

Weather

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Tuesday morning. A heat wave was expected Wednesday with a high of 40 degrees and a low of 23. Temperatures are expected to continue to climb throughout the week, with highs in the mid-50s, and lows in the upper-30s and mid-40s.

Until those temperatures rise, night travel is ill advised, according to the Georgia Department of Transportation, referring to the prospects of black ice.

According to GDOT's David Spear, winter weather conditions became widespread in northwest Georgia around 3:30 a.m. Monday, with multi-



Frigid temperatures plagued the region on Monday. Photo/Charles Duncan

ple roadways affected. GDOT work crews treated isolated icing on numerous state routes that included 5/515 and 60 in Fannin County, state routes 2 and 282 in Gilmer County, and state routes 136 and 515 in Pickens County.

Road problems arose because of early morning showers before temperatures began a rapid decline. The aftermath of the showers was black ice almost everywhere as road crews did their best to combat the problem.

Sleet was first reported in Union County shortly before 2 a.m. Monday, Spear said.

By 4:48 a.m. on Monday, temperatures had dipped to 29 degrees with the wind chill factor bringing a feel of 18 degrees, according to the National Weather Service.

By 5:20 a.m., the temperature had fallen to 25 degrees, with the wind chill factor making it feel like it was 16 degrees.

Temperatures continued to drop as the clock ticked. By lunchtime on Monday, it was 18 degrees with a real feel of 4 degrees.

Just four days prior, another Weather Event came to fruition, with temperatures

falling like a ton of bricks from the low 50s to the teens. Friday morning, locals awoke to a wind chill factor that made temperatures feel like 3 degrees.

Union County's Road Department began a daunting task of keeping roads clear of ice about 7 p.m. Thursday as the Flash Freeze began.

"We initially didn't think we would get any or very little snow, so it was kind of a surprise that so little amount of snow could have such a large impact," Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said. "Because of the quick change of temperature going from 50 down to 20 in just a few hours, every flake of snow that fell ended up sticking somewhere."

The snow that fell was really too thin to scrape off the roadways, so the Road Department utilized a stronger gravel to salt ratio to help provide traction on the roads that were treated, Paris said.

"We did not have time to get to all the secondary roads, as we initially concentrated on the roads in the worst condition being Blue Ridge Highway, Mulky Gap, Pat Haralson, around the hos-

pital and nursing home, Town Creek and a few others," Paris said. "Being the first time for utilizing all the salt spreaders, it took a little while to load them all up, but we only lost maybe an hour."

As road conditions continued to deteriorate, there was no way to cover all the county roads as the Road Department typically tries to do in a large storm over a few days, Paris said.

"We concentrated on the worst road reports," he said. "The guys actually spread salt and gravel from about 9 p.m. Thursday on through the night. I am sure some people wondered why their road was not scraped or salted. There literally was not enough time as everything happened so fast."

Every snow and ice event is different and a lot of decisions have to be made each time as to how to attack it, Paris said.

"In this case, I don't think I have ever seen this little amount of snow stick so quickly after temperatures being in the 50s during the day and ultimately dropping to 13 degrees over night," Paris said. "Also aiding us was that the snow was dry because of the extreme cold, so it was not as slick as a normal snowfall in the mountains. We were fairly certain based on weather reports, that the sun would shine all day on Friday and help melt most of the snow and that was the case."

Paris and the Road Department braced for another Weather Event.

"Batten down the hatches as it will be extremely cold and windy and by the time you receive this paper," Paris said. "You should already be tired of cold weather as winter is starting off with a bang."

Council

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months working for the City. The Council gave Stencil a 50 cents per hour raise, which is standard policy, Councilman Dyer said.

The Council also approved the distribution of

the City's Hotel/Motel Tax dollars. Forty percent goes to the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce, 25 percent goes to the Downtown Development Authority and 25 percent goes to

the Union County Historical Society.

The Council also approved the Occupational Tax, Certificates of Solidarity Fitness, and Causey Orthodontics.

Beating

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"She had been severely beaten about the head and face."

Deputies say the victim told them that Barclay had twice threatened her with two different knives; one was a butcher knife that broke, and was tossed underneath the bed by the victim. According to deputies, a second knife was found in the bedroom underneath a table. That knife they say was held on the victim as Barclay forced her to write a letter of apology.

The prelude to the beating involved the use of methamphetamine and alcohol, deputies said.

Barclay allegedly beat his victim all over her body with a wooden closet rod, an axe handle, and his fists, deputies said. The victim was transported to Union General Hospital for medical treatment.

"Her injuries were not life-threatening, but, he did beat the heck out of her," Sheriff Mason said. "He hurt her pretty bad, physically and emotionally."

The house was in total disarray following the five-hour ordeal, Sheriff Mason said.

Fugitive...

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He gave the name Michael Noah Parker when he was asked his name. His real name is Michael Noah Harper.

Harper also had in his possession false identification items and possession of tools to commit a crime, Sheriff Mason said.

The vehicle reported stolen out of Cherokee County, GA was a Hertz rental car.

He has been charged with theft by receiving stolen property, possession of tools to commit a crime, giving false information to an officer, driving without a license, conspiracy to possess a controlled substance, and possession of false identification item, jail records show.

Harper is being held in the Union County Jail, jail records show.

Finally, what turned out to be a busy New Year's Day for sheriff's deputies, a burglary was reported at the County Transfer Station, Sheriff Mason said.

"It doesn't look like they got anything of value, maybe a little pocket change," Sheriff Mason said. "But, who ever did this, sure did a number on the place looking for something, it was ransacked."

The bathroom door was ripped off the hinges and propped up against the washing machine, and the rest of the home looked like a life-and-death struggle had taken place, the sheriff said.

Barclay was charged with aggravated assault, four counts of cruelty to children,

three counts of false imprisonment, and terroristic threats, Union County Jail records show.

He is being held in the Union County Jail.

The minor child is in the custody of her grandmother, and the victim is recovering, Sheriff Mason said.