

Possum drop...from Page 1A

Senior Center Director Kathy Hill and Administrative Assistant Phillip McGlamery brought the center's second annual possum drop to life using a fishing pole and a small, cute, plush possum, handmade by Judy Brown, a crafts volunteer at the senior center.

The drop took place on Friday, Dec. 29, in conjunction with the center's New Year's Eve celebration and daily noon luncheon, which was enjoyed by more than a dozen of the center's members.

"We've been doing this for several years now," said Hill. "We try to have something at every holiday for our members. At New Year's, we were already doing hats and ice cream and cupcakes, and so we said that we'd like to do a possum drop. And here we are."

Those who attended the New Year's Eve Party commemorated the New Year

with brightly colored party hats and noisemakers, making for a cheerful and enthusiastic celebration. According to McGlamery, hosting these events for the seniors is something that both he and Hill are very passionate about because oftentimes, those who come to the center spend holidays such as New Year's alone.

"This gives everybody something to look forward to," said McGlamery. "This is an opportunity for these people to come and be with their peer group. Also, aside from our holiday celebrations, we have tons of activities here. There's something here for everyone, no matter what they enjoy doing."

"We have a full slate of things that attracts people to the center and gives them a reason to be with other folks."

Before the little possum made its grand debut, senior center members enjoyed the



The Senior Center Possum Drop has become an annual tradition, using a possum made by one of the members, Judy Brown. Photo/Lily Avery



Phillip McGlamery brings the possum in for a close-up with senior center member Ursula Whitelock. Photo/Lily Avery

good eats of a traditional New Year's meal consisting of ham, greens, black-eyed peas and cornbread. A delicious dessert of ice cream followed the dropping of the possum, because no good celebration is complete without a little something sweet.

The Union County Senior Center is a day activity center for senior citizens of Union County. To become a member, residents must be at least 60 years old to join, though any resident interested in volunteering or becoming involved at the center are welcome to stop in any day during the week.

A wide variety of activities are available for members to enjoy, all free of charge. A list of these activities can be acquired by calling or visiting the center throughout the week.

In conjunction with the countless activities, members

also have the opportunity to enjoy a free lunch, Monday through Friday, at 11:30 a.m., and the center provides a Meals on Wheels program for members who are unable to make a trip to the center.

Meals on Wheels offers both hot and frozen meals to patrons and is offered Monday through Friday as well, through

the help of many devout volunteers who donate their time for the betterment of others.

"We can always use more volunteers," said McGlamery. "The lifeblood of the Senior Center is volunteer help. We couldn't do it without our volunteers. We love them and appreciate them so much."

Those who wish to

become involved with the Meals on Wheels program may contact the Senior Center at (706) 439-6105 or drop by the center throughout the week.

The senior center is located at 95 Senior Center Drive in Blairsville, and is accessed through the entrance of North Georgia Technical College from Highway 515.

Propane truck...from Page 1A



The Union County Fire Department and Sheriff's Office responded to the scene. Photo/Facebook

then will freeze.

"When it's liquid, it's pressurized in that container, and once it comes out, it's going to expand that pressure, and it's got a freezing process when that happens."

So, what if the tanker had sprung a leak, spilling thousands of gallons of liquid propane into the ditch and roadway?

"If we'd had a leak, we'd have had to do a lot of things," said Dyer. "We'd have had to evacuate the area, get a lot of people away from it, and get all the ignition sources away from it."

Union County has mutual aid agreements in place with neighboring agencies, and Dyer said in the event of a hazardous materials situation, they could get a hazmat team to respond quickly to the scene.

"There are some local mutual aid folks that are in Gainesville and a few other places that could have come and helped us out with that," said Dyer. "And the gas companies, they have their own folks, too,

so we may have used them, too, to call them and see what they could do."

A big propane leak of thousands of gallons would have major consequences for the area surrounding an accident, with the potential for a large fire being the most immediate concern, as propane made its way over the land, along the road, and into creeks and streams.

The potential for an explosion is another major concern in such a scenario, and all people located close to a big spill would have to evacuate for those reasons.

"We'd have had to get everyone out of those shops and houses, shut down the road, turn all the cars around," said Dyer. "If the fire department shows up at your door and says, I'm sorry, but you need to evacuate – we're not doing that for fun. We need you to go."

"It's not going to be something where people say, yeah, well, I'll think about it. It's for your own safety to get out. We wouldn't be evacuating

unless there's a reason.

"So, if the fire department or sheriff's office shows up at your door and says, 'We need you to move,' then it's probably in your best interest to move."

Hypotheticals aside, Dyer said he was thankful that the Dec. 18 accident never even came close to being a situation that required an evacuation.

"It could have been worse if (the tanker) had turned all the way over, it could have broken a valve off – it could have had all kinds of potential problems," said Dyer. "All in all, it was not an extreme accident, the back wheels just fell off."

"The whole entire trailer and the whole entire container was intact, and didn't come close to even being hit, much less having any other problems."

"Any time you're dealing with these things, and nothing ruptures and nothing catches on fire, you always have to consider yourself lucky."

"This was not a routine call, but I think this is something that wasn't as severe as it could have been."



Two Tanner's wreckers got the truck out of the ditch and on the road. Photo/Facebook