

North Georgia News

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Community competes to raise money during Super Chef Showdown

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Within the first hour of the Super Chef Showdown on Saturday, March 9, more than 100 guests had joined the Hope House of Union County in celebrating the eighth annual event at the First United Methodist Church.

Event organizers invited local churches and organizations to prepare dishes for guests to taste, then vote on for which they believed to be best.

"This is our big fundraiser of the year," said Hope House Board Chair Eric Wood. "We are nonprofit and faith-based, and we help people that are in legitimate need, whether it be a power bill or propane, or whatever they may need."

"They can need us, and we are open twice a week, and they fill out an application to see if they are eligible for our help."

The organization is also supported by local businesses, churches and individuals throughout the community, as well as the Showdown event, all in the name of helping those in the community who are in need.

"We have community leaders who have agreed to participate as a chef," said Evelyn Ueltzen, treasurer for the organization. "They have all prepared a dish, and they are serving up samples, so the community comes in and pays one admission fee and goes around to taste all the chefs." Each group has a jug that they use to vote with their money on the agency or dish that they like.

"We have two types of judging," said Ueltzen. "We have jug winners, who win based on the amount of money in their jugs, and we also have See Chef, Page 3A



Big winners of the Super Chef Showdown on Saturday, March 9, were (L-R) St. Clare's Episcopal Church, Shady Grove UMC, and the FUMC Youth Group. Blairsville PD (not pictured) won best-tasting food for the competition. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Local students bring championship home in new state competition



FFA Adviser Chris Crump with UCHS students Landen Gray, Colby Elliott, Alexis Moody and Miriam King, who finished First Place in the Agriculture Technology and Equipment ID Competition in February. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Jarrett Whitener
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Four Union County High School freshmen attended State CDE Day last month to participate in the Agricultural Technology & Equipment ID Competition at Fort Valley State University.

"CDE stands for Career Development Event," said Future Farmers of America Adviser Christopher Crump. "The contest should be geared to actual careers in the community,

so this one was electrical wiring, and they actually won the area competition by 75 points, and then went down there to win the state competition."

Added Crump, "This is the first time they have ever had the state competition, so it's very new. Two years ago, it was introduced, but it was an area contest before becoming a real major competition."

Students have to go through different components of the competition before being selected as winners,

with each student being individually judged based on their performance.

"The most practical part was they had to do some electrical wiring," said Crump. "They had to wire a two-box wiring problem, and that can be a switch light, two outlets, two lights, or any combination of that."

"They had to wire a light switch and it was sourced through the light, so they had to know how to reidentify

See FFA, Page 2A

Disturbing pattern of behavior precedes double murder in Morganton

By Shawn Jarrard
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MORGANTON – A 35-year-old McCaysville man has been charged with the March 4 murder of Amber Jackson, 31, whose 3-year-old son was also found shot to death at the scene, according to the Georgia Bureau of Investigation.

The GBI responded that evening to a call for assistance made by the Fannin County Sheriff's Office concerning a double murder involving Jackson and her young son Ethan, according to the GBI.

Fannin County Sheriff's Deputies made the tragic discovery after responding to a 911 call of "shots fired" at Jackson's address on Underwood Road in Morganton, according to the GBI.

Upon arrival, deputies found the mother and son on the front steps of the apartment, dead from apparent gunshot wounds, according to the GBI.

Joshua Lee Fults, identified as Jackson's boyfriend by the GBI, "was located on the porch of the residence suffering from an apparent self-inflicted



Joshua Lee Fults

gunshot wounds." Deputies took Fults into custody, and he was transported to a medical facility, where he was last reported to be in critical condition, according to the GBI.

"At this time, an arrest warrant charging Fults with the murder of Amber Jackson has been taken by the Fannin County Sheriff's Office," according to the GBI. "Additional charges are expected."

Once the investigation is complete, the case will be submitted to the Appalachian

Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office for prosecution, according to the GBI.

Disturbingly, this was not the first time law enforcement had gotten out with Fults concerning attempted suicide and his girlfriend, Jackson, according to multiple reports obtained from the Fannin County Sheriff's Office.

Jackson called the law on June 30, 2018, in reference to a domestic situation at her then-residence on Kingtown Street in Blue Ridge, according to an Incident Report.

Fannin County deputies and the McCaysville Police Department responded to Jackson's residence that day, where they discovered a man, Fults, sitting on the porch with a knife held to his wrist, as Jackson holed up inside with her son for safety.

"The male was demanding to speak with his girlfriend, Amber Jackson, or he was going to kill himself," according to a report filed by Sgt. John Bramlett of the Fannin County Sheriff's Office.

See Murder, Page 7A

Gun Club discusses target range progress in March 7 Annual Meeting

By Shawn Jarrard
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Members of the Union County Gun Club gathered for their Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 7, inside the Haralson Memorial Civic Center.

And though there weren't any major updates on the proposed Union County Target Range, members learned in the meeting that the U.S. Forest Service is about halfway through its vetting process for the project off of Georgia 180 between mile markers 18 and 19.

The 2019 Annual Meeting took place two days shy of the one-year anniversary of the initial meeting with



Union County Sheriff Mack Mason speaking in the March 7 Annual Meeting of the Union County Gun Club.

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Forest Supervisor Betty Jewett, Georgia Director for USDA Rural Development

Joyce White and others at the proposed range site on March 9, 2018.

That 2018 meeting served as a milestone of sorts for the Gun Club, as Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris' office soon after made the application for the target range to kickstart the project with the Forest Service.

The club, which began in July 2017, is hopeful that the USFS process will wrap up by late summer 2019, at which point members will receive the go-ahead to start building the range.

"We knew this wouldn't be an overnight thing, and we told y'all that, and you've stuck with us, and I thank you for it," said Union County Sheriff

See Gun Club, Page 2A

Chief Chad Deyton federally deputized as DEA Task Force Officer

By Shawn Jarrard
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Union County Schools Police Chief Chad Deyton has been federally deputized as a Task Force Officer in the Drug Enforcement Administration.

It's not a paying gig, but it does allow him to take part in any DEA investigation throughout the United States, as well as those occurring closer to home.

"This is a good tool for the school system, because we can bring a lot of assets from the federal government as far as teaching our students about drugs," said Deyton. "We can educate them. We've already been talking, trying to educate the kids on this vaping trend."

See Deyton, Page 3A



Jason Allen of DEA Atlanta presenting Union County Schools Police Chief Chad Deyton with his DEA Task Force Officer certification paperwork and a Certificate of Appreciation in the Feb. 19 school board meeting. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

City Hall hopes to finish new Blairsville Police Department by midsummer

By Shawn Jarrard
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Renovation of the vacant building next to Blairsville City Hall to serve as the brand new Blairsville Police Department is moving right along, with city officials hopeful that the building could be open by midsummer.

Members of the Blairsville City Council unanimously approved a series of contracts to complete the building in their March 5 regular meeting with Mayor Jim Conley.

Construction will be carried out by Bridges Home Builders to the tune of \$45,869, while other subcontracted costs to include electrical, plumbing, HVAC, etc., will come out to \$62,200, with the overall



Jacob McCann presenting Blairsville Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter with a decorative flag he made to honor law enforcement. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

cost of the renovation project totaling \$108,069. Already, new floors and wall studs have been installed, and roofing could potentially

See BPD, Page 6A

Vol. 110 No. 11
4 Sections 28 Pages
Weather
Thurs: Showers Hi 64 Lo 54
Fri: Rain Hi 58 Lo 34
Sat: Cloudy Hi 51 Lo 30

Arrests 4C
Churches 3C
Classified 5D
Opinion 4A
Legals 4D
Obits 6C
Sports 2B

SPORTS
BASEBALL
Mar 15 vs. Monticello (DH)
5 PM
SOCCER
Mar 15 vs. Putnam County
5:30 & 7:30 PM

Woody Gap
Band of Steel
Gala

See page 2D

Open letter
from
Union County Schools
Superintendent

See page 2A

New UGH CEO
Welcome
Reception

See page 7A