

# UCHS...from Page 1A

ready skills that we need to with our students.

"We want our kids, when they go to a job, to be reliable employees that employers can depend on to show up on time and do the job that's asked of them. So, this is on top of the things that the state charges us to teach children. We feel strongly, through conversations with employers, that this is what a lot of young people are deficient in. So we want to try to reinforce those skills that they're going to need to be successful in whatever their chosen professions may be."

Last time, the perfect attendance kids wanted to eat at the brand new Chick-fil-A restaurant.

This time, however, the kids chose the farm-to-table restaurant known as The Sawmill Place, and instead of going with Hill, two of his

assistant administrators joined the kids for lunch.

"It's just a good experience to get out of the building in a different setting, and kind of reward them for doing such a good job," said Hill.

Adams, who won the laptop, said she was surprised to have won the drawing for the laptop – but anyone who knows her would not have been surprised to find that she was in the running.

At only 16 years of age, Adams already works two jobs on top of having perfect attendance at school. She is also a member of the high school chorus program.

"It's really important to me to come to school, because I want to get into a good school for college, and it's just important to me to be here and make a point that it's not hard to be here," said

Adams.

Adams plans on becoming a teacher herself one day, and she realizes the importance of being on time, every time.

"I love this school," said Adams. "I've been to several different schools, and you don't see this much effort to make sure that the students understand what they're doing, and understand that it's important to come to school – that it shows up after high school."

Hill, always one to give credit where credit is due, said that the school system is so good because of its students and its teachers.

"You've got people that care, and it makes a difference when people actually care," said Hill. "That's the big thing, is teachers caring about their kids, and kids caring about being here, so the culture of this school is unique because of that."

# Yuletide...from Page 1A

Tchaikovsky's Waltz from Serenade for Strings, as well as Corelli's Christmas Concerto, some Christmas carols in a sing-along, and much, much more.

The musicians of the North Georgia Chamber Symphony donate their talents and their time in order to bring the concert to the people of Union County for free, which is in line with the rest of the concert series presented by the Historical Society.

Then on Saturday, Dec. 5, the Butt-Mock House will be open for tours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., showcasing life in the mid-1800s.

Returning this year to the Old Courthouse will be Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and a couple of his elves, and children can start lining up to take pictures with the jolly old man at 1 p.m. for the event that runs until 3 p.m., before Santa has to head off to join the annual Christmas Parade.

The Old Courthouse will be running an open house from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m., offering refreshments to those who attend the festivities.

Historical Society members have been hard at work getting the Old Courthouse ready for the yuletide season, hanging wreaths around the outside of the building and upon every door inside, and getting the big tree decorated inside the courthouse, which is so tall it requires a ladder for the finishing touches.

"Every room has been decorated," said Joanne Sales, office manager for the Union

County Historical Society. "It took us about two weeks with volunteers. We had about five volunteers working here. They did the outside flower pots, they decorated the tree – and it takes a long time to decorate that tree."

Bill Graff, a part-time employee of the Historical Society, played an integral part in helping with some of the more difficult decorating tasks, such as the top of the tall tree inside the courthouse, or some of the wreaths hanging high on the outside of the building.

Continuing with events this upcoming Saturday will be the Christmas Parade, organized by Historical Society member Libby Stevens, which will begin at 4 p.m., and will feature floats designed by businesses and a handful of individuals, all of whom should be tossing candy to children.

The Union County High School band will also be a

key part of this year's parade, performing Christmas music and keeping things as festive as possible until the parade makes its circuit around the square and the time comes for the annual Christmas tree lighting.

"The Smokie Mountain Melodies will sing carols when we light the Christmas tree at 5:30 p.m.," said Sales.

Members of Enotah CASA, a group of court-appointed child advocates, will be lining the square and streets of downtown with luminaries prior to the tree lighting, and once it becomes dark, the group will light the luminaries at 6 p.m. to add to the special atmosphere that Saturday.

The Lighting of the Blairsville Luminaries is a fundraiser for Enotah CASA, and those interested in purchasing one of the luminaries – which are, of course, free to behold this Saturday – should visit enotahcasa.org.



# Harper...from Page 1A

As it stands, there are two lots with GA 515 road frontage, which should draw big developers into the fold.

"The lot closest to America's Home Store and the lot just on this side of the off ramp where the old ramp is, the two lots facing 515 are our moneymakers, because obviously they face 515, they've got higher visibility, therefore the dollar amount is more," said Harper.

Those lots on GA 515 are what Harper and the DDA will concentrate on selling first, as the money they make there will go toward bringing further development into the Haralson

Project.

"On Pat Haralson Drive, what we want is someone who's willing to build us something similar to Kings 5 & 10, where you've got on-street up here, and you've got retail on the bottom floor," said Harper. "We want the same type of concept here so that we have on-street shopping, and then shopping underneath that faces into this lot."

The lots between Pat Haralson Drive and GA 515 will have more of a Downtown Blairsville feel, Harper hopes.

"Our goal is to influence (incoming businesses) to help us build something that's cohesive

to downtown," said Harper.

Ideally, Harper said that the entire Haralson Project could be completed by the end of 2016, but putting a hard deadline on the venture is not practical at this point because they're still courting developers.

"That's why we're working with Mitch Griggs, because he has the contacts and the knowledge and the negotiation skills we need to get the right kind of people in here," said Harper.

Also in the works is development of a greenspace within the allotted area of the Haralson Project, which will be made available for patrons to rest and relax.

# Bandit brings holiday darkness

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer



The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC has discovered the culprit responsible for the holiday blackout.

"We had a raccoon crawl into the substation yard (in Blairsville), and actually climb up on our facilities there," said Dan Brewer, interim general manager of Blue Ridge Mountain EMC. "It got between the high voltage line and probably the steel in the substation."

"That created a short circuit just like you would have in your house, and that short circuit tripped a breaker that we have, which is just like a breaker you have in your house."

The power outage occurred at 7 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, and power was restored shortly thereafter at approximately 7:17 p.m., briefly interrupting family time and early Black Friday shopping alike that Thursday.

More than 3,000 individual service accounts were knocked out during that time, including Walmart, other local businesses and many residences in Blairsville and Union County.

"We had an employee who happens to live close to the substation, and as soon as (the power) went out he called in, and they sent him over to the substation, and he actually restored the service after he was able to check out what the problem was," said Brewer.

Unfortunately, the raccoon did not survive the encounter.

"This is not an uncommon occurrence," said Brewer. "It happens to us with squirrels on poles in people's back yards. It happens to us with raccoons, and occasionally you'll get a snake into a substation that will actually work its way up there

and do the same thing.

"It is almost always fatal for them, because you're talking about roughly 15,000 volts between them and the ground,

and that creates a pretty good arc and will fry most anything that's in the path."

Brewer has been interim general manager for only a few short months, but in that time, he's gotten to know that the employees of Blue Ridge Mountain EMC are some of the hardest working around.

"I've been very impressed with the employees here," said Brewer. "They are dedicated to serving the membership. They'll go out of their way to make things right."

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