

# Upcoming ‘Turkey Trot’ to benefit Deputy Henderson

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Union County Sheriff’s Deputy Mitchell Henderson took a big step forward in his recovery last week, when he transferred to the world-renowned Shepherd Center in Atlanta.

And by all accounts, Deputy Henderson shows improvement each and every day.

Deputy Henderson’s family has been constantly by his side throughout this whole ordeal, and through them, the communities of Union and Towns counties have done their part to keep Henderson in their thoughts and prayers.

Many have even made efforts to help Henderson by raising money for his recovery, to go toward his family’s travel expenses and any medical needs Henderson may have on his journey of healing.

Seventeen-year-old Austin Urban, who is a senior at Mountain Area Christian Academy, knew he wanted to help when he heard a law enforcement officer in his community had been injured.

Urban has been paying attention to recent reactions around the nation concerning an increase in allegations of racially motivated shootings by police officers, and he felt a benefit for Henderson would be a good way to show his support for the deputy as well as all law enforcement officers in the community.

“I really felt led to do something, not just for Mitchell, but for the whole entire police force, to let them know that the community has their back and the churches have their back,” said Urban. “Police officers have a community that loves them and wants to thank them.”

The idea to host a 5K seemed a natural choice for Urban, whose cross country team just won their state championship.



**The son/mother team of Austin and Lisa Urban are bringing the #239 Turkey Trot 5K & Prayer Walk to Meeks Park on Saturday, Nov. 19**

So, after some discussion with his mom, Lisa Urban, who works at First Baptist Church of Blairsville, the “#239 Turkey Trot 5K & Prayer Walk” was born.

The benefit will take place on Saturday, Nov. 19, just in time to show thanks for local law enforcement right before Thanksgiving.

Meeks Park, located at 490 Meeks Park Road in Blairsville, will host the Turkey Trot. Registration opens at 8 a.m. and the run and prayer walk begin at 9 a.m.

Participants can pre-register now for \$25 at active.com, which also secures for them a T-shirt, and folks can register the day of the race for \$30, with a chance to nab a T-shirt while supplies last.

Race proceeds will go toward the “Mitchell Henderson Benefit Account,” to help with expenses related to Deputy Henderson’s recovery.

The mother-and-son Urban team have been working to organize a world-class race for Henderson, and they are still seeking sponsorships.

In order to have time

to print sponsor names on the backs of event T-shirts, they are asking that sponsorship forms be filled out and returned no later than Nov. 1.

There are three different sponsorship levels for having names printed on the backs of shirts – \$100, \$300 and \$500.

Of course, people can also just donate whatever they can afford. All checks should be made payable to “Mitchell Henderson Benefit Account,” and can be mailed to First Baptist Church, 296 Blue Ridge St., Blairsville, GA 30512.

The Urbans are hoping for a strong community turnout for the #239 Turkey Trot 5K & Prayer Walk. This is their first time organizing an event like this, but they’ve had plenty of positive feedback so far, and look forward to having the race professionally handled by Classic Race Services.

Austin will be joined that Saturday by his fellow MACA Cross Country runners and their coach, and the Union County Sheriff’s Office told the Urbans that they will have representation at the race.

## Halloween...continued from Page 1A

the Caribbean as their theme.”

Hometown Halloween on the Square is always held on Halloween night, no matter what day the holiday actually falls on – even if it’s a school night.

“We felt it important to give local kids the opportunity to actually trick-or-treat on the night of Halloween,” said Harper, adding that the centralized location gives children a great place to collect candy.

There’s more to Halloween this year than just Halloween, however.

Thanks to the partnership between the DDA and the Union County Historical Society, Harper has been able to organize an Outdoor Movie Night for residents.

This Saturday, Oct. 29, will be the last Outdoor Movie Night of the season, and will feature a free viewing of Tim Burton’s “The Nightmare Before Christmas.” The movie will be projected onto a big screen on the lawn of the Butt Mock House, aka the Mountain Life Museum and Heritage Center, just up from the square.

“Copeland’s (Restaurant) is sponsoring a costume contest for kids for Outdoor Movie Night, so that gives kids two opportunities to dress up,” said Harper.

The contest will take place before the movie starts, and contest winners will get gift certificates to eat at the new restaurant located in Downtown Blairsville.

Outdoor Movie Night festivities begin at 6 p.m. this



**This scarily costumed creature featured heavily in the frights of the evening last year, though the inhabitant of the costume was friendly enough to pose for pictures.**

Saturday, and the folks behind “We Are Still Here” will be running the concessions, selling drinks, popcorn and cotton candy to patrons of the event.

“We always try to do something that’s family friendly,” said Harper, speaking on the upcoming events. “They’re free for the community, and it’s a good way to help other organizations to provide concessions for their causes. And it’s good to get people downtown.”

The Downtown Square will be closed to through traffic for the duration of the

Hometown Halloween event, and parking can be found all around the downtown area, including at Blairsville City Hall and behind King’s 5 and 10.

“Hometown Halloween is an event that everybody looks forward to,” said Harper. “In a rural community, too, it’s hard for kids to trick-or-treat like kids from the city. You don’t have as many neighborhoods or safe places to go, so it gives the opportunity for merchants to give back to the community, and it’s something fun the kids enjoy.”