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# North Georgia News

3 Sections 26 Pages

Hometown Newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Wednesday, July 3, 2024

## Celebrate Independence Day at Meeks, in Suches

By Shelly Knight  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Each year, patriots across the nation come together as proud Americans to celebrate their freedoms that came with the founding of this country. And as always, Union Countians have multiple options to wish the United States a very happy 248th birthday.

Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President Steve Rowe said that the big Red, White & Blairsville Fourth of July Fireworks at Meeks Park are ready to assist families in honoring Independence Day.

On Thursday, July 4, people can start gearing up for the celebration as early as

noon by choosing their spots and setting up grills and tents to settle in for the long haul, with fireworks set to go off about 9:30 p.m.

Local churches will be in the Sorghum Field inside the park to provide plenty of food and fun things for children to do. While there, people can enjoy the playground, skate park, basketball court, tennis, disc golf, creek play and many other activities.

"We've seen as many as 18,000 people from across the county viewing the fireworks, and the lake fills up with boats looking for the best seat in the house," Rowe said.

There is no shortage of great viewing spots for the Meeks Park fireworks,

whether directly inside the park or at the North Georgia Technical College campus across the road. People even line up along Georgia 515, and other common viewing areas are at nearby businesses and churches.

"It's time for some outdoor fun—put the cellphones down," Rowe said. "This tradition has been going on for quite some time, and it's a good one to keep going."

Something special the chamber does each year is provide buses and a reserved area set aside for local nursing home patrons.

"We know one of the things the residents have said they miss the most is the chance to see the fireworks," Rowe

said. "We take care of that."

The annual chamber raffle, which helps to offset the cost of the pyrotechnics, will be held at about 7 p.m. There are great prizes like pontoon boat rentals and fishing trips on the line. Tickets are \$10 apiece and can be purchased by heading to the chamber or calling 706-745-5789.

Folks looking for a more out-of-the-way July 4 experience can attend the annual fireworks by the Suches Fire Department. The fireworks will shoot off at dark on Thursday, but festivities will begin at 5 p.m. at Woody Gap School, with food and drinks available for purchase.

"This event is made See Independence Day, Page 4A



Area residents can choose between multiple viewing locations for Independence Day fireworks on Thursday, including Meeks Park and Woody Gap School. Photo by Todd Forrest/2023

## Union Gun Range now open for Second Amendment practice



Local, state and federal officials joined members of the public to commemorate the Union County Gun Range grand opening with a ribbon cutting last Thursday. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Second Amendment enthusiasts gathered on Thursday, June 27, for the grand opening ribbon cutting of the Union County Gun Range – a top-of-the-line facility that will be the model for other public ranges in Georgia moving forward.

Due to limited parking for

the event, the Commissioner's Office provided a shuttle service for members of the public who wished to attend, ferrying guests from nearby Fire Station No. 12 to join numerous local, state and federal officials in celebrating the occasion.

Located off Georgia 180 East five miles from the Gainesville Highway turnoff, the range is a partnership between Union County

Government, the U.S. Forest Service and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, all of which sent representatives to the ribbon cutting.

Construction began in early 2023 and took about a year and a half to finish after the yearslong process to get the range approved at the federal level. And the wait paid off last week when the facility

officially opened to shooters on Friday, June 28, as the 46th public range in Georgia.

On July 10, 2017, following a concealed carry class hosted by the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Mack Mason and a plea published in the North Georgia News asked that anyone interested in forming a club with the goal of establishing a firing range stay See Gun Range Open, Page 4A

## Start of medical malpractice trial

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

A former patient of Union General Hospital is suing the hospital and other parties for alleged medical malpractice that resulted in the need to amputate her left arm and leg, court records show.

Jury selection in the civil trial has been scheduled to begin July 15 inside the Union County Courthouse, with the trial expected to last between three and four weeks.

Upwards of 1,000 jury summonses were issued the week of June 10 here in Union County – a larger than usual number given the status of the hospital as a well-known institution in the community.

Overseeing the case is The Honorable James E. Cornwell, a senior judge on the Etowah Judicial Circuit Superior Court.

Originally filed in 2017, the lawsuit has taken years to make it to trial due to "substantial discovery" by the parties involved – the case includes over 9,000

pages of filings – and judicial delays brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anna Giacomini, the woman bringing the lawsuit, suffered major injuries after being attacked by a donkey she was feeding at an undisclosed commercial farm in North Georgia in November 2015, according to past reporting by Channel 2 Action News. Giacomini settled with the farm in 2017.

Her injuries reportedly resulted in the development of a flesh-eating bacteria infection, which her lawsuit alleges was not treated in a timely manner during her weeklong medical stay in Union County, thereby causing the need for her amputations in December 2015.

Giacomini first received treatment for her Nov. 26, 2015, injuries at Northeast Georgia Medical Center, which is not a defendant in the case. She was transferred to the Union County Nursing Home for physical rehabilitation on Dec. 4, 2015, court records show.

According to Giacomini, See Malpractice Trial, Page 3A

## Hill discusses appointment to Kemp's Advisory Board

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Schools Superintendent John Hill has been appointed to Gov. Brian Kemp's Superintendent Advisory Board, as announced in the monthly meeting of the School Board in June.

Hill attributes the achievement to the success of the Board of Education, viewing his appointment as a reflection of not merely himself but also the administrators, staff and local board members who have helped make the School System so notable.

For seven years now, Hill See Hill's Appointment, Page 2A



School Superintendent John Hill, center, with First Lady of Georgia Marty Kemp and Gov. Brian Kemp. Photo/Facebook

## Duck Derby tickets on sale for Christmas fundraiser

By Brittany Holbrooks  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Attention Union Countians: it's again time to prepare for Butternut Creek to be filled with the plastic likenesses of cheerful ducklings. That's right, the annual Rubber Duck Derby will soon return to help raise funds for the Shop With a Cop for Christmas program benefiting local kids.

The curious aquatic phenomenon happens every year when folks purchase toy duckies from the Blairsville Police Department. Then, toward the end of summer, See Duck Derby, Page 2A



Blairsville Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter and Assistant Chief Shawn Dyer are happy to sell people tickets for the annual Duck Derby fundraiser at the Blairsville Police Department. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

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# Hill's Appointment...from Page 1A

has led Union County Schools as superintendent, and he looks forward to bringing back his experiences working with other education leaders on the board to enhance his ability to serve this community.

The Advisory Board essentially serves as the governor's eyes and ears in all things related to education in Georgia. Made up entirely of superintendents from across the state, each board member contributes his or her

educational and administrative experience toward discussing matters pertaining to the betterment of Georgia's schools.

Topics of discussion might include how to foster better attendance or why some students are out in the first place, finances and efficient fundraising, disciplinary action options, and tackling local issues that impact the success of a region's students.

"The governor lets us know when he wants to have a meeting," said Hill, who added that his duties will be the same as the rest of the board. That said, as the only member of the Pioneer Regional Service Agency represented there, Hill feels an obligation to help others. He hopes to bring more attention not just to Union County but to the surrounding area as well.

"Northeast Georgia is fairly geographically isolated and historically not very well represented in Atlanta," Hill said. "So, I think it's a good opportunity to just

have a conversation with the governor."

Though not as populated as the urban sprawl, Hill believes it's still important to offer the same opportunities for success to students growing up at the foot of the Appalachian Mountains. Hearing different points of view and gaining an audience with Kemp is a good way to bring more diversity to problem solving and might garner more attention when a need for input or help from outside the community arises.

July 10 will be Hill's first time visiting the Governor's Mansion and his first meeting as part of the Advisory Board. For now, he will focus on listening and interjecting only when necessary, as he wants to take time to learn the ropes.

Eventually, he does want to bring attention to school funding and affordability, especially as they relate to the Pioneer RESA region.

With the "local fair share" of education costs going up due to increased property values, the local revenues

needed to keep Union County Schools running at their best have skyrocketed.

"Since North Georgia's property values have risen post-COVID, that does impact government funding," said Hill, adding that he believes the issue to be a "fairly substantial" topic worth bringing up to the Advisory Board when the time is right.

Rising costs generally, such as increases in health care expenditures for school employees, have resulted in the largest budget the system has ever seen, which is having to be met with more and more local dollars as state funding is cut.

In the case of the FY2025 Budget, this has translated to expenditures outweighing revenue, so reserves are having to be used to cover the shortfall.

It's not an ideal position to be in, and Hill plans on raising awareness for the issue. Otherwise, he said that any sort of issues brought up in the future would depend on those faced by the RESA, and for now, things are stable.

# Duck Derby...from Page 1A

these ducks "race" down the creek at the Union County Farmers Market.

Each duck sports a number on its bottom registered to whoever bought its corresponding ticket. It helps to think of the Duck Derby as a communitywide raffle.

"This thing's turned out to be a whole lot bigger than we ever thought it would be," Blairsville Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter said, and he was quick to add that the fundraiser's success is due to the generous support of the community.

Derby proceeds end up in a bank account set aside specifically for Shop With a Cop gifts. The more ducks that are "adopted," the more money can be spent around Christmas, and the more kids get to have gifts of their own or take something nice back to their families.

In Baxter's words, "nobody gets paid a penny to do this," and to date, the Shop With a Cop program has taken 2,400 children to Walmart through the years on the quest to make sure every Union County kid gets gifts for Christmas.

Duck sales have officially begun, so that means everyone in the community is gearing up to head off to the aquatic races. That said, it's not just about the spectators and the organizers.

"Duck wranglers" from the Safe Pet Project will be on hand to help keep the colorful fowl from running afoul of the bank or any snags left in the creek from rocks and branches.

It truly is a community project, evident not just by how involved people get, but also by the number of ducks that participate in the derby. Last year, about 3,000 of the little quackers floated down Butternut, and Baxter hopes to garner at least that many participants for 2024.

And if helping local kids wasn't enough of a motivator for folks to nab a lucky duck, there's a possibility of winning prizes to take home. Baxter said there will be around 100 prizes in total, but the three leading ducks will earn their purchasers \$500, \$250 and \$100, respectively.

Other prizes include gift cards and coupons for local businesses, but it doesn't stop there, as even the duck that finishes in last place – the "lame" duck – will earn someone a gas grill.

"All our prizes end up being very nice," said Assistant Police Chief Shawn Dyer of the donated items. "Our crowd's getting bigger every year that comes to watch it – (the community needs) to come watch it. It's a lot of fun. The kids love it, we really enjoy it, (and) it's our main fundraiser

for this program."

"Last year, we probably had 300 or 400 people," estimated Baxter, noting that it corresponded with last year's Shop With a Cop as the biggest yet with 150 children participating. "It's a lot of work, but it's probably one of the most rewarding things that our department does all year."

So, mark your calendars and get your ducks in a row by Aug. 31 for the Duck Derby, which will be held in its usual place at 11 a.m. at 290 Farmers Market Way.

The ducks can be purchased at the Blairsville Police Department for \$10, although anyone can flag down an officer and ask to buy a ticket. According to Chief Baxter, there's always been a friendly competition between officers to see who can sell the most tickets.

Keep in mind that the Blairsville Police Department is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Downtown Blairsville, and any inquiries can be made by calling 706-835-1692.

"You know where your money's going with us, and it's going to help a young person have a great holiday," Baxter said. "I promise you, it's the best money you'll ever spend... This program means the world to this department."

# Byron Herbert Reece Farm presents: Sara Preston Friday, July 5th

Reece Farm presents Sara Preston! She is a new performer to the Reece Farm & Heritage Center! Friday, July 5th from 1-3 PM at the Pavilion.

Sarah Preston has been making music almost her whole life. Beginning at just 8 years old, she sang in the church choir and later began playing guitar in the youth group band. Since that early age, music has been the center of Sarah's life. Music has given her the opportunity to travel throughout the nation and refine her artistic abilities. She has stylistic experience and repertoire in the following genres; country, rock, top hits, blues, soul and alternatives.

Bring your lawn chairs



Sara Preston

to the pavilion to enjoy two hours of music! Free admission. Donations are greatly

appreciated! We invite you to come enjoy the exhibits at the farm before the concert.

# Struck By Lightning 2, July 6th

Reece Farm presents Struck By Lightning 2, Saturday July 6, 2024, 1-3 PM at the pavilion.

Originating as a trio in the fall of 2020, Struck by Lightning was no more than a few old guys that thought getting together to perform at a local open mic night might be fun to do. A one and done sorta thing. The credit for the name goes to the original founder and lead singer of the group at the time, Mr. Brent Michael "Always in the Right" Key.

With Brent handling much of the vocals and acoustic guitar, drummer/percussionist/guitarist Bill Wilson handled the harmony vocals and Brent's longtime friend and keyboardist, "The Italian Cowboy" Steve 'O Fineo formed a successful sound all their own. They quickly began booking multiple venues throughout Young Harris, and Hiwassee, GA, as well as Murphy and Andrews, NC during their first 1½ years together.

When Brent decided to step down from the group to pursue other endeavors in Aug of 2022, Steve O' and Bill decided to carry on with the Struck by Lightning name



as a duo Musical Group and became known as Struck by Lightning 2.

Bill moved into the lead singer roll and began playing the acoustic guitar full time, while Steve 'O continued to explore his creativity with the addition of a second keyboard and supplying the vocal harmonies.

In doing so, they have more than doubled their song library to include multiple types of genres including a vast variety of toe-tapin', sing-along country, line-dance, pop, rock & easy listening favorites from as far back as the 1950s to present day. They can also be found dedicating their time to faith based Christian contemporary music venues, as well.

In addition to performing at the local pubs and wineries in the surrounding area, they also perform at various benefits & festivals, and love

to provide their musical entertainment for private parties.

You can contact and follow them and their scheduled events on Facebook at: STRUCKBYLIGHTNING 2

Bring your lawn chairs to the pavilion to enjoy two hours of music! Free admission and donations are greatly appreciated! We invite you to come enjoy the exhibits at the farm before the concert.

Byron Herbert Reece was a farmer and a writer, and his books are available in the gift shop. The farm is set up as a legacy to him & his family with exhibits, farm animals, local books and crafts. There is also a hiking trail from the farm to Vogel State Park. The farm is also a beautiful venue for your special day with affordable rates. We now have trout stocked in Wolf creek (please follow all Georgia Fishing rules). Check out our "BHR Farm Village" cabin rentals on VRBO! Farm exhibits are open Wednesday through Saturday 10 until 4; Free Admission. 8552 Gainesville Hwy., Blairsville GA 706-745-2034; FB: Reece Heritage Farm, www.reece-farm.org.

# Malpractice Trial...from Page 1A

multiple delays in proper medical evaluation and care at both the Nursing Home and Union General Hospital resulted in her infection reaching a "point of no return," amounting to negligence that led to her amputations after being transferred back to Northeast Georgia Medical on Dec. 11, 2015, for recommended surgery.

The defendants in the case deny all allegations of medical malpractice and negligence.

These defendants are Union General Hospital Inc., doing business as Union County Nursing Home, and Union General Hospital; Dr. Kathryn Blocker, The Southland Medical Group, LLC and Blocker Healthcare, LLC; and Dr. Jeffrey McIntire and Gainesville Imaging Associates, P.C.

Two other defendants are listed as "John Doe" and "ABC Corporation" to account

for a medical professional involved in Giacomo's care whose identity and affiliation were not known to the plaintiff when the Consolidated Pre-Trial Order was signed on June 20.

Former Blairsville physician James Heaton plays a key role in the case against the hospital, though he is not listed as a defendant. Giacomo is alleging that, as medical director of the Nursing Home and her assigned physician in Union County during her time here, Heaton failed to evaluate her condition in a timely fashion, resulting in delayed intervention regarding her infection that subsequently spread.

Separately, Heaton and then-Union General CEO Mike Gowder were arrested in February 2016 and later tried and found guilty of federal prescription drug crimes.

Giacomi claims the hospital "at the very least had

a reasonable suspicion" that Heaton and Gowder were the subject of an investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration when she was being treated and was therefore negligent in keeping Heaton on as credentialed staff.

In the Pre-Trial Order, the hospital defends the credentialing of Heaton at the time and says there is no evidence that "any UGH employee or director was aware of Dr. Heaton's involvement in any criminal activity prior to his arrest on February 4, 2016."

Additionally, the lawsuit alleges that inadequately trained wound care staff improperly evaluated Giacomo's wounds after she was admitted to Union General's Emergency Department on Dec. 7, which led to further delays in appropriate treatment for the growing infection.

The claim pertaining to "negligent hiring, training, supervision, retention and/or

credentialing of Dr. Heaton and other medical personnel is to be bifurcated from the medical malpractice portion of the trial of this case," per the Pre-Trial Order, meaning the case will be tried in two parts.

Dr. Blocker was the emergency room physician who admitted Giacomo to the hospital when she came over from the Nursing Home. According to her defense brief, Blocker's participation in Giacomo's care "was at all times appropriate and complied with the standard of care."

The lawsuit also says that radiologist McIntire failed to interpret a crucial X-ray in accordance with the "STAT" designation for highest priority, which showed "an abnormal, critical finding" that needed to be communicated quickly due to the fast-spreading nature of the infection.

McIntire's defense brief states that he "fully complied in every way with the applicable standard of care," and that nothing he "did or failed to do caused or contributed to cause Ms. Giacomo's alleged injuries, including her amputations."

Giacomi is seeking damages to cover medical expenses incurred to date

and in the future, as well as recovery of legal fees, for pain and suffering, interference with normal living, and other grounds.

As noted in the Pre-

Trial Order, the possibilities of settling the case are "poor"; however, Union General Hospital "remains willing to consider any reasonable resolution to the case."

## Union County Fire Station No. 3 Annual Celebration June 22nd



Lt. McClure, Dave Carter and Commissioner Lamar Paris

Union County Fire Station No. 3, near Booger Hollow, celebrated its annual hamburger and hotdog roast on Saturday, June 22.

All the stops were pulled out to give community members a great meal and fire safety information. Fire trucks

and other equipment were on display.

At noon, Members of the Moon Shadow Subdivision gave a \$250 donation to the Fire Dept. as a show of support and appreciation to all the men and women of Fire Station No. 3.

On hand for the presentation was Lt. McClure accepting the check from Moon Shadow President Dave Carter, as Commissioner Lamar Paris expresses his appreciation.

Eight couples and one dog from Moon Shadow were there for the festivities.

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# Gun Range Open...from Page 1A



Former Gov. Sonny Perdue was pleasantly surprised to receive a namesake road sign from Commissioner Lamar Paris on June 27.

after the class. One-hundred and fifty people signed up, and the Union County Gun Club took flight. Club members tirelessly pursued the range with help from Sheriff Mason, who convinced people to "step out on faith" in support of the initiative. Mason's significance to the cause only grew as he took on the role of club liaison between the various governmental entities.

Through their efforts – and those of many other grand opening attendees – the county secured 90% federal funding for the roughly \$4 million project and cut through several layers of red tape to make the facility a reality. Sheriff Mason received a tremendous surprise last Thursday when Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris revealed that the main office and instructional building had

been dedicated as the Mack Mason Center in recognition of his leadership on the project. Emotion filled Mason as he thanked the Gun Club Board and membership for seeing the project through to completion and Commissioner Paris for his ambitious vision in building a one-of-a-kind range where men, women and children alike can practice their constitutional rights. For his part, Paris

Photo by Shawn Jarrard



Gun Club President Paul Clark presenting a check to the county accounting for funds raised over the years by dedicated Gun Club members.

Photo by Shawn Jarrard



Edie Rich shed grateful tears last week when the county unveiled the plaque dedicating the rifle range to her late brother, storied Marine Corps Veteran Eric England.

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

expressed gratitude for a lengthy list of people who played a part in the range, clearly proud to have assisted in leading the effort to create a safe place for residents to hone their shooting skills. There were two other big dedication surprises, the first being the name reveal for the road leading to the range from Georgia 180. Henceforth, the facility can be found at 140 Sonny Perdue Drive in honor of the former governor's dedication to securing the range for Union Countians. Perdue served as the Secretary of Agriculture in charge of the U.S. Forest Service in the Trump administration, and he pulled the necessary strings that enabled the grand opening that was seven years in the making.

The former governor flew up from Atlanta to attend the ribbon cutting, finding ample room for his helicopter to land on the 150-yard rifle range. "You've got a wonderful, beautiful facility here where people can really learn how to be safe around firearms and handle them," Perdue said, noting that the range will be a "great model for the state." Added Perdue, "It is a day of celebration, because this is a great venue, a great facility, and will be good for the youth and the adults and the people of Georgia who enjoy gun sports and doing it the right way."

Chief Range Master Craig Davenport revealed the third dedication of the event: the naming of the rifle range after U.S. Marine Corps Master Sgt. Eric England, a native son and patriot of Union County who still holds shooting records to this day. England passed away in 2018 at the age of 84. In addition to his strong moral character, he is remembered for his 24 years honorably serving his country both in combat and as a Weapons Tactics Instructor who received numerous medals over his career. Edie Rich and her son Eric – sister and nephew to England – attended the grand opening to witness the unveiling of the memorial plaque dedicating the range to her late brother's memory. Overcome with emotion, Rich said England would have been very proud of the honor. A Marine Corps veteran himself who received encouragement from England



Sheriff Mack Mason with wife Rhonda after Commissioner Paris revealed the naming of the Mack Mason Center at the Union County Gun Range.

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

as a young man, Davenport looks forward to leading his part-time crew of Range Safety Officers in promoting the safety of range guests as well as the legacy of the beloved local veteran.

the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, guests returned inside to enjoy lunch by the Rec Department, and Range Safety Officers made themselves available over the next several hours to give tours of the facility.

The grand opening featured multiple other speakers who were involved in the range project: DNR Deputy Commissioner Thomas Barnard; USFS Blue Ridge District Ranger Steverson Moffat; State Sen. Steve Gooch; State Rep. Stan Gunter; Community Center Director Jim Marchman; and Gun Club President Paul Clark. Clark presented a \$90,000 check to the county Parks & Recreation Department, under which the range is operated. The check comes from membership dues collected since the club's formation and enables members in good standing to shoot without paying additional fees for the next three years. Honorable mentions related to the project were State Director of USDA Rural Development Joyce White, DNR Board Member Ray Lambert Jr., County Manager Larry Garrett, County Construction Manager Mike Thomason, County Purchasing Agent Pam Hawkins, County Clerk Jennifer Mahan, Rec Director Scotty Thompson, Luke Colwell of Colwell Construction, Travis Smith of Milestone Construction, Architect Alan Wieczynski, SPLOST Project Manager Kevin Hamby, Walter Lane of DNR, the late Steven Goines of Goines Industrial Printing, all members of the Gun Club Board, and others. Following the outdoor ribbon cutting sponsored by

The new recreational opportunity features a 25-yard pistol range with 10 shooting benches and a 150-yard rifle range with 14 shooting benches. Range hours are Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. over spring and summer months, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in fall and winter. Sunday shooting takes place from 1-4 p.m., and the range is closed on Mondays. Individuals may purchase an annual membership for \$200, and families can obtain an annual membership for \$300. The daily shooting fee for non-members is \$15 per person, and \$5 for people 15 and under, though children 5 and under are not allowed on the range. On top of providing a safe place for law enforcement and the public to practice shooting, the facility will give back to the county as an economic draw, and to the state and nation with money raised through shooting sports via a federal excise tax for the Wildlife Restoration Program that funded the range. "This program consists of funds raised by the sale of firearms, ammunition and archery equipment for the purpose of conserving and managing states' natural resources and developing and constructing shooting ranges," according to DNR. The state of Georgia receives approximately \$30 million annually from this fund.

# Independence Day...from Page 1A



Patriotic fun in the sun is what the Nottely Boat Parade is all about, coming up this week on Saturday, July 6.

Photo by Todd Forrest/2023

possible by the generous support of sponsors to cover the costs of fireworks," according to the Suches Fire Department. "This allows us to avoid using operating funds of the department, which go towards protecting and serving our community. "If you would like to help in this great effort, as the cost of fireworks has risen drastically this year, donations can be made to (P.O. Box 84, Suches,

GA 30572)." Independence Day celebrations will continue this weekend with the Nottely Boat Parade tradition. Held at the Nottely Marina, the parade features a contest with trophies, and boat decoration themes range from patriotic to whatever people dream up with their imaginations. The parade will take place on Saturday, July 6, and parade participants are asked

to start lining up at the marina at 11 a.m. this year instead of noon. July Fourth is the day to remember the Founding Fathers' courage and wisdom, as 56 men from 13 colonies signed the Declaration of Independence. Their incredible feat has withstood the test of time and marks a terrific occasion to spend time with neighbors at the biggest birthday party of the year.