

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## County approves revisions to alcohol ordinance

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris held a second reading and approval of several revisions to the Union County Alcohol Ordinance in his regular monthly meeting on Thursday, June 16.

The revisions come after much hard work done by the Union County Alcohol Board, which offered most of the revisions as recommendations for the commissioner as 2016 amendments.

Two of the amendments included in the 2016 revision of the alcohol ordinance were handed down from the 2015 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly. These state-level revisions



Commissioner Lamar Paris

included making powdered alcohol forbidden and illegal in all circumstances around the state. The other revision said that, "when there is a local disciplinary action involving the alcohol ordinance, both the violator and

the county must report it to the (Georgia) Department of Revenue," according to Commissioner Paris.

The following other changes to the alcohol ordinance were adopted in the meeting last Thursday:

Criminal record background checks now go back three years instead of five, giving people an easier shot at a second chance for certain types of employment involving the sale of alcohol, even with a mistake or two in their pasts, according to the commissioner.

Furthermore, the new 2016 revised ordinance eliminates the need for fingerprinting during background checks, a cost-saving measure for potential employees that was previously required for employee permits.

All employees at all checkout registers where alcohol can be purchased are now required to have an employee permit allowing them to complete sales of alcohol, and this rule was made to apply to every business - Walmart, for example, was previously exempt from this requirement, according to the commissioner.

Temporary permits for "new, probationary employees" are now good for 45 days instead of 30 days, when said employee is working in a licensed establishment.

Class B game machines are now allowed, but are subject to strict regulation and licensing by the Georgia Lottery Commission.

A change was made to the requirement of a licensee's presence where alcohol

is sold. Before the 2016 revisions were adopted, a licensee - which can be a manager of a business and not necessarily the owner - was required to work a third of the hours the store was open, during at least two months of each quarter.

In order to more fairly treat businesses that are open around the clock, the updated ordinance requires licensees to work a third of the hours that the store sells alcohol (during at least two months of each quarter), not when the store is open.

Another change to the alcohol ordinance did away with the requirement for the registered agent of a location selling alcohol to need a full background check. However, they must still be "a Union County resident, and will be responsible along with the li-

cencee for matters and notices relating to the license."

The first reading of the ordinance occurred in the May 19 county meeting, and the commissioner held a public hearing on Monday, June 13, to discuss the 2016 amendments to the ordinance with residents of the county.

Also in the county meeting, Commissioner Paris approved the contract between Union County and Roof Management, Inc. for the installation of a new roof on the Pat Haralson Memorial Civic Center.

The total cost of the contract was \$157,425.

"This has been a long time coming," said Commissioner Paris. "We have pieced and patched and tried to avoid

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## Meeks Park to host Chamber's annual fireworks show



Last year's crowd at Meeks Park awaits the annual fireworks show. They weren't disappointed as everyone went home very happy. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

This Monday, July 4, will mark the 240th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which heralded the beginning of a new nation starting with just 13 colo-

nies. Fast forward 240 years and 37 states later and Americans still celebrate their Independence from the British Empire by joining together with friends and family over food, fun and fireworks.

Every year in Union County, Meeks Park and the Blairsville-Union County

Chamber of Commerce offer residents a chance to bring their families out and celebrate their freedom in patriotic style with a free fireworks show.

And the Meeks Park Fireworks, set to take place Monday evening at 9 p.m., will be bigger and better. See Meeks Park, Page 3A

## Suches ready for 4th of July fireworks

By Jim Miner  
North Georgia News  
News Special

Suches - On Monday evening, July 4th, on the field behind the Woody Gap School in Suches, the Suches Fire Department will present their annual Independence Day fireworks display in what has become a Suches tradition.

The fireworks will begin at dark but the festivities start earlier as the Suches community and visitors gather around 7 p.m. for hot dogs, soft drinks and snacks and the chance to meet friends, old and new. It is also planned that there will be patriotic and old time mountain music both recorded and (hopefully) live featuring local musicians.

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Hundreds will anticipate Monday's 4th of July fireworks.

## BOE recognizes achievement

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Board of Education had a night full of awards and recognition at their monthly meeting on Tuesday, June 21.

FFA High School Advisor John Clark Pettit brought four out of the six members from the 2016 - 2017 FFA Officer Team to present the meeting with a presentation honoring Board Chairman Gary Davenport with an honorary DFA membership.

"Thank you for giving us a minute tonight, not to ask for anything or present any plans or ideas, but to allow our kids to pay a little respect and present a token of their appreciation," said Pettit. "Every year the mem-



BOE Chair Gary Davenport hands out awards to FFA's Austin Dyer and Jake McClure during last week's BOE meeting. Photo/Lily Avery

bers choose, and the students choose at their monthly meetings, people they would like

to recognize in the community. This past March, the of-

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## Independent qualifying this week, runoff early voting next

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Early voting for the July 26 Republic Primary Runoff will begin on Tuesday, July 5.

The runoff race in question is for the office of 8th District State Representative in the Georgia General Assembly, and voters will be deciding between Matt Gurtler and Kent Woerner.

Those interested in voting early can do so on weekdays between Tues-



Diane Nichols

day, July 5, and Friday, July 22, from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. each day.

The three weeks of early voting will take place in the Board of Registrars office inside the Union County Courthouse.

Tuesday, July 26, will be the actual Election Day for the runoff, and voting will run from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. that day, and voters will be voting at one of the 11 predetermined polling precincts on Election Day.

"There will be sev-

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## Patterson claims Dessert crown

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Union County Farmers Market always has a little bit of something for everyone, and this past weekend was no exception as free dessert tastings were offered up to support a good cause during the first American Cancer Society Dessert Contest, held in the Union County Canning Plant.

The Farmers Market teamed up with the Union County Relay For Life to get the contest up and running, donating all proceeds from the contest to the American Cancer Society.

"Mickey [Cummings] presented the idea to us, for us to have a day here," said Mia Crowe, Relay For Life Event Lead. "We immediately jumped on board with it."

"We loved the idea of it and we always like to spread awareness in any way that we can. Mickey had a few ideas on how this would all work so we took those and brainstormed."

"It's been a lot of fun."



Farmers Market patrons make some tough decisions in crowning the 2016 Dessert winner. Dot Patterson took top honors. Photo/Lily Avery

We've really enjoyed it. We've had a lot of people participate and come out to try the desserts.

"This is the first time we've ever done this but we're hoping to make it an annual thing because at first I was afraid no one would come back here but a lot of people are being supportive and the money coming in has

been fantastic.

"Everyone has been so generous, it's really wonderful."

While the Farmers Market typically hosts at least one dessert contest every couple of years, Farmers Market Manager Mickey Cummings wanted to change things up in

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## Boat Parade tradition continues

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Staff Writer

To the boaters of Union County, the time is nearly at hand - the 20th Annual Nottely Marina Fourth of July Boat Parade will be setting sail on Saturday, July 2, and all comers are welcome with no registration necessary.

Entrants into the parade are asked to be lined up at 11 a.m. that Saturday at the marina, after which there will be a pass in review at 11:30, followed by the awarding of trophies to best decorated boats at noon.



Nottely Marina is ready for the 2016 Boat Parade on July 2 at, you guessed it, Nottely Marina. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

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Saturday, July 2nd

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Monday, July 4th

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