ups alike laughed and had a grand ol' time under the Little Big Top.

Now in its seventh year, the Kiwanis Fair spanned April 12 through April 17, filling nearly an entire week with carnival goodness.

From the just-right sweetness of funnel cake to the tinny tunes of the circus calliope, the Kiwanis Fair offered residents far and wide

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Locals ride the Paratrooper gleefully on Saturday. The Paratrooper was just one of many rides to experience. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Prom 2016 an enchanted evening for students

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

In just four short hours, students danced, made merry and made memories to last their lifetimes at the Union County High School event of the year - the 2016 Junior-Senior Prom at North Georgia Technical College on Saturday, April 16.

Seniors spent the evening with friends, their dates or both, having one final hurrah before graduation and the hurrying demands of "the real world," and juniors, sophomores and freshman had equally thrilling evenings surrounded by lifelong buddies and budding romances alike.

The theme for this year's prom was Disney, and the entrance to the dance hall featured attendees' names elegantly lining the way in a

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UCHS students dance the night away at the 2016 Junior-Senior Prom, which took place at North Georgia Technical College on Saturday, April 16. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

UCSO sponsors Conceal Carry class open to public

By Charles Duncan
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The Haralson Memorial Sheriff's Office will be abuzz with activity on April 28.

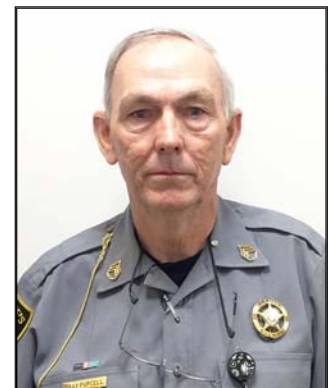
Beginning at 6:30 p.m., the department will host a meet and greet with community members.

At 7 p.m., the department will sponsor a Conceal Carry class, open to the public and free of charge.

Union County Sheriff's Office US Sgt. Billy Purcell, will conduct the training.

US Sgt. Purcell has more than 30 years of experience in law enforcement. He is a P.O.S.T. certified instructor with firearms and defense tactics.

From 1986 to 2010, US Sgt. Purcell was senior in-



SSgt. Billy Purcell

structor at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Police Academy. In addition, he was the assistant director of the academy from 2002 to 2010.

SSgt. Purcell has a degree in Criminal Justice and

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SPORTS BASEBALL

Thurs. Apr 21 @ Andrews 4:30 PM Soccer

Tues. Apr 19 @ Lumpkin Co 5:00 & 7:30

Thurs. Apr 21 @ Oglethorpe 5 & 7 PM

Fri Apr 22 vs. Towns % & 7 PM