

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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## State to certify 'hand recount' Friday; would-be fraudsters warned

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Results of the Risk-Limiting Audit Manual Tally – aka the statewide hand recount of the presidential race ordered last week by Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger – will be made available this week in advance of the Nov. 20 deadline for Georgia to certify the election.

The main purpose of a risk-limiting audit is to "identify potential hacks, malfunctions, or other interference in the voting process," according to the Secretary of State's Office, and Georgia is using an open-source software program called Arlo to assist the process.

Arlo is an election auditing tool built by the 501(c)(3) nonprofit VotingWorks and funded by the Department of Homeland Security.

"With the margin being so close, it will require a full-by-hand recount in each county," Raffensperger said in a Nov. 11 news conference. "This will help build confidence. It will be an audit, a recount and a canvass all at once."

Individual audit results from local elections boards were not available at press time, but Union County Elections Board Chair Libby Stevens said over the weekend she was pleased with the way her poll workers handled the audit.

Union County had more than 15,000 early in-person, mail-in, and Election Day ballots to work through in the audit, which was open to members of the public, designated political party monitors and the media for the sake of transparency.

Locally, the audit was completed at the Board Office on Hunt-Martin Street between

9 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. Friday, though larger counties will likely take all the time allotted through Wednesday, Nov. 18, to complete their recounts.

Raffensperger announced the "hand recount" after citing the close statewide margin of about 14,000 votes in the race between Donald Trump and Joe Biden for president.

The final statewide tally of the hand recount will serve as the official result of the presidential race in Georgia, which, once certified, will be open to yet another statewide recount should it fall within a close enough margin to allow a candidate to request re-tabulating.

Much is at stake in Georgia's ongoing election process, as Biden appears to have overcome the necessary hurdles to be named the next President of the United States. See *Recount*, Page 2A



Union County Poll Workers Darren Harper and Donna Guess going through ballots during the risk-limiting audit at Election HQ Nov. 13. Photo by Lowell Nicholson

## Ten area veterans awarded Quilts of Valor in appreciation



Area veterans were happy to receive Quilts of Valor Saturday. Pictured here: Robert "Chuck" Morgan, Ronnie Ware, Rowal Kurtz, Harry Warren, Clair Reed, James Lewis and Toby Perry, not necessarily in that order. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Members of the Misty Mountain Quilters' Guild hosted their first Quilts of Valor Award Ceremony since February to honor area combat veterans on Saturday, Nov. 14.

The ceremony usually takes place at the Old

Courthouse, but due to COVID-19, organizers chose to hold the event outdoors at the Union County Farmers Market. There, they socially distanced and wore masks to protect the veterans and each other.

Others awarded Quilts of Valor that day include Paul Conley of Blairsville, U.S. Air Force; Robert "Chuck" Morgan

of Blairsville, U.S. Army; Ronnie Ware of Murphy, North Carolina, Army; Rowal Kurtz of Blairsville, U.S. Navy;

Jon Berdus of Blairsville, Navy; Harry Warren of Murphy, Air Force; Clair Reed of Hiawasse, Army; James Lewis of Hiawasse, Navy and Air Force Reserves; Toby

See *Quilts of Valor*, Page 3A

## County unveils Sports Center with ribbon-cutting ceremony

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and the Recreation Department showcased the new Union County Sports Center on Tuesday, Nov. 10, with a tour

of the facilities and a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The event opened in the Gold Gym – one of two gymnasiums inside the building – with Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce President Steve Rowe introducing Paris, who

in turn provided a history of the property from the moment the land was purchased in the early 2000s.

"Several years ago, when (the county) purchased the property, I know some people had questions," Rowe said. See *Sports Center*, Page 2A



The Union County Sports Center is now open, six days a week. Pictured here, local stakeholders at the Nov. 10 ribbon cutting. Photo by Todd Forrest

## Granddaddy Mimm's to open new Blairsville facility Saturday



Tommy Townsend couldn't be happier with the way Granddaddy Mimm's in Downtown Blairsville has shaped up, open Saturday. Photo/Submitted

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Downtown Blairsville will get its 'shine on this weekend, as Granddaddy Mimm's Distilling Co. opens its brand-new facility for business at 112 Wellborn Street.

Starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21, Granddaddy

Mimm's will welcome the public for tastings and retail purchases of its world-famous authentic corn whiskeys, new Owtown Vodkas, and of course, its various flavors of moonshine, all distilled right in the heart of Union County.

Granddaddy Mimm's has come a long way since Blairsville's own Country Music star Tommy Townsend

announced in 2012 he'd be turning the Depression-era moonshine recipe of his grandfather Jack "Mimm" McClure of Young Harris into a modern-day family business.

Four years later, in Summer 2016, Townsend opened his Pappy's Distillery & Museum at Iconic's Plaza on Gainesville Highway, offering tastings, tours, merchandise, live music and retail sales of his distilled products.

And now, in 2020, Townsend and his company have taken the next step by creating a true destination experience in Downtown Blairsville, moving to and completely renovating the old "CO-OP" building directly across from the Mountain Shelter Humane Society Thrift Store.

"What started out as kind of a hobby has grown into a full production line, and I couldn't be happier seeing my granddaddy's legacy living on and getting bigger and bigger," said Townsend, whose company has gone from producing a few cases a month to hundreds, with plans for continued growth.

The new location has allowed Granddaddy Mimm's to expand both its operational and customer areas of the business, and Townsend is See *Granddaddy Mimm's*, Page 6A

## ALA Unit 121 celebrates Armistice Day at Vets Center



Patriotic veterans changed the flags at the Maj. Leon Davenport Building during the Nov. 11 Veterans Day observance. Photo by Todd Forrest

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Maj. Leon Davenport Veterans Building opened its doors at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 11, to honor American service members with a Veterans Day Armistice Ceremony, hosted by American Legion Auxiliary Unit 121.

Assisting in the ceremony were Michelle Ladd and Randy Schue of National Veteran Resources, who attended in

their organization's patriotic red, white and blue RV.

Auxiliary President and Chaplain Janice Walters-Taylor got the Armistice Ceremony underway at 10 a.m., calling for the opening prayer, Pledge of Allegiance and offering welcoming remarks.

"For nearly a century since the guns of World War I fell silent on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month," the American people have observed

this day, first as Armistice Day and now as Veterans Day, which is the reason we are here, along with countless others gathered around the nation for this continuing great tradition.

"To each and every one of the veterans gathered here, and to those that might be looking on, we are grateful for your service, we are grateful for your sacrifice. To all our veterans, with us and beyond.

See *Armistice Day*, Page 6A

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**SPORTS FOOTBALL**

11/19

@ Gilmer Co.

7:00 PM

**UCS**

**Schools Honor Veterans**

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**Benefit for Troy Phillips, Jr.**

**RAFFLE!**

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