

## Give-A-Gift...from Page 1A

community in ways like this, where we team together with community agencies, if you will, for a better Blairsville and Union County," said Derrick Hartley of First Baptist Blairsville. "I think it's a wonderful opportunity for our sheriff and county law enforcement to put forth an image that's not just about handcuffs and jail cells and speeding tickets.

"Oftentimes, they're maligned for what they do. They're good folks, and it's our pleasure to come alongside of them to help kids that have need, maybe less fortunate than others. It's an easy thing for us to do, to provide space."

Those interested in donating toys should keep in mind the 1 to 12 age range, and toys can be dropped off - new and unwrapped, with no toy

weapons, please - at either the church or the Sheriff's Office during operating hours.

"A lot of families can't help hardships coming, and maybe they're down on their luck this time of year," said Sheriff Mack Mason. "Anything that we can do to help, we sure want to do it."

Added Sheriff Mason, "We don't want any recognition for this. When we get to help

somebody outside of the scope of our arrest authority and powers, then that's a joy to us, because it doesn't happen often."

For more information, including on how to make monetary donations to Give A Gift, contact the Union County Sheriff's Office at 706-439-6066.

## Scam...from Page 1A

The Sheriff's Office has received more than six complaints regarding this particular scam in the last two weeks, and the perpetrators have successfully scammed local individuals for about \$3,600 so far.

And the scam has been making the rounds in surrounding counties, too, with several people in the area being asked to make the same difficult choice: pay up or face being "arrested" by supposed Sheriff's Deputies.

Sometimes, the scammers will impersonate actual deputies with local

law enforcement, while other times, the name of the "deputy" calling appears to have been completely made up.

Victims are being instructed to go out and purchase prepaid credit cards, after which they are to call the scammers back to relay payment information.

When dialed by real investigators with the Union County Sheriff's Office, the most recently used callback number went to a fake voicemail claiming association with the Sheriff's Office.

Unfortunately, Lt. Osborn said the scam callback number

is likely untraceable.

"It's probably one of those spoof phone numbers, but we're still working on it," said Lt. Osborn.

What all the scams hold in common is that the calls seem legitimate to the person being scammed, with scammers addressing their victims with confidence and authority.

"These people sound very professional," said Lt. Osborn, referring to victim reports. "When I started calling the victims back, they were questioning me to make sure I was legit."

"I had to go through a

process to get these people to talk to me. Now, we've got people out here concerned that we're actually real law enforcement - it's pulling the people's trust down, and I can't say that I blame them."

Lt. Osborn said that if anyone ever suspects a scam concerning the impersonation of a law enforcement agency, they should hang up immediately and call 911 or the agency's publicly listed phone number to double check.

"Our direct line here at the Sheriff's Office is 706-439-6066," said Lt. Osborn.

## Arrest...from Page 1A

However, UCSO Staff Sgt. Andrew Glass and Deputy Bradley Mathis were able to catch up with Ray, subdue him, then take him into custody that evening.

Resulting from his arrest, investigators seized \$5,000 worth of methamphetamine, illegal Schedule IV and Schedule II drugs, drug-related objects and cash.

Towns County investigators have charged Ray with trafficking in methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute, possession of Schedule IV drugs, possession of Schedule II drugs, possession of drug-related objects, and obstruction of law enforcement officers.

Investigators also served warrants on Ray from a previous encounter with him that occurred in Towns County earlier this year on Sept. 6, including warrants for possession of methamphetamine, three counts obstruction of law

enforcement officers, and two counts possession of Schedule IV drugs.

The Gordon County Sheriff's Office had outstanding warrants on Ray for aggravated assault on a law enforcement

officer, along with several traffic offense warrants, and the Union County Sheriff's Office had outstanding probation and obstruction warrants on Ray.

Also involved in the Nov. 25 arrest was an officer

with the Hiwassee Police Department.

The information in this article came from the sheriff's offices in Towns and Union counties.

## Lassiter...from Page 1A

they continued serving the community that they decided to make their own.

The proclamation states that Jim and Sally both have a family tradition of bravery, sacrifice and service to their community, proven by their dedication, service and volunteerism, which have strengthened this community.

"We are very proud that you chose Union County to come back to and move to," said Paris in the meeting, and Jim thanked the commissioner for the proclamation.

"This is now our home and we thoroughly, thoroughly enjoy it," said Lassiter. "We deeply appreciate this proclamation. It's kind of overwhelming."

Commissioner Paris also proclaimed Nov. 4, 2018, as "Georgia Retired Educators Day."

According to the proclamation, more than

121,000 retired educators have devoted their time, energies, and talents to public education, providing for the educational development of millions of outstanding Georgia residents.

Retired educators possess valuable knowledge and use their lifetime experiences and skills to enrich the educational process in a variety of settings, according to the proclamation.

"We have always had an active retired educators group in our county, and I appreciate all that they have done in the past caring for our students and all they continue to do helping the future," said Paris.

Also in the meeting, Commissioner Paris discussed a Notice of Award of Contract to Winkler & Winkler, Inc. to construct the Union County Pavilion at Meeks Park in the amount of \$251,845.

"The notice to proceed allows work to commence on Jan. 2, 2019, and be fully

completed on or before May 2, 2019," said Paris. "We were fortunate that the architect firm from Gainesville allowed us to use his previous plans that were designed for the Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center, just below Vogel State Park."

"Our pavilions at Meeks Park are constantly in use or overbooked. This will not only be a very attractive addition to Meeks Park, but also a benefit to the public."

Other business conducted during the meeting included the appointment of Linda Beaver to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Region 1 Field Office Advisory Council for a three-year term; the resolution naming Jill C. Gooch as Deputy County Clerk; and the acceptance of Mountain Top View into the County Maintained Road System.

## United Daughters of the Confederacy Smith's Legion #2699



(L-R): Barbara Junghans, Emma Pittman, Phyllis Nadeau NTDec5, Z10, CA

Old Blairsville Cemetery Restoration celebrated - A project spanning more than four years came to fruition earlier this month when the Sons of Confederate Veterans, David W. Payne Camp 1633, and UDC ladies of Smith's Legion #2699 came together celebrating the restoration of the Old Blairsville Cemetery. The cemetery is located on Hughes, behind the Union County War Memorial Park.

Union County Sole Commissioner, Lamar Paris, said "This has been the most fulfilling project of all the things I've done in this county. I think I'm more proud of this than anything that I've done."

Ladies of Smith's Legion honored two Confederate Veterans by placing an Iron Cross at the grave sites of Pvt. John Butt Black, and his half brother Cpt. Allen But Gaddis. These soldiers were from Union County and served in Smith's Legion Calvary 6th GA Regiment CSA during the War Between the States. The participated in battle action in Georgia, Tennessee, and North and South Carolina. April, 1865, they were forced to surrender with the Army of Tennessee.

The Iron Cross is a sacred symbol placed at the grave site of Confederate Veterans to honor the valor and dedication of CSA Veterans. Children of the Confederacy candidate, Miss Emma Pittman, unveiled a monument recognizing the cemetery restoration and a plaque was placed at the entrance of the

cemetery.

Smith's Legion #2699 meet monthly at G and G Restaurant, across from Ingles in Blairsville. Visitors and prospective members are welcome to attend. Current members are residents of Cherokee and Clay counties in North Carolina and Union, Towns, and Fannin Counties in Georgia. E-mail, smith'slegion@gmail.com for dates and information.



Iron Cross