

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## City approves sign for new owners of Citizens South Bank

By Charles Duncan  
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The Blairsville City Council approved seven sign permit requests at its regular meeting for September.

Included among those requests and approvals, a sign permit for Park Sterling Bank, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley said.

Park Sterling and Citizens South Bank have a pending merger that is scheduled for approval early in the fourth business quarter, Mayor Conley said.

Park Sterling will acquire Citizens South for a total value of approximately \$77.8 million, excluding the

exchange of \$20.5 million in preferred stock issued to the United States Department of the Treasury in connection with Citizens South's participation in the Small Business Lending Fund.

Upon completion of the merger, the combined company will have approximately \$2.2 billion in total assets, \$1.7 billion in total deposits, \$1.4 billion in total loans, and a network of 45 branches in the Carolinas and North Georgia.

In March 2010, Citizens South took control of the Bank of Hiwassee, Bank of Blairsville, Bank of Blue Ridge and two branch banks as the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation entered into a purchase agreement with the Gastonia,



**Mayor Jim Conley**  
NC-based lender to assume control of those banks.

Those local banks were closed by the Georgia Department of Banking and Finance and FDIC was named receiver.

To protect depositors of those banks, the FDIC entered into a purchase and assumption agreement with Citizens South Bank.

In addition, Park Sterling's obligation to complete the transaction is conditioned on the FDIC's consent to the assignment of existing FDIC loss-share agreements to which Citizens South is a party.

At closing, Citizens South Banking Corporation will merge into Park Sterling Corporation and, as soon as practicable following the closing, it is anticipated that Citizens South Bank will merge with and into Park Sterling Bank.

"Our proposed merger with Citizens South is the

culmination of extensive due diligence and thoughtful discussions, which we expect to result in a strong business and cultural fit," Park Sterling CEO James C. Cherry said. "We believe this transformational partnership will be positive for our shareholders, customers, employees and communities. Citizens South's footprint is virtually a perfect fit with Park Sterling's."

"Our combined footprint will extend through the attractive Upstate region of South Carolina, including the high growth Greenville-Spartanburg corridor, and into North Georgia," Cherry said. "We will also enjoy a very healthy balance sheet and powerful earnings capabilities."

"We are proud to partner with Kim Price (Citizens South CEO) and his capable team at Citizens South and look forward to continuing their company's 107 year history of providing outstanding service to their communities," Cherry said.

In addition to Park Sterling's successful sign permit request, the city approved sign permits for El Manzanillo Restaurant, an upgrade for Cadence Bank, Beautiful Transitions Thrift Boutique, Downtown Thrift Store, Ellen Gerber Art Studio, and Waves for Weight Loss.

These are the first sign permits approved by the City since its sign ordinance and sign permit process were revamped by the council.

## The Panthers' 1957 football team honored

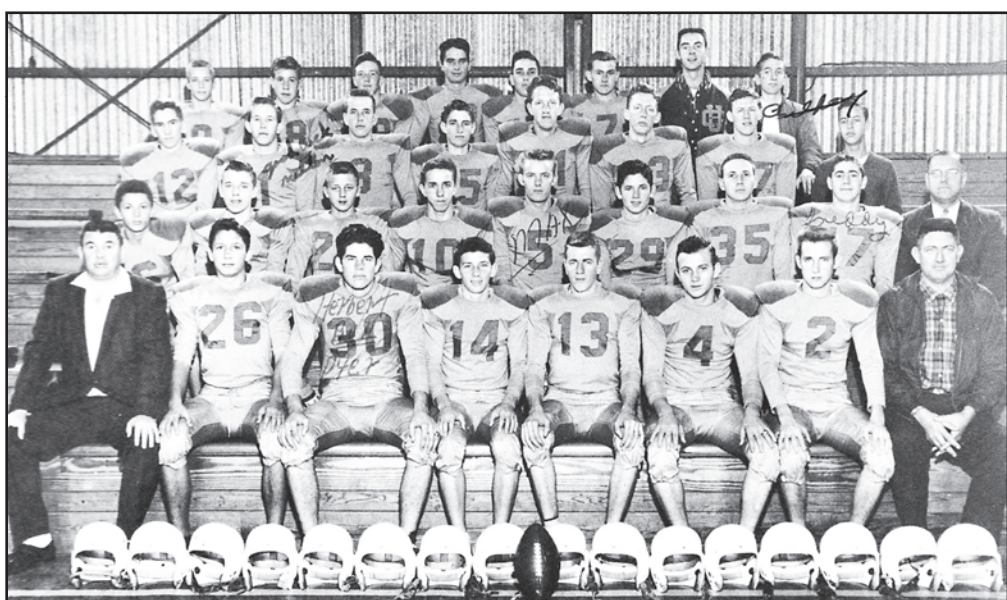
By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium was the place to be last Friday night as Union County High School honored its first football team, the 1957 Union County Panthers as the team celebrated its 55-year reunion.

Beforehand, the team would gather at Steve's Steakhouse for a good meal and an opportunity to catch up with teammates and reminisce on that special 1957 season.

Despite having absolutely no experience to work with, Coach Dave Hardin molded his young Panther squad into an immediate success, polishing off a remarkable 5-2 record in the first year.

Those in attendance from the 1957 team on Friday evening were Coach Dave Hardin, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, Alvin Dyer, Herbert Dyer, Roy Dyer (Best Defensive Back), Keiter Foster, Royce Hughes, Jim McAfee (Team MVP), Bill McGlamery, Bill Parker,



The Glory Days of Union County Panthers football were revisited Friday night at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium as Union County High School celebrated the 55th anniversary of its first team.

Wendell Patterson, Freddy Shuler, Tom Swartz, Curtis Young, Neal Hunter, Wendell Runion, and D.L. Martin.

Martin would pave the way for Union's first football team by helping charter the team's first quarterback club.

As soon as each member had been through the buffet line at Steve's, McGlamery opened by asking for a moment of remembrance for

the players who had passed: Max Helton, Clayton Mason, Earl Odom, Wyclon Helton, Jewel Tate, Tasker Patton, Anthony Wright, Don Garrett, and Tommy Reece. McGlamery then took a moment to announce those who weren't able to attend.

"The following players wanted to be here tonight but are in serious condition," Bill McGlamery announced:

"Charles Owenby, Clark Rogers, and Jim Everett."

After Tom Swartz gave the blessing, McGlamery asked for each member of the team to share their favorite memories from the infant years of Panther football.

At that moment, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley officially welcomed everyone to

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## EMC Annual Meeting scheduled for Saturday

By Charles Duncan  
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The 74th Annual Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Meeting, scheduled to be held at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds, is slated for Saturday, Sept. 15.

Registration for door prizes begins at 8 a.m. and the business meeting is slated to begin at 10 a.m.

The entertainment for this year's event is scheduled to be the chorus teams from Towns County High School and Murphy, NC High School.

The annual meeting, conducted by BRMEMC General Manager Matthew Akins, provides a breakdown of the previous year's events and progress.

Akins' message to members will include an update on the North Georgia Network, details about the progress of the new EMC headquarters, a progress report on the new automated metering project and news related to EMC's



**Matthew Akins**  
Generation Partnership with TVA.

The business meeting also will include ratification of three board members for three-year terms.

Those board members include William Prather of Fannin County, Jerry Nichols of Towns County, and Robert Ensley of Union County.

The EMC board does not accept nominations from the floor, according to its by laws.

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## County gets \$295,687 CDBG grant

By Charles Duncan  
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Union County has been awarded an almost \$300,000 Community Development Block Grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to help pay for expansion of its Senior Center, Patrick Larson of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission said last week.

The \$295,687 grant will provide funding for the physical expansion of the Union County Senior Center, to provide programs, activities, and services to an increased number of Senior Citizens in Union County, Sole Commis-

sioner Lamar Paris said.

"Those funds will go towards the renovation and expansion of the Senior Center," Paris said. "It's a great project. This is a hard fought, competitive grant. Every community in the state of Georgia is trying to get this grant."

"Most of the money comes from our federal tax dollars," he said. "Counties and cities all over the state are applying for these dollars."

The Union County Senior Center was a priority project, with overcrowding conditions and lack of floor space for activities, Commissioner Paris said.

"We've had a great Senior Center for many years," he said. "Ruth Murrell was



**Commissioner Lamar Paris**

over that program for many years and did a great job. We're very fortunate to have Kathy Hill in that position now and carried on that tradition.

"The program is grow-

ing, our seniors enjoy the center," he said. "The lack of space makes it tough, they've only got one activities room."

"They do their meals there, their exercise program there and many of the other programs that they do are done in cramped, crowded conditions."

"One of the things we'll do with that money is add an activities room to alleviate the crowded conditions at the center," Paris said. "We'll also add a meetings/functions room."

"We're proud to have a good working relationship with the Department of Community Affairs, and they

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## The Music Man gets his day, September 15

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County's Music Man will have his day.

Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris last week proclaimed Sept. 15th as "Sam Ensley Day" in Union County.

Ensley a local musician and teacher has remained an inspiration both musically and educationally for decades.

A celebration is scheduled for 10 a.m. Sept. 15 at the Mock House.

Live music and scrumptious barbecue can be had on that day, said Historical So-



**Sam Ensley**

ciety President Bud Akins. "There will be music as long as there's one string left

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## Trauma exercise can save lives

By Charles Duncan  
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Three Emergency Medical Technicians emerge from the Shirley Miller Building at the Union County Public Library.

They observe a victim laying on the ground, obviously injured after being struck by a vehicle.

The victim had chased a ball across a busy street.

The trauma team works to stabilize the victim, and prepare her for transport.

It's an exercise designed



A victim lays underneath a Chevy Suburban unnoticed by emergency workers during a recent training exercise in Blairsville. Photo/Charles Duncan

## Fire Station 2 open house

By Joe Collins  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Sept. 8 from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m., Union County Fire Department Station 2 said thank you to the Jones Creek Community for all of the financial donations they have received this year.

"We just wanted to host this open house to say thank you to all the people in our community that have graciously donated their money and their time in support of what we do here," said a grateful Lt. David Burnette.

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The Bounce House was a hit with local youth attending the Open House at Fire Station 2 in the Jones Creek Community. Photo/Joe Collins

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Blairsville GEORGIA

NoCrow Zone  
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Lady Panthers Softball  
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Cross Country  
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BLAIRSVILLE - UNION COUNTY

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