

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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GDOT: 'Ivy Log Creek Bridge to be replaced'

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
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Ivy Log Creek Bridge, built in 1940, is about to be replaced, according to the Georgia Department of Transportation.

The Murphy Highway bridge project is part of a \$55 million improvement package approved last week by GDOT, department spokesperson Teri Pope said.

The new bridge in Union County is one of 17 North Georgia projects awarded by GDOT last week, Pope said.

The North Georgia projects cost total \$55 million, Pope said.

"The projects will improve mobility and safety," Pope said.

Talley Construction Company of Rossville, was awarded the bid for the .474-



Construction will begin later this summer on a new bridge over Ivy Log Creek according to GDOT. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

mile long Ivy Log Creek Bridge project. Total construction cost: \$3.578 million, Pope said.

Construction on the bridge is expected to begin later this summer, with a target completion date of Dec. 31, 2014, Pope said.

Emily Dunn, who represents the 9th Congressional District, which includes Union County, said construction of the Ivy Log Creek Bridge is exciting news for Union County residents.

"This is great news for our community and construction will not impact traffic," Dunn said. "The new bridge

will be built parallel to the existing bridge to the west. Traffic will continue to use the existing structure until the new bridge is finished then traffic will be shifted over to use the new bridge and the original bridge will be demolished."

The existing bridge was built in 1940. The new structure will include shoulders on both sides of the bridge and be built to current engineering standards improving safety for motorists, Pope said.

Work on the project is expected to begin late this summer.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris was all smiles about the Ivy Log Creek Bridge project. He praised GDOT's leadership team.

"That project is a long

See *Bridge*, 3A

Union County dominates Region CRCT scores

By Charles Duncan
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Union County Schools have dominated the Region again in the Criterion-Referenced Competency Testing.

In Union County, once again, teachers are doing a magnificent job as students - elementary and middle schoolers, with a rare few exceptions, dominated the region in CRCT testing results.

Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe was ecstatic over the latest test scores.

"We know our strengths, and we know our weaknesses," he said. "Fortunately, our strengths are outweighing our weaknesses. We have some amazing students in this school system."

Assistant Union County



Gary Steppe

Schools Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams' comments were short and sweet and directed to students and teachers. "Congratulations on the high achievement and continued success," Dr. Williams said.

In reading, Union students placed first in third, See *Scores*, 2A

Two-sport star Brian Jordan to autograph his children's books

By Charles Duncan
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Brian Jordan has always been a game-changer.

The former Richmond Spider is a member of a rare group, an All-Pro defensive back in the NFL, and an All-Star outfielder in Major League Baseball.

Jordan, 46, a former Atlanta Falcon All-Pro safety, and former Atlanta Brave All-Star outfielder, is now a member of Fox Sports' Braves Live crew on Atlanta Braves Major League Baseball telecasts.

Today, he's changing the writing game in children's books. When you think of a children's book author, you might not automatically think of the former Atlanta two-sport professional athlete. However, he's authored three children's books.

On Thursday, June 20th Jordan will head to Blairsville in preparation for the Game Face Baseball and Softball camps he's hosting at Meeks Park June 22nd and 23rd. He's also in town for a book signing to be held at the Union County Community Center



Retired Atlanta two-sport professional, Brian Jordan comes to Blairsville on Thursday to sign copies of his children's books at the Union County Community Center.

from 3 p.m. to 5p.m.

"I believe that in every child, there is the potential for excellence, my children's books are just a part of my effort to give back to the community for the good fortune I've been granted," Jordan said.

I Told You I Can Play, Overcoming Fear of the Baseball and Time Out for Bullies are all tales from Jordan's youth.

The youngest of three children, Jordan had to earn

spot in neighborhood football games. He was hit in the face with the ball as a child prompting the second book.

Finally, Jordan grew up protecting his friends from bullies and wrote the third book based on that experience and how well it served him.

All three titles will be available during the book signing on Thursday, the cost is \$20 per book.

Jordan will be on site to

See *Jordan*, 2A

World Trade Center memorial part of new Fire Station 1 upgrades

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Last week, a piece of steel from Tower 2 of the World Trade Center was delivered to Union County to be displayed for the public in the new Fire Station 1 that is set to open in July.

That simple piece of rusted steel may look like scrap metal to some, but to the Union County Fire Department, it will serve as a constant 70-pound reminder every time they glance at it, going in and out the door.

A reminder as to why they serve, and that words aren't capable of summing up our gratitude for the job they do.

That rusted piece of steel is a way for the residents of Union County to thank them. A way for the community to place a small downpayment on a bill that the



Lt. David Dyer and Union County Fire & Rescue's Dustin Lee unload some precious cargo last week. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

community will never be able to repay for putting their lives on the line for Union County, day in, and day out.

"Ira Bryant, the new Station 3 volunteer training officer, helped arrange the delivery of Structural Steel from

World Trade Center attack in 2001," Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said. "We are honored to have this on display at our new fire station, and are grateful to the men and women of our fire

See *Memorial*, 6A

Workforce Development comes to town

By Charles Duncan
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Micah Thomas is the man to know if you need a job.

Thomas, a member of Georgia Mountains Regional Commission's Workforce Development team drives one of the two mobile training units purchased with Workforce Investment Act funding through the Governor's Office of Workforce Development.

Thomas was in Blairsville on Friday at the Union County Public Library showcasing just what the mobile unit has to offer.

The mobile units are equipped with video technol-



Micah Thomas

ogy, computer stations, and a teacher station to conduct training sessions.

"This is the first of many trips to Blairsville," Thomas said. "We'll be here, once or twice a month, or as often as

necessary. We're still working on a schedule, so we'll get that information to you as soon as it's complete."

Need a resume? No problem as a personal resume can be produced on the mobile unit and be ready to share with a prospective employer, said Thomas, who assisted six individuals on Friday with resumes.

The mobile units are being used in each of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission's 13 counties to provide a resource for the unemployed and underemployed to access needed technology in their pursuit of employment, Thomas said.

See *Jobs*, 3A

Mason: 'two charged in drug busts'

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
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A stuck vehicle landed a 63-year-old Norcross man stuck in the Union County Jail following a call for assistance last week, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

Tommy Michael Brown's 2011 Shelby Cobra Mustang was stuck in a ditch near Highway 515 East and the U.S. Forest Service building, Sheriff Mason said.

"Deputy Sally Tanner responded to the call for help," Sheriff Mason said. "While talking with Mr.



Sheriff Mack Mason

Brown, Sally observed several smoking devices inside the vehicle which are known to be used to smoke illegal narcotics.

"Deputy Tanner then spoke to Mr. Brown about the

smoking devices and asked for his consent to search the vehicle and he declined," Sheriff Mason said.

That led to Union County Sheriff's Investigator Tyler Miller's involvement in the matter, Sheriff Mason said.

"After being denied consent to search the vehicle, Deputy Tanner contacted Tyler Miller to respond to the scene," Sheriff Mason said. "As Deputy Tanner was waiting on Miller's arrival, Mr. Brown told her that he had some synthetic marijuana inside the vehicle." Investigator Miller soon ar-

See *Busts*, 6A

Mountain Shelter celebrates 25 years

By Charles Duncan
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Roscoe must have known it was the day to shine.

The young, brindle-colored Plott Hound was in his kiddie pool, splashing, chasing fish that decorated the bottom of the pool and, yes, of course, wagging his tail.

Roscoe, a resident at Mountain Shelter, was in search of a new home. He chose the 25th Anniversary celebration at Mountain Shelter off Bowling Gap Circle to make an impression.

According to the staffers at Mountain Shelter, Roscoe is a good-natured dog. He looks the part of a hunting dog. He acts the part of



Roscoe entertained all the visitors at Mountain Shelter on Saturday. Photo/Charles Duncan

a family dog, complete with personality and manners.

In today's tough economic times, larger dogs are a hard sell, Mountain Shel-

ter Director Lisa McConnell said.

"Large dogs, well, and cats and kittens, they're still

See *Shelter*, 3A

Langley launches 'Stewards of Children'

By Joe Collins
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley is on a mission to help adults recognize the signs of child sexual abuse.

Langley recently spoke to the Mountain Movers and Shakers group in Young Harris about a program he is working on called "Stewards of Children" to help prevent the sexual abuse of children, which is a prevalent problem in our society nationwide.



District Attorney Jeff Langley

It's a problem that has become more common than most people realize.

"Stewards of Children" is an educational program designed to help train adults to recognize sexual abuse in a child and act on that suspicious behavior.

The program is part of the SAFE operation known as the Towns and Union Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Initiative.

Their goal is to train five percent of the adult population of Towns and Union counties. According to author Malcolm Gladwell in the book, *The Tipping Point*, if you can reach

See *Stewards*, 3A

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UNION COUNTY SADDLE CLUB

ROPER

Fri., June 21 & Sat., June 22

Gates Open at 6 p.m. Each Night
Action Starts at 8 p.m.

Union County Saddle Club Arena
Corner of Hwy 515 & 325

See page 13A

Mountain Fling

Arts • Crafts
Gifts • Food

June 29 • 9 - 5
June 30 • 11 - 4

North GA Tech
Blairsville, GA

Presented by: Mountain Regional Arts & Crafts Guild, Inc.

Fourth of July Boat Parade

Judging @ 11:15
Trophies @ noon

See page 8A

Blairsville PTO
1st Annual Golf Tournament

Friday, July 26
Butternut Creek Golf Course

Call 706.835.5322
for more information