

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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October 30, 2013

Hometown Halloween packs a crowd in Downtown

By Mason Mitcham
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

It was elbow-to-elbow Saturday in Downtown Blairsville.

Small, ghoulish characters invaded the town already crowded with scarecrows. Not to worry, there were plenty of Super Heroes to ward off any invasion of the Downtown Square.

No, it wasn't the next X-Men movie in progress; it was Hometown Halloween on the Downtown Square in Blairsville.

Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley got in on the act, arriving as a modern day Joker, of Batman fame.

City streets were blocked off, and only ghouls, goblins, Ninja Turtles, a few fairies, Supermen, sharks and aliens were allowed to enter Downtown.



There was candy a plenty at Hometown Halloween in the downtown on Saturday. No one got tricked at all.

Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll came appropriately dressed as, well, Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll.

Chief Carroll and his troops blocked off the Downtown Square, allowing costumed children and their sometimes-costumed parents

to gather in the downtown and get a year's supply of Halloween candy from various businesses, churches, and volunteer organizations.

The costumed ranged from the lighthearted - butterflies and princesses - to the ghoulish, and included everything in between.



No one got tricked at all. Turtles, fairies, Supermen, sharks, and aliens.

A remote-controlled UFO flew overhead - courtesy Dan Parker's drone.

As it grew darker, scarier creatures came out

See *Halloween*, 6A

Early voting continues through Friday in Mayor's race

By Charles Duncan
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City residents continue to go to the polls this week to decide between two-term Mayor Jim Conley, and political newcomer Tom Payton.

Early voting ends Friday and the next opportunity to go to the polls will be on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 5th.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Nov. 5th. The turnout in the City Election has been an incredibly low one, with less than 15 voters taking part in the election to date.

At press time, only 14 early City Election votes were in the ballot box, according to election officials.

Mayor Conley is seeking his third term as Mayor of

See *City*, 2A



Jim Conley



Tom Payton

Entwhistle surprised with Quilt of Valor

By Charles Duncan
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Terrence Entwhistle has done the Tour of Duty, now, he has the ultimate medal of honor.

On Sunday, surrounded by family and friends at his Blairsville home, Entwhistle was surprised in a ceremony presenting him with a Quilt of Valor.

Entwhistle, who served in the United States Marine Corps from 1966 through 1969, and served in the Vietnam War 1968-69, fought in three major battles during his tour in Vietnam, including the fight in Dan Nang, where he was exposed to Agent Orange.

Entwhistle then joined the U.S. Army in 1970, and served in U.S. Military Intelligence through 1999.

He received numerous Military honors, including the Legion of Merit.

The Quilt of Valor was



Terry Entwhistle was a happy man at his home on Sunday.

a special online request by his wife, Sandra, through the Quilts of Valor website.

The Quilts of Valor Foundation

See *Valor* 2A

More than 450 turnout for early voting for SPLOST

By Charles Duncan
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The lines haven't been long, and the opportunities to cast ballots have been ample.

With just three days left to cast early ballots, county residents have been slow to go to the polls to decide if they want to extend the current 1-cent Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax.

Unlike the 2012 General Election with record-high voter turnouts, locals seem disinterested in the vote to extend the SPLOST.

If approved, the county would hope to collect \$19 million, of which \$1.5 million would go to the City of Blairsville for city projects.

"I don't know how to read those numbers," Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said. "The trend has been that 50 percent or more of the vote has been coming in during early voting."

"I don't vote early, I



SPLOST would supply \$3.4 million for Parks and Recreation.

always vote on Election Day," Paris said. "I just hope that between now and Friday, folks come out to take part in early voting in this most important election."

"If they can't fit that into their schedule, Tuesday, Nov. 5th from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. is the only other chance to go to the polls," Paris said. "I really hope people get behind this vote. It's so important to the future of Union County."

The six-year run of SPLOST III comes to a close

in March 2015. The county is looking to extend the 1-cent sales tax for six years with an affirmative vote in November.

Collections, if approved by voters, would begin in April 2015.

The early ballot for SPLOST IV allows time to put the measure back on the ballot in two years if there is a negative vote with only minimal lapse in sales tax collections.

The city will receive 7.89 percent of the total collections from SPLOST IV, per an intergovernmental agreement with Union County government.

According to the deal, if project revenues exceed the amount called for in the referendum, the county may use those funds to complete any other county project.

Likewise, if the proposed city projects, come in under cost, the city may use

See *SPLOST*, 2A

Wings of Freedom Tour comes to a close

By Azure Welch
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris was out of breath last Monday.

He had just experienced the exhilaration of being on-board a B-17 Flying Fortress.

"It may be one of the most exciting things I've ever done," he said. "You're down in there, you see the machine guns, you're looking out over everything. It's one of the best thrills anyone could experience."

Wednesday, Oct. 23rd, The Wings of Freedom Tour came to an end.

Over the three days of the events, hundreds visited the Blairsville Municipal Airport's North Ramp to catch a glance of the elusive warbirds.



The Big Birds were flying last week at Blairsville Municipal Airport.

Three World War II airplanes were on display during this three-day event; the P-51 Mustang, the B-24 Liberator, and the B-17 bomber, which is actually nicknamed *The Flying*

Fortress.

These airplanes were the life blood of Allied Forces during WWII, which was said

See *Wings*, 3A

Earl's Reserve debuts at Odom Springs

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Steve Odom and family have taken the taste of France, and mixed in some hometown Blairsville flavor at the recently opened Odom Springs Vineyard in western Union County.

Odom Springs is a family owned estate located in the mountains of north Georgia.

Located on Odom Road, off of Highway 325, across from the old Breedlove's Store, the Odoms have turned the beautiful rolling hills of their family farm into a ripe Cabernet Sauvignon vineyard that is as easy on the eyes as the wine is on the taste buds.

Last week, the vineyard was open for a wine tasting with *Earl's Reserve* and



Odom Springs has rolled out *Earl's Reserve*. Photo/Todd Forrest

RoDawg Red available for the public to sample.

Unfortunately the recent gridlock in Washington has delayed several of the bottle labels which should arrive

any day, and allow the winery to offer a unique assortment of wines known as *Homemade Sin*, *Mountain Cabernet Sau-*

See *Winery* 2A

Merle puts on a show in Hiawassee

By Azure Welch
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Hiawassee - It has been six years since Merle Haggard and his band have darkened the doors at Anderson Music Hall.

But on a cold Friday night in Hiawassee, Haggard entertained an almost sold out crowd of more than 2,000 at Anderson Music Hall at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Before the iconic Haggard took the stage, Ashley Strickland and Steven Van Sheridan, both of Athens, the best female and male vocalist winners in the talent show where the prize was to be part of Merle's opening act, cut loose on the partisan Haggard crowd.

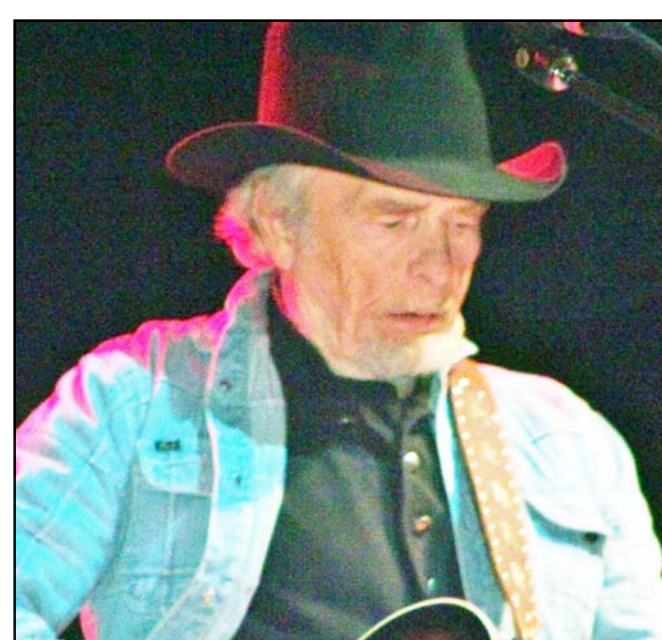
The crowd more than welcomed the multi-talented Strickland and Van Sheridan, who sang like they had been there before.

While Strickland and Van Sheridan held their own, it was obvious who this partisan crowd came to see.

The word "legend" usually makes an appearance at some point when the topic turns to discussing Haggard, who along with Buck Owens, launched the music known as *The Bakersfield Sound*.

It's an acknowledgment of his artistry and his standing as "the Poet of the Common Man."

It's a tribute to his incredible commercial success



Country Music icon in six years Haggard returned to Anderson Music Hall for the first time in six years on Friday. Photo/Azure Welch

and to the lasting mark he has made, not just on Country Music, but on American music as a whole. His performance at The Hall on Friday night was testimony true to this fact.

Not only was Anderson Music Hall's audience treated with the vocal stylings of a Country Music legend, they also were treated to an array of Haggard and Country Music souvenirs and memorabilia.

Haggard entertained the crowd with a few of the more than 40 No. 1 hits he's recorded through the years. He also delighted the crowd with his dynamic sense of humor.

Haggard performed hits like *Mama Tried*, and *I*

Think I'll Just Stay Here and Drink.

He performed a few of his newer songs, and tossed in a little *Okie From Muskogee*, and *The Fighting Side Of Me*.

Prior to his performance of *I Think I'll Just Stay Here and Drink*, Haggard sparred with the crowd, telling them "this song is dedicated to all those drunkards out there," and he quickly reminded the crowd that he was now "a reformed drunkard," who "doesn't drink anymore, and I don't drink any less."

His humor brought the

See *Haggard*, 3A

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SUCHES FIRE DEPARTMENT HAUNTED FIRESTATION
OCT. 31ST FROM 6-8 PM

The next **North Georgia News** edition will be held until **Wednesday morning** due to the election.

Fall Back
Don't forget to set those clocks back at 2 AM Sunday Morning

VARSITY FOOTBALL:
FRIDAY, Nov. 1st 7:30 PM @ Social Circle

CROSS COUNTY:
WED. Oct 30th 7:430 PM
Region 8 Championship Meet @ Riverside Military Academy in Gainesville