

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Brackett returns to office; T-SPLOST canned, runoff in 9th

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Union County Probate Judge Dwain Brackett is back; T-SPLOST is dead; and Doug Collins and Martha Zoller are neck and neck at press time in the 9th District Congressional race.

Judge Brackett cruised to victory Tuesday night with a solid performance in Tuesday's primary over challenger Barry Weinstein.

Judge Brackett finished with 3,478 votes or 71.87 percent, to Weinstein's 1,344 votes, or 28.13 percent.

Judge Brackett said he couldn't be more happy.

"It was a good night and the good people of Union



**Judge Dwain Brackett**  
County have spoken," Brackett said. "It's a heart-warming experience and a very humbling experience."

Judge Brackett had a reception for his supporters at Grinds and Glazes.

The room was packed and each time election results were read, the crowd lit up the room with a hearty cheer.



**Barry Weinstein**  
overwhelmed by the show of support that I have received in this election," Judge Brackett said. "When you're in the midst of a campaign, you can never really be prepared for what the results may or may not be. Tonight, I was reminded of the supporters I have and the support I have for the way we run my office and I just want to thank the voters for

returning me to office.

"I am committed to them, I will continue to provide them with professional service from their Probate Court," Judge Brackett said.

The turnout for the primary was almost 38 percent with locals casting 5,046 ballots.

One of the hottest issues on the ballot in recent years drew a loud and resounding 'no' from Union County voters and voters in all 13 counties within the Georgia Mountains Region.

The transportation 1-cent sales tax was soundly defeated region-wide, with voters within the region turning the referendum back with

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Judge Dwain Brackett keeps up with Primary Election results at Grinds and Glazes on Tuesday. Photo/Todd Forrest

## Alexander's celebrates Glenda Gooch

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Glenda Gooch was looking down on her hometown of Union County and smiling on Wednesday.

That's because the Meet and Greet with Vera Bradley's daughter Joan Bradley-Reedy went really well.

The event, held at Alexander's Store on Town Creek School Road, raised much needed dollars to benefit the Glenda Gooch Foundation.

The store gave a portion of the proceeds from the event to the foundation. More than 250 people poured into the store to have a chance to meet Vera Bradley's daughter, Joan and purchase the ever popular quilted, cotton handbags, luggage and tote bags.

The Vera Bradley company also donated a limited edition bag to raffle off to benefit the local foundation.

Sandy Alexander said Alexander's Store was more than proud to contribute to the foundation and make a difference.



Kennetha Alexander, Sandy Alexander, and Kalan Adams of the Glenda Gooch Foundation pose with a beautiful portrait of Glenda.

"It's just an honor to do this," Sandy Alexander said. "When we were setting this event up, the foundation was the first thing that came to my mind.

"I feel it with all my heart that this community can do something to help the Thrift Store and make a difference in this community," she said. "It's a powerful way to

honor Glenda. This is an exciting day for the foundation and for Alexander's Store to do its part in helping with the foundation's mission."

Glenda, a native of Blairsville, was the recipient of a heart transplant when she was only 8 years old.

The community held a prayer vigil as she underwent surgery, and the vigil continued as she recovered. She was loved and respected, and the community watched her grow into a fine, courageous, young lady.

Early in 2008, at the age of 22, Glenda passed away from heart failure at Emory Hospital in Atlanta. Through the joint efforts of a loving family and community, the Glenda Gooch Foundation was created as a tribute to Glenda to keep her legacy and her spirit alive.

A portion of the proceeds generated from the Vera Bradley event at Alexander's Store will help needy children and their families that are struggling financially. It's just the way Glenda would have wanted it, said her close-

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## Buses ready to roll; 2,700 expected at Union schools



Marcia Barrett and Danita Stephens get the classroom ready for Kindergarten at the Primary School. Photo/Todd Forrest

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Those big yellow school buses will be back on the county roads this week as Union County Schools return to the classroom on Friday, Aug. 3rd.

The school system is expecting 2,700 students to fill its classroom seats and Stanley Garrett and his bus drivers are ready for the task getting them to and from school.

Teachers returned to the classroom on Friday, July 27. Garrett and his team have worked throughout the summer months to keep the system's school buses up to the task of another school year. Garrett would like to warn the community to use caution around school buses and school zones. Garrett and his team have been working since May to prepare the buses to escort the county's students to and from

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## Vera fans flock to Alexander's

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Joan Bradley-Reedy soaked in the mountain air as she walked gracefully into Alexander's Store on Town Creek School Road last week.

She stopped, took a deep breath and exhaled.

She turned to the lady standing beside her, smiled and proclaimed it was the freshest air she had breathed in quite some time.

Joan travels a lot, and the air was simply perfect in Blairsville on Wednesday, just off Town Creek School Road.

Joan was here to celebrate the Vera Bradley brand, a meet and greet celebrating the popular bags and luggage affectionately known as a girl's best friend.

While Vera's fans were inside the store, if you were standing outside, it was pretty obvious something pretty big was going on inside.



Customers at Alexander's Store get excited about Vera Bradley last week. Photo/Kennetha Alexander

A herd of husbands patiently waited outside while their wives anxiously anticipated meeting Joan, the Vera Bradley Brand Ambassador, and daughter of the brand's namesake.

She was nestled in a comfortable location within

the store, the spot where fans of the colorful Vera Bradley bags come to buy their favorite pocketbooks, luggage and totes.

One-by-one, Joan greeted Vera fans, signed their bags and luggage, posed for pictures and shared cake and cookies

with them.

Dietrich Brown, Alexander's Vera Bradley representative, and Kennetha Alexander were extremely busy slicing more than a dozen

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## Green Bean Fest a hit



Green Bean Beauty Pageant winners celebrate on Saturday at the Festival. Photo/Janice Boling

By Janice Boling  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Fresh produce, homemade crafts, various exhibits, a dunking tank, festival food court, low country boil, recipe contest, canning contest, pizza eating contests, 5K race, bike ride, beauty pageant, square dance, door prizes, Mr. Green Bean Man, live music, games,

a climbing wall, bungee jumping, petting zoo, pony rides, free medical screenings, and the Kazoo Band concert were all part of the 3rd Annual 2012 Green Bean Festival.

With the event heavily promoted in the North Georgia News, on radio spots, and even picked up by FOX 5 News, The Union County Farmers Market was filled to

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## A busy July Commission meeting

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris awarded six local community grants and discussed new business at the July Commission Meeting.

The first order of busi-



Commissioner Paris and the recipients of the 2012 Community Grants. Photo/Todd Forrest

## UCSO busts meth lab; 3 arrested

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Acting on an anonymous tip, the Union County Sheriff's Office discovered an active methamphetamine laboratory last week on Golden Ridge Road in rural Union County.

Sheriff Scott Stephens said that three people were

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Task Force members remove chemicals from a suspected Meth Lab last week in Union County. Photo/Union County Sheriff's Office

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**Suches Fire Station Community Appreciation Day**

Saturday, August 4  
6PM  
Suches Community Center  
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**4th Annual Union County Farmers Market Community Flower Show**

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**3rd Annual Tomato Day Free Tomato Sandwiches**

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**Blairsville Cruisers Block Party**

Friday, August 3 • 5 PM - Dusk

Blairsville Walmart Parking Lot

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