

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Honaker: 'Let us recognize them as heroes'

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

If you want to know what Veterans Day is about, just ask U.S. Army retired Master Sgt. Charles (Bill) W. Honaker Sr.

Honaker, the guest speaker for the Veterans Day Service and Luncheon at the Union County Community Center, told the standing room only crowd that there's more to war than meets the eye.

Honaker's service years included a rare glimpse of the veterans who gave their all for their country.

He spent 17 years of his 20 years of service in Graves Registration, or Mortuary Affairs, as it is known today.

"I cared for fallen warriors. For 13 of the 20 years I was on active duty, our country was embroiled in the Vietnam conflict. I served four years



Bill Hughes accepts the Commander's Award from VFW Commander Richard Hoibraten on Monday during Veterans Day ceremonies at the Union County Community Center. Photo/Todd Forrest

at the U.S. Army Mortuary two years as an instructor in my specialty; three years as the Army's senior GRREG NCO, rewriting Department of the Army policy

for my MOS to match conditions on the modern battlefield," he said. "I also inspected the readiness of Graves Registration units worldwide. "My job, whether in Germany or Vietnam, was to

recover, identify and safe-guard remains and personal effects of military personnel, and to insure their evacuation through proper channels to the

See *Veterans*, 6A

State Rep. Allison to speak at Union County GOP meeting

By Charles Duncan
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State Rep. Stephen Allison will break down the upcoming Georgia General Assembly session on Saturday at The Lodge at Copperhead.

State Rep. Allison is the featured speaker at the Union County Republican Party November meeting, which begins at 9 a.m.

Breakfast will be available for purchase beginning at 8:30 a.m.

State Rep. Allison represents Union, Towns, and Rabun counties, and a portion of White County.

State Rep. Allison will provide insight into the upcoming legislative session, which begins in January, detailing key legislative items that will be



State Rep. Stephen Allison

focused on during the General Assembly session at the State Capitol in Atlanta.

State Rep. Allison also will answer questions related to the upcoming General Assembly session, and questions related to the state's lawmaking process.

Currently serving his third term in the State House, the veteran lawmaker serves

See *Allison*, 2A

Emma tops at State again

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Carrollton - Union County's sophomore Cross Country sensation Emma Garrison has done it again.

Garrison completed the course at Carrollton High School in 19:10, 38 seconds ahead of second place Lovett Lion Serena Tripodi, and more than 40 seconds quicker than her State Championship pace from 2012.

She is now in elite company as only the second athlete in school history to win multi-State Championships, and the first female to accomplish the feat. Chris Jones is the only other UCHS athlete to complete the feat.

"I guess that's a big deal," said a humble Garrison after the race. "But Monday will be just another school day."

See *Emma*, 3A



Emma Garrison tops Class AA's Cross Country charts again, winning her second state championship on Saturday. Photo/Todd Forrest

Mistletoe Market kicks off Christmas Shopping Season

By Charles Duncan
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The Christmas Shopping Season kicks off Saturday, Nov. 23rd at North Georgia Technical College.

That's when the 13th Annual Mistletoe Market & Sugarplum Tearoom begins the holiday shopping festivities.

The Mountain Regional Arts & Crafts Guild, Inc., a thriving organization of more than 85 talented artists and crafts people from the surrounding area, sponsors the annual event.

Mistletoe Market Craft Show will be held on Saturday, Nov. 23rd, 2013 from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 24th, 2013 from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. at North Georgia Technical College on Highway 515 in Blairsville.

Proceeds from the show's events support the Hiwassee Artisan Centre in Hiwassee that funds children's arts and crafts summer



The excitement is building for the 13th Annual Mistletoe Market.

fundraiser of the year.

While fundraising is a major part of the weekend, superior talent also is on full display as painters, sculptors, mapmakers, jewelry designers, woodworkers, and sewing artisans demonstrate their gifts on the spot as if at work in Santa's Workshop.

Many of them are retired

Others are making a living in their art field while a few are fresh out of college.

The show is held indoors and there is ample free parking and no admission charge. Lunch is available to purchase.

The event features a juried art show with more than

See *Mistletoe*, 2A

'Yes' for SPLOST IV means lots of new projects

By Charles Duncan
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Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris is ready to roll up his sleeves and get to work after voters supported the extension of Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax referendum by more than 70 percent last week.

However, even the Commissioner admits there's still 15 months on the existing SPLOST initiative.

However, when April 2015 rolls around, he figures to have a pretty good idea of how SPLOST IV will shape up.

"We are allowed to begin projects early, but we would have to evaluate the funding to be able to do that," Paris said.

The projects list for SPLOST IV includes acquisition of the Union County

See *SPLOST*, 3A



The 'yes' vote for SPLOST IV now means \$3.4 million for Parks and Recreation in Union County. Photo/Todd Forrest

Chief Carroll: 'Things could be tight in 2013'

By Charles Duncan
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2012's Shop With A Cop will be a tough act to follow, Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll admits.

Sixty-one children ages 11-17 were feeling very important last December. It was a record year for the Blairsville Police Department's Shop With A Cop program.

It's a new year and a new challenge, and Chief Carroll is worried about the economy again.

"I believe things are worse this year than last year," he said. "Times are tough, everything is and the kids are not expecting a whole lot of Christmas."

"We took 61 kids shopping last year, that's the most ever for our program," he said. "We've already got 60 kids wanting to go this year. There's more than that to tell the truth, but we'll just have to wait and see what we can do."

Donors to the program will soon commit dollars to make sure local children ages 11-17 have a bright Christmas. Chief Carroll said some have indicated that their donations might be down a bit in 2013.

"This entire program is based on donations," Chief Carroll said. "We're bracing for a tough year, but we're hoping for the best. This is a



Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll is hoping for a bright Christmas season for Shop With A Cop in 2013. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

really proud community, and they try to do everything they can to help us."

The officers who proudly wear the uniform of the Blairsville Police Department, and one of their biggest supporters, the Blairsville Crusiers, say this event is as much an event for them as it is for the children.

"We look forward to this as much as the children do," Chief Carroll said.

Shop With A Cop has lit up the faces of more than 500 local youth since the program began in 1999.

Each child is allotted a certain amount of money and they shop the way they want to.

Union County Family Connection, teachers

and other sources point the prospective shoppers in the direction of the Blairsville Police Department.

Many "Bear" Baxter said, don't shop for themselves.

"These are the kids that fall through the cracks," Baxter said. "It's the kids that are sort of in limbo when it comes to Christmas. Everyone likes to see the eyes of the little ones light up. Well, the tweeners (11-17) sort of get left out."

A record number of Shop With a Cop kids didn't get left out in 2012. That group was part of the most successful campaign in the program's history.

See *Shop*, 2A

Ledford, Stokes plead not guilty

By Charles Duncan
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Two Towns County women charged with the malice murder of a former Union County resident have pleaded not guilty in Towns County Superior Court.

Brittany Elizabeth Ledford, 21, entered a plea of not guilty during arraignment last week in Towns County Superior Court, court records show.

Rebecca Ann Stokes, 32, waived arraignment via her attorney David Turk, and Turk entered a plea of not guilty on Stokes' behalf, court records show.

Earlier this year, a Towns County Grand Jury handed up a 13-count indictment against the two women accused of murdering 53-year-old Diane "Dee Dee" Adams-Donaldson on June 17th.

Ledford, 21, and her reported lover, Stokes, have been charged with felony murder, malice murder, two counts each aggravated assault, tampering with evidence, and removal of a body from the scene of death, according to the indictment handed up in Towns County Superior Court.

Stokes also has been accused of terroristic threats for pointing a gun at Adams-Donaldson and firing it in

her direction, the indictment shows.

The murder, according to arrest warrants, occurred on June 17th at 500 Hickory Lane. Adams-Donaldson's body was loaded in a wheelbarrow and rolled to a home that had not been occupied since 1973, according to testimony during an Aug. 4th bond hearing for the two women. Adams-Donaldson's body was dumped in an abandoned well on the property, where it was recovered on July 11th, by law enforcement, according to investigators with the Towns County Sheriff's Office.

Enotah Judicial Circuit
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Haralson Civic Center
November 12th • 12:30 - 5 PM

Give Blood...
Give Life.
Haralson Civic Center
November 12th • 12:30 - 5 PM

Marine Corps League Toy Drive
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Woody Gap School Construction Class Fruit Fundraiser
Last day to order is November 15th!

Varsity Football: State Tournament Friday, November 15th @ Lovett 7:30 PM
Basketball: Scrimmage Tues. Nov 12th Hiwassee Dam 6 PM & 7:30 PM