

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Scottish Festival, Highland Games draw a crowd

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

A good time was had by all at the 12th Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games.

Over the weekend, Blairsville transformed into Little Edinburgh as the Seasons Inn Plaza hosted the Friday night Ceilidh (pronounced kay-lee) before the main event unfolded Saturday morning at Meeks Park.

For the 12th consecutive year, kilts and bagpipes invaded Union County and its neighboring counties for the Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games.

The festival has grown over each of the 12 years since the idea of a Scottish Festival



There were bagpipes a plenty at the 12th Annual Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

came to fruition, thanks to the Blairsville/Union County Chamber of Commerce, which was pursuing an event that would bring in tourists for a weekend.

Scottish festivals are in abundance up and down the Atlantic Seaboard; Appalachia was the landing place for many

early Scottish settlers in the early years of America. And now, from January to November, across these United States, Scottish festivals are all the rage.

"We don't have any attendance numbers in yet, but we counted more than 2,000 cars with an average of three-per-car, that came in just on Saturday," said Scottish Festival Committee member Lynn Varian.

Scottish festivals are gaining in popularity across the state, and beyond. For the seventh consecutive year, the Southeast Tourism Society designated the Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games as a Top 20 event in the South.

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## County gets GEMA grant for ATV vehicles for search and rescue



Commissioner Lamar Paris, and EMA Director Charles Worden accept a check from GEMA/HS' Charles Dawson.

By Charles Duncan  
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chase of needed and necessary equipment.

Union County Emergency Management Agency has received almost \$20,000 in federal money for the pur-

The County will purchase two All-Terrain-Vehicles for search and rescue activities, EMA Director Charles Worden said. See *Grant, Page 2A*

## Blairsville woman dies in 3-car crash

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
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A 37-year-old Blairsville woman died from injuries sustained in a three-vehicle crash at Georgia 515 and Walmart Way, the Georgia State Patrol reports.

The crash that claimed the life of Melissa Dawn Rice happened Saturday, June 13 at approximately 11 a.m., according to the State Patrol.

The crash unfolded when a 2002 Chrysler Town & Country driven by 30-year-old Joseph C. Cordova, of Blairsville was traveling east on Georgia 515 in the turning lane. A 2001 Saturn SL1 driven by Rice was traveling west on Georgia 515 in the right lane. A 2003 Chevrolet Venture, driven by Lannie J. Shelton, 33, of Blairsville, was stopped for traffic on Walmart Way, according to the State Patrol.



Saturday overloaded rescue personnel as this 3-car crash took priority. Dawn Rice died in the crash.

by Cordova, made a left turn from Georgia 515 to Walmart Way, and failed to yield right of way. The Saturn, driven by Rice, struck the Chrysler in the right side with its front. After initial impact, Cordova's Chrysler overturned and struck Shelton's Chevrolet in the front. The Saturn rotated

and came to an uncontrolled final rest on Georgia 515, facing north.

Rice died from injuries sustained in the crash. Cordova was injured, but not transported, according to the State Patrol.

Shelton was not injured in the crash, according to the

State Patrol.

Charges are pending the completion of the investigation.

Funeral arrangements for Melissa Dawn Rice were not available at press time.

This is the second vehicle-related fatality in Union County in 2015.

## Blairsville man makes the cut for History Channel series, Alone

By Charles Duncan  
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Alan Kay is about to be more famous than he's ever been before.

The 40-year-old Colwell Probation Detention Center guard, and survivalist, is one of 10 people from the U.S. and Canada to compete for \$500,000 on the new History Channel series *Alone*.

Labeled as the country's boldest and longest survival experiment ever captured for television, *Alone* premieres Thursday, June 18, at 10 p.m.

The 10-episode series puts 10 hardcore survivalists alone in the Vancouver Island wilderness – no camera crew, no teams, and no producers – on a single mission to stay



Alan Kay

alive. At stake is \$500,000 awarded to the person who can last the longest.

Carrying only what they can fit in a backpack, the survivalists are completely

See *Alone, Page 2A*

## First graduate: Drug Court "saved my life"

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The North Enotah Drug Accountability Court graduated its first class on Thursday, June 11, at the Union County Courthouse.

Having formed just over two years ago, program administrators expect to hold six to eight more graduations this year, as successful participants complete the requirements.

"It saved my life," said Marvin Pritt Jr., who is the first to graduate from drug court. "It's not easy, but it's worth it. I'm proud of this."

Pritt spoke in his graduation on what he has overcome since starting drug court – he had lost his job, his driver's li-



Acting Drug Court Coordinator Barbara Honaker explains what Drug Court is to a crowd of family, friends and advocates last week.

cence and custody of his son, but through the course of program completion, Pritt was able to regain all.

"I had a son born 10 years ago, but I actually became a father two years and

four months ago, and that was when I joined drug court," said Pritt. "I'm able to give him a life, show him what a productive member of society can be, should be, and not the person I had become two and a half

years before."

This particular non-profit accountability program serves both Union and Towns counties, with the objective to "bring forth all aspects of the criminal justice community to assess, evaluate, supervise and treat addictive substance abuse behavior in a strict, judicially supervised, yet voluntary basis," according to graduation literature.

Drug court is meant to act as an alternative to incarceration by giving participants the tools "to abstain from illegal activity," and to engage in "evidence-based rehabilitation" designed to encourage offenders to become law abiding citizens.

"I think it's a change

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## Lacey is a celebrity at Pet-a-Pet

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Humane Society Mountain Shelter kicked off its Fourth Annual Pet-a-Pet on Saturday, June 6.

"This is our Fourth Open House to get the community to come see what we do," said Mountain Shelter Director Lisa McConnell. "This year we're starting Kidz Camps to teach humane education, and that's with our new Dawg House."

The Dawg House was created with children in mind, with cartoon paw prints leading inside and across the dedicated building, and a multitude of activities within to encourage learning about and interacting with dogs and cats.

"It's Kindergarten through



Lacey

sixth grade, but depending on the demand, we may expand, too," said McConnell. "We're teaching spay, neuter, vaccination, heartworm, how to treat your animal dos and don'ts – humane education, because so many people don't understand it."

Classes begin Saturday, June 13, and will run three in June and three in July, from

See *Pets, Page 3A*

## Welcome to Buy Local Weekend

North Georgia News  
News Special

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce and the *North Georgia News* present the Fourth Annual Buy Local Weekend.

It all starts Thursday, June 18th through Saturday, June 20th.

Thirty-three local businesses are offering hot selling, featured items at 50 percent off the regular price for three days only during normal business hours.

Those who visit the Chamber to pick up the coupon listing will also receive a free gift.

Small businesses are the core of our local community. When we shop local, we support our neighbors who have a vested interest in the success of our community.

With more than 615 members, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce is comprised of retail, services, general merchandise, professional services, restaurants, and

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## County's largest manufacturer expands

North Georgia News  
News Special

Corrugated Replacements is expanding their operations into a new facility in the Blairsville Airport Regional Industrial Park, creating 15-20 jobs and investing up to \$3 million.

"Corrugated Replacements is the County's largest manufacturing employer and we are very pleased to help them expand their operations here," said Scott Carter, Chairman of the Union County Development Authority. "The majority of new jobs are created by companies already in a community and we are committed to helping our existing industries prosper and expand."

Corrugated Replacements manufactures replacement parts for the corrugated industry as well as other



Jennifer Lee Chandler gives Union County Economic Development Director Mitch Griggs a tour of the expanded Corrugated Replacements.

machine parts. The company specializes in precision machining and rapid turnaround times for over 2,400 manufacturers throughout the world. Started by Bob and Stan Lee in 1981, the company constructed a 50,000 square-foot facility

in Blairsville in 1997 and has grown into a premier parts and components manufacturer.

"We are excited about our expansion in Blairsville" said Bob Lee, president of Corrugated Replacements, Inc. "We have been working

with the Development Authority on expansion plans for some time. The availability of the building in the industrial park was the key to meeting our immediate growth requirements. We appreciate the effort and assistance we received from Mitch Griggs and are looking forward to continuing growing our business here."

Corrugated Replacements is locating in one of the speculative buildings in Blairsville Airport Regional Industrial Park, which were constructed with One Georgia funds. The company will relocate their division of North Georgia Heat Treat from its existing facility on Lee Industrial Drive, which it has outgrown. In addition to adding new equipment and capacity, the company

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Blairsville Pro RODEO

www.BlairsvilleProRodeo.com

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