

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

May 3, 2017

UCHS celebrates 'Sweet Southern Nights' in Murphy

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

MURPHY, NC – For the first time in recent memory, the Union County High School Prom took place outside of Union County.

Seniors, juniors and a small mix of underclassmen celebrated Prom 2017 with the theme "Sweet Southern Nights," which played well last Saturday night at The Hackney Warehouse in Murphy, North Carolina.

The venue's pebble-strewn courtyard, open to the night sky, offered weary students a cool reprieve from the intensity of the strobing lights, thumping music and fog machine of DJ Stinnett inside the warehouse.

Brittney Stinnett, a

Spanish teacher at the high school, was one of many to organize the prom this year, and she said The Hackney Warehouse approached the high school earlier this school year about holding the annual dance in Murphy for a change.

After consulting with student leaders at the high school who were involved in planning prom with Stinnett and other prom advisers, the venue was decided – The Hackney House it would be.

And if the number of students and frequency of dance moves served as any indication of student enjoyment last Saturday, the venue change was a welcome addition to the memories made at Prom 2017.

One of the more memorable moments came around 10 p.m., some three

hours after the dance began.

Surrounded by their peers, a majority of whom helped them to ascend to the heights of prom royalty, seniors Josh Owenby and Lydia Arrowood were crowned 2017 Prom King and Queen.

Their titles seemed to fit as well as their crowns, given that the couple was also voted Mr. and Mrs. UCHS for the Class of 2017 Senior Superlatives earlier in the school year.

Owenby and Arrowood, both 18, are high school sweethearts who have been dating for nearly four years, and they were excited to hear their names called out as King and Queen on Saturday.

"Prom is a great way to spend time with friends, when the class is all together for a

See Prom, Page 8A



Josh Owenby and Lydia Arrowood were crowned 2017 UCHS Prom King and Prom Queen on Saturday, April 29. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

Forgotten veterans find a home in national cemetery

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Thanks to the Missing in America Project, five previously forgotten veterans received Military Funeral Honors and interment at the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton on Wednesday, April 26.

Laid to rest last Wednesday were:

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Charles John Hodapp Jr., World War II Veteran; U.S. Air Force Sgt. Gary Lee Criswell, Vietnam Veteran; U.S. Army SP4 Christopher Allen Gunter, Vietnam Veteran; U.S. Army SP4 Louis Henry Klaier Jr., Vietnam Veteran; and U.S. Army SP4 Michael Salvatore Nicolo, Vietnam Veteran.

Before the efforts of the Missing in America Project

See Veterans, Page 2A



Veterans greet the five who were laid to rest at the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton on Wednesday, April 26. Photo/Sean Verma of MIAF

North Carolina man dies in two-vehicle crash on Georgia 515

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

A 69-year-old Florida man faces charges that include second-degree vehicular homicide resulting from a two-vehicle crash on Georgia 515 at Georgia 325 on April 21 in Union County.

James Wendall Clark, 70, a part-time resident of Cherokee County, North Carolina, died from injuries sustained in the crash. Clark was life-flighted to Union General Hospital after the crash, according to a Georgia State Patrol crash report.

Clark was one of three passengers in a black 2015 Toyota Highlander, driven by Paula Bradley, 69, of Wesley Chapel, Florida, according to the report.

According to the State Patrol, Bradley was driving eastbound on Georgia 325 and crossing Georgia 515. He failed to yield to a gray 2007 Ford Explorer driven by Danny Fields, 38, of Blue Ridge. The accident occurred at approximately 6:10 p.m., according to GSP.

The Ford Explorer struck the Toyota on the passenger side, causing it to rotate clockwise before striking a standing stop sign with the vehicle's driver side, according to GSP.

Nancy Bradley, 69, of Wesley Chapel, Florida, and Samuel C. Morgan, 72, of Hudson, Florida, passengers in the Toyota, were also injured and transported to Union General by ambulance.

See Crash, Page 2A

Violent fugitive from justice captured in Illinois

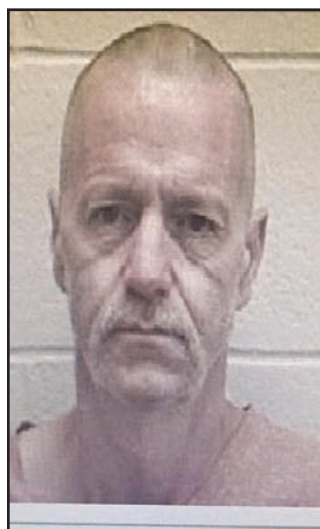
By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The hunt for Jeffrey Dean Cowan came to an end last week, when Cowan was apprehended without incident by police in Marion, Illinois, on Wednesday, April 26.

Cowan, 56, of a Blairsville address, had been on the run since his violent disappearing act on Sunday, April 23.

As previously reported, Cowan bonded out of the Union County Jail on April 23 with the help of local bondsman Buck Dills, according to Lt. Daren Osborn of the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Cowan said his wife had the money to pay Dills for the bonding fee, but her vehicle had broken down at the Dollar General near the



Jeffrey Dean Cowan

Booger Hollow Store, a story that turned out to be a total fabrication, according to Lt.

See Fugitive, Page 7A

Confederate veterans honored, remembered in ceremony

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The local Sons of Confederate Veterans celebrated Confederate Veterans Memorial Day by honoring two recently passed members alongside their Confederate ancestors on April 29.

Held at the Union County War Memorial last Saturday, the Sons of Confederate Veterans David W. Payne Camp No. 1633 conducted the memorial service, with assistance from the United Daughters of the Confederacy Smith's Legion Chapter 2699.

Camp Compatriot Scott Ledford called the service to order, and Camp Chaplain Edward Massengale led the invocation, after which he said a few words in honor of the group's two recently lost compatriots.

See Confederate, Page 3A



Jason Boshers, Army of Tennessee Councilman. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition reels in hungry residents with annual trout dinner

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Thursday evening was a little fishy in Blairsville as the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition hosted its 13th Annual Trout Dinner Fundraiser at the Haralson Memorial Civic Center on April 27.

Typically, the dinner is held in Meeks Park to enjoy the beginning of warm weather season but the rainy weather called for a change of venue. HRWC Director Callie Moore thought this might cause the turnout to be low but that was definitely not the case.

"We host the Trout Dinner every year mainly because it was our first

See HRWC, Page 7A



County Ag Agent Melissa Mattee transporting a haul of smoked trout, center, with Mickey Cummings and Patrick Fix on Thursday, April 27. Photo/Lily Avery

January Term 2017 Grand Jury Indictments continued

The following individuals were indicted during the January Term 2017 of the Union County Grand Jury, which met in April for the second time:

George David Gowder III, 54 counts fraud in obtaining controlled substance; seven counts unauthorized distributions and dispensation; four counts forgery in the first degree; violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act.

Jamie Lee Harkins, two counts fraud in obtaining controlled substance; two counts violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act.

Gail Nicholson Gowder, two counts fraud in obtaining controlled substance; two counts violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act.

Virginia Lou Harkins, two counts fraud in obtaining controlled substance; two counts violation of Georgia

Controlled Substances Act. **James Edward Garrett**, four counts child molestation; two counts sexual battery against a child under 16; three counts criminal attempt to commit a felony; two counts aggravated sexual battery.

Jordan Daniel Mashburn, aggravated assault; cruelty to children in the third degree; simple battery.

Stephen David Cavuoti, criminal damage to property in the second degree; two counts criminal trespass.

Cody Nicole Anderson, possession of a controlled substance; possession of drug-

See Indictments, Page 7A

Vol. 108 No. 17
4 Sections 32 Pages
Weather
Thurs: Rain Hi 62 Lo 42
Fri: Showers Hi 56 Lo 42
Sat: Cloudy Hi 63 Lo 45

Arrests 6A
Church 6A
Classifieds 5D
Opinion 4A
Legals 7D
Obits 6C
Sports 2B

DAY OF PRAYER
May 4th 6:30 PM
First Baptist Church
of Blairsville

EARTHfest 2017
"Celebrating our Local Roots!"
Saturday, May 6
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Historic Reece Farm

See page 6A

Spring Cruise-In At
Union Co. Nursing Home
May 7th

See page 6A

PANTHERS GOLF
Boys Only Thurs. May 4th
@ Old Union vs. Towns County

Mon May 8th Boys Area 3
Tourn. Catechee Golf Club