

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Vietnam Moving Wall arrives Oct. 8th

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Moving Wall Memorial is coming to Meeks Park in Blairsville, and will be available around the clock and free to the public during its stay between Thursday, Oct. 8, and Monday, Oct. 12.

Arriving that Thursday morning, The Moving Wall – a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. – will bring with it a time of silent reflection for the many brave members of the United States Armed Forces who died or are still missing as a result of the Vietnam War.

As of May 25, 2015, there are 58,307 names etched into the mirror-like black granite of The Moving Wall.

Among this enormous list of Vietnam War casualties gone but not forgotten are the names of area service members who lost their lives during the war.



Brave soul from Union County are: Roger Ray Brown, age 21, Herbert Carson Davis, 20, Anthony Edwin Elliott, 23, John Henry Woody, 23, Charles F.

Lance and Preston H. Patterson. Brave souls from Towns County are: Ernest William Garrett, 21, and Clyde Owenby, 21. Brave souls from Fannin

County are: Leslie Howard Cantrell, 36, Jewell Robert Green, 20, David Mack Herndon, 24, Jeppie Joseph Payne, 48, Donald Wayne Queen, 23, and John Arthur Swords, 21.

Brave souls from Lumpkin County are: Bobby Jene Fields, 31, Houston Grant Jr., 32, and Tommy Herman Swain, 20.

Brave soul from White County, Kenneth Gibbs, 19.

Brave souls from Cherokee County, NC, are: Thomas Edward Brown, 20, James Clinton Bryant, 24, William Ralph Graves Jr., 23, Ronald Gene Hembree, 21, Raymond T. Mashburn, 20, Raymond Farley Trantham, 19, William Danny Morrow, 19, Miles Henry Nelson, 33, Jimmy V. Smith, 21, Richard Herbert Wilson, 21, Billie Jack McClure, 35, Lowell Vetter Smith, 34, and Michael L. Garland.

Brave soul from Clay County, NC, David Leon Dailey, 19.

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Indian Summer Festival this weekend in Suches

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Suches - The 38th edition of the renowned Indian Summer Festival kicks off this weekend, bringing visitors from near and far to Suches for two days of food and excitement with a coloring book of fall foliage providing a spectacular backdrop of reds, purples, oranges, and yellows while listening to the trickle of the crystal-clear waters of a mountain stream that flows through the grounds.

The festival originated in 1977 when a few local parents of Woody Gap students organized the Woody Gap Sports Club and were met with the pressing need of acquiring uniforms for the Falcons basketball teams and its cheerleaders.

Over the past 38 years, the festival has expanded, and with all proceeds going to Woody Gap School and its students, the generosity of the community has grown beyond supplying uniforms.

"Every dime we make goes back into the school," said Larry Wood, a founding member of the Sports Club. "Nobody makes any money."

Now the festival has



The 38th Annual Indian Summer Festival takes place this weekend to benefit Woody Gap School.

contributed sports equipment, trophies, computers, electronic equipment learning devices and more.

As for this year's version of the Indian Summer Festival, Wood says, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

On Saturday morning, runners will begin lining the track in front of the Woody Gap Schools for the Annual Run Above the Clouds, which consists of a 10K race, a 5K race, and the 1-mile Fun Run.

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Save the Date: Oct. 10th Sorghum Festival

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The 46th Annual Blairsville Sorghum Festival is bringing its authentic brand of mountain heritage to Meeks Park the second and third weekends in October.

The festival kicks off Saturday, Oct. 10, when the Sorghum Mill gears up for the crushing and cooking of sorghum at 9 a.m. Vendors also begin to demonstrate and showcase their wares at this time, with live music shortly following at 10:30 a.m.

Also on Saturday, Oct. 10, the 2015 Sorghum Festival Parade makes its way from the Old Middle School Gym to Meeks Park.

This year's parade is all about patriotism, and float builders are encouraged to



embrace the theme: "American Pride... All Gave Some... Some Gave All."

Special to this year's festival and parade is The Moving Wall, a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans

Memorial in Washington D.C. The Moving Wall will arrive at Meeks Park on Thursday, Oct. 8, and will be on display around the clock until its closing ceremony on Monday, Oct. 12.

This puts The Moving Wall to Meeks Park the same time as the Sorghum Festival, and the Blairsville Sorghum Festival Board decided to highlight The Wall's presence by incorporating the patriotic theme for this year's parade.

"We're trying to revolve everything around The Moving Wall," said Festival Club Treasurer Kim Bridges, who co-organized the festival. "The Wall won't be here the second weekend, but we're trying to revolve the parade and the festival around that. The (Union County) High School chorus is going to come down right after the parade and kind of kick off the festival by singing the national anthem for us."

Union County's own Alan Kay – winner of The

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Rewarding student achievement

By Shawn Jarrard
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It's not always easy to get up in the morning, especially when fighting a cold or after late nights doing homework, but Union County High School students are being rewarded for their good attendance this school year with a new attendance initiative program.

The program aims to teach students the importance of good attendance when it comes to employability, where hard work is rewarded in the workplace.

"We as administrators



Perfect attendance earned these five UCHS students lunch at Chik-fil-A with UCHS Principal John Hill. attend regional economic development meetings, and we have a lot of conversation with

local employers about their needs," said UCHS Principal John Hill. "We understand as a

school principal, and as a high school student, I feel like my job is not only to prepare our kids for postsecondary education, whether it's technical college or university, but to prepare our kids to be employable.

"A big part of that employability skill is being able to be on time and have good attendance as an employee. So, we think we need to, at the high school level, prepare our kids for what's going to be demanded of them in the workforce."

For the purposes of the reward program, perfect attendance is defined as zero

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HSMS pulls out the stops; it is a dog and cat's world

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Our four-legged friends can easily become family, but who is there to provide nutrition, medical attention, grooming, love, and more to those that are abused and neglected?

That's where the Humane Society Mountain Shelter of Union and Towns counties steps in. And the most successful fundraiser for the shelter is September's "Puttin' on the Dog" held at the Union County Farmers Market.

The 15th edition of the annual money-raising event featured wine tasting, live music, live auctions, silent auctions, raffles, and catering.

However, many in attendance were carrying a heavy heart due to the recent passing of former Mountain Shelter Manager Tricia Spear, who passed away earlier this year at the age of 45 following



a battle with cancer.

"She (Spear) worked for the humane society for 15 years and will be sadly missed," said event emcee JoAnne Leno. "She was always the backbone behind 'Puttin' on the Dog.'"

Ken Snyder also gave a very touching tribute to the memory of Spear.

Following Snyder's tribute, they turned around and did a very nice tribute to

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Pumpkins galore at Farmers Market

By Shawn Jarrard
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Fall is in the air, and as such, the Union County Farmers Market celebrated The Great Butternut Creek Pumpkin Festival on Saturday, Sept. 26.

"Please bring in their large pumpkins, large watermelons, large tomatoes and sweet potatoes, those type things," said Market Manager Mickey Cummings of the competition part of the festi-



The ribbon winners at the Great Butternut Creek Pumpkin Festival.

val. And the results were truly inspiring, as several entrants produced homegrown produce of staggering proportions.

Jordan Pandolph, a 15-year-old freshman at Union County High School, grew a First Place Ribbon-winning giant pumpkin, which weighed in at a remarkable 85 pounds.

Pandolph, who is a member of Union County

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It's Hammer time at Trackrock Campground

By Todd Forrest
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For 15 years, Trackrock Campground has hosted its biannual Hammer-In and last weekend marked the 29th edition of the event, which is nothing short of a blacksmith's dream.

The Hammer-In began as a few knife makers working under a pavilion and has grown leaps and bounds and now focuses on getting the kids involved and introducing them to a new hobby that doesn't include video games and iPhones.

"We got started when Frank's (Alexander) dad, Tommy (Alexander) told us that we could come up here and have a Hammer-In," said knife maker Carl Rechsteiner who has been involved since the event's conception.

"There were four or five of us and we did it under a pavilion and we've been here every year. What we've managed to do, with the help of the campground, is do this for free where the public can



come in and see what we do. What we're really trying to do is get kids out here to see what they can do with their hands instead of playing with electronics. We deal with the older kids and adults too but we really like to get the kids in here and get them involved.

"We do it for fun," he added. "All of us are knife makers in some range or another. Some of us are professionals, some of us are novices but it's a sharing thing and we get to teach kids, get together for fellowship, and it always turns out great."

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Gearing up for Halloween on The Square

By Shawn Jarrard
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With Halloween just around the corner, it's time once again for Blairsville and Union County to embrace the ever popular festivities of Hometown Halloween on the Square and Scarecrow-Ville.

Halloween on the Square will take place on Sat-

urday, Oct. 31, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., and will feature merchants from all over Blairsville and the surrounding area handing out free candy.

The Downtown Blairsville Square will be closed off during the event, and all who attend are encouraged to dress in their Halloween best for the evening.

Hometown Halloween on the Square is sponsored

by the Blairsville Downtown Development Authority, the Union County Historical Society and the many merchants who participate.

"For me, it's just like a big block party," said Blairsville DDA Program Manager Darren Harper. "Last year we had a lot of adults in costume, which is awesome. There are not many opportunities to trick or treat up here, so it's the one

place people can go and know they're going to get something. It's going to be safe, and there are other things to do downtown.

"I expect a lot of the restaurants and possibly some of the shops to stay open later because it's a Saturday night, and there will be, I would say almost 1,000 people on the

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Festival
Suches, GA
Oct 3rd & 4th

Run Above the Clouds

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at Meeks Park

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CROSS COUNTRY
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