

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Schools to welcome community for Veterans Day program

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

For the seventh year, the Union County School District is hosting a student-run Veterans Day event for the entire community on Friday, Nov. 8.

Administrative Assistant Art McCann of Union County High – himself a retired Army Ranger – is once again coordinating the event for the school system, and he's been working closely with students who will be running the program Friday.

"I think it's important," McCann said. "No. 1, it means the students. No. 2, it means Veterans Day more, especially the ones that I train to do the ceremony."

"It's also good because

the majority of the audience are students in the district, and they will listen to another student before they're going to listen to some old veteran up there talking. That's important because they can relate to it better.

"The other thing is that it teaches them how to run a ceremony like this."

Fortunately, when it came time to find kids to run the annual Veterans Day program, McCann said he didn't even have to solicit any of the students for help, as they approached him to volunteer.

"It's good to hear from younger people because, for the veterans, that's what they joined for, (those kids are) what they fought for," he said.

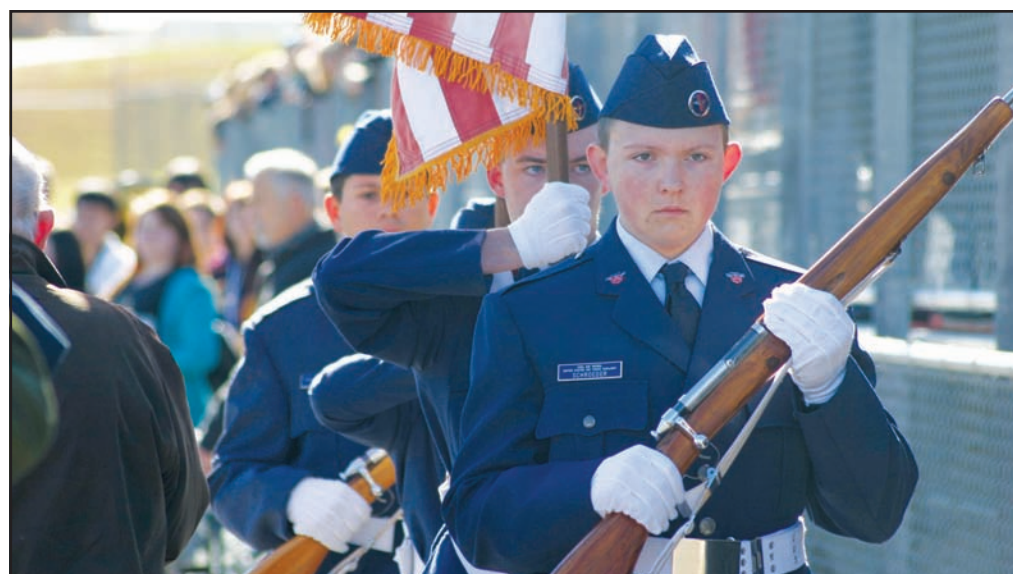
Of course, it's also important for Americans of

all ages to recognize veterans, McCann said, since if it wasn't for those veterans, America wouldn't be where it is today, as the military keeps the country safe and free, all while making up less than 1% of the population.

"So, there are a lot of people that don't really know or understand, and it's important that they understand what veterans do and have done for our country," McCann said.

The event will begin with a free breakfast for veterans and their spouse or a friend from 8:30-9:30 a.m. at the high school cafeteria, and there will be a shuttle service to and from the cafeteria and the Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium program venue for guests attending Veterans Day.

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The Union County School District hosts an annual Veterans Day program in Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium. Pictured here: Cadets with the local Civil Air Patrol in the Veterans Day program. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

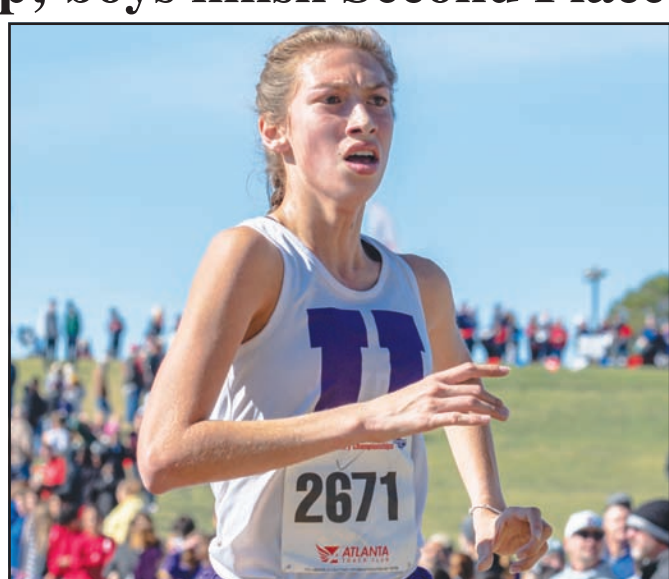
## Sanchez wins second State Championship; boys finish Second Place

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Sports Editor

CARROLLTON – Union County senior Zoe Sanchez wrapped up her high school cross country career with back-to-back state titles following a commanding 28-second victory at the Class AA State Championships on Saturday, Nov. 2.

Sanchez led wire-to-wire, leading by 20 meters at the 1-mile mark. Her lead grew to 20 seconds by the 2-mile mark as she cruised unchallenged across the finish line.

Despite winning her second straight title by nearly 30 seconds, Sanchez said that her second State Championship was, without a doubt, the more



Two-time cross country individual State Champion Zoe Sanchez crossing the finish line in Carrollton on Saturday. Photo by Todd Forrest

## Sheriff's Office thankful for appreciation cookout by WoodmenLife



Union County Sheriff's deputies and Blairsville Police officers breaking bread during their WoodmenLife-sponsored appreciation lunch last week.

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
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Joey Swanson and Daniel Shumaker of the nonprofit WoodmenLife insurance company treated local law enforcement to two days of steak lunches last week prepared right in the parking lot of the Union

County Sheriff's Office.

The men cooked the steaks on a mobile gas grill on Oct. 29 and Oct. 30, serving 100 officials, including Sheriff's Office deputies and jailers, officers with Blairsville Police and Union County Schools Police, and E-911 dispatchers. Alongside the steaks, the

men served baked potatoes, corn on the cob, dessert and drinks for what turned out to be a delicious meal of thanks.

"This was an opportunity to show appreciation and spread the word that Woodmen offers an extra benefit for first responders," Swanson said. "If

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## Blue Ridge Classic coming to Ag Center Saturday; students place in Perry

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Union County Future Farmers of America and 4-H are hosting the Blue Ridge Classic Cattle Show at the Agriscience Center starting at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9.

So far, 120 calves have been entered into the show, which will feature FFA and 4-H student competitors between fourth and 12th grades.

Both FFA and 4-H students represented Union County well at the Georgia National Fair Junior Competitions in Perry last month.

For the uninitiated, there is a lot more to preparing for and participating in the fair – held Oct. 3-6 this year – than just leading an animal around a ring.

"It's definitely an activity that brings your family together, something that all do – it's a family thing," said FFA 10th-grader Miriam King. "And



Agriculture teacher Ryan Talton with FFA Reporter Miriam King at Union County High.

it shows a lot of leadership, and that's what FFA is all about."

King is definitely taking advantage of the leadership opportunities with FFA. She's

the club reporter for the 2019-2020 year, and she's already decided that she wants to attend the University of Georgia after

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## Two firefighters, Blairsville man taken to hospital after head-on crash

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
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A Union County Fire Department Ford Expedition known as FR-1 was involved in a head-on collision while responding to a medical emergency on Murphy Highway last Friday.

The two-vehicle crash occurred near Nottely Marina shortly after 5 p.m. on Nov. 1, resulting in two career firefighters being transported to Union General Hospital and a local man being airlifted to Erlanger Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee, according to authorities.

Both firefighters were treated for minor injuries and released later that evening, and



The Fire Department's Ford Expedition being transported from the scene of a Nov. 1 crash on Murphy Highway. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

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## More than 2,500 people attend Hometown Halloween on the Square

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Despite having to reschedule Hometown Halloween on the Square from Oct. 31 to Nov. 2 due to weather, the annual event in Downtown Blairsville still attracted large crowds of trick-or-treaters over the weekend.

Kids and adults alike from all over the area dressed up in costumes to walk the circuit around the Old Union County Courthouse, socializing with friends and scooping up candy treats from local businesses and individuals.

The weather on Saturday made the event all the better, as it stayed warm before cooling down later in the evening.

"This is the perfect

kind of weather to have for Halloween," said Darren Harper of the Blairsville Downtown Development Authority. "It's not too hot or too cold, and it thankfully isn't raining like it was on Thursday, when the weather was miserable."

"I'm really glad to see this turnout, and I'm happy to see everyone having fun."

In many communities, Halloween is a local effort that brings folks out for different reasons, be it for candy or to see people in costumes, and that's exactly the way it is in Union County.

One particularly talked-about costumed figure was Jason Annis, who dressed as a statue and stood unmoving in various places around the square, causing people to stop

and admire his ability to stay still for long stretches of time.

"This is my first year being a statue," Annis said. "I usually like the really scary-style stuff for Halloween, but I decided to throw this together."

"I got all of it from a thrift store over in Blue Ridge, then I painted it all green. It took around 30 hours total to get it all painted and together, but it's a lot of fun. I haven't been able to pay attention much because I can't move a lot, but I hope that people are enjoying it."

Many stopped to take pictures as Annis stood perfectly still, and others tried to get him to budge from his statue state, but he stayed still despite this being his first year to dress as

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Hundreds and hundreds of costumed children flocked to the Blairsville Square to trick or treat for Hometown Halloween on Nov. 2. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

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