

# North Georgia News

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## Terry Reece remembers his Uncle Hub

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

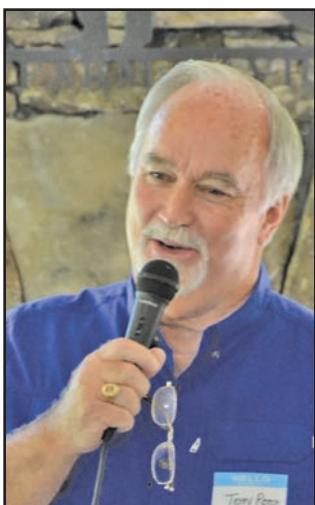
Terry Reece spoke fondly of his late Uncle Byron Herbert "Hub" Reece on Saturday.

Terry Reece was the keynote speaker at the 11th Annual Reece Society Meeting at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center.

Though only 10 years old when his uncle died, Terry Reece remembered the humorous side of Hub Reece.

"He had a dog named Dionysus," Terry Reece remembered. "I told him I didn't really like that name, could we call him Bullet? That was a better name for a dog. He told me that might confuse him since he was already used to the name Dionysus."

"Dionysus was what amounted to a Russian Wolf Hound," Terry Reece said. "What I wished I had said was 'you bring a dog all the way from Stalingrad to Choestoe, North Georgia, and that didn't



Terry Reece



Byron Herbert Reece

confuse him?"

Hub Reece was a quiet man, but his nephew said he had quite the sense of humor.

Terry Reece's father T.J. Reece worked in Detroit, Mich. in the automobile factories, so Hub Reece was like a surrogate father to Terry Reece and his siblings.

"There were nine nephews and nieces," Terry Reece

said. "This place where we're sitting, I worked here; these trees weren't here, you could see the highway."

"When I came along, Byron was farming less, writing more, teaching more and making public appearances," he said. "A lot of the farming had kinda, sort of, been taken over by my family."

The sound of a tractor,

and the rattle of its trailer signaled that Hub Reece was coming up to the farm on the Farmall Tractor to bring the Reece boys a jug of water.

Another sound familiar to the farm was wild hogs. Those hogs belonged to Juan Reece, Hub's father, and they were marked on the ear.

Old Red's jingling cowbell, Gene Dyer's truck going to market, and the slow motion sound of Bill Reid driving his truck to market to sell his produce were other sounds the Reece boys heard on the farm.

"We knew the sound of Bill's truck because he drove so slow," Terry Reece said. "When he got to Enotah Cottages, he had to put it in second gear."

Byron Herbert Reece was an award-winning poet, but he was much more than that in life. There was a side to Hub Reece that many never saw. His life wasn't all dependency and depression.

See *Reece*, 3A

## BOE sets tentative budget at \$25.885 million

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Fiscal Year 2015 Budget for the Union County Schools System will increase by more than \$1.223 million.

The increase easily can be attributed to the hiked cost of instruction as Gov. Nathan Deal and the Georgia General Assembly have included a teacher pay raise in their Fiscal Year 2015 budget.

Local governments must follow suit and match those increases.

The cost of instruction is projected at more than \$1.83 million for Fiscal Year 2015.

The total budget tentatively is set at \$25.885 million for Fiscal Year 2015. That's up from \$23.662 million in Fiscal Year 2014.

Of course, the first five mills, or \$6 million, comes off the top of the school system's budget for Local Fair Share,



Dr. Jeremy Williams

Union County Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams said.

"That money goes into a pool at the state level for less fortunate school systems," Dr. Williams said. "The state has used this formula for the last 35 years so it's nothing new."

"We're not the only school that has to pay that, but it is a significant amount

See *Budget*, 2A

## Relay For Life raises \$72,000 to fight cancer

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

After 20 years, the Union County Relay For Life teams are still fighting the good fight as they attempt to beat down cancer.

More than 500 people battled the rain like they battle cancer to be a part of the 20th Annual Relay For Life ceremonies.

Once again, the honors were held at the Union County Farmers Market on Old Smokey Road just outside Blairsville.

Approximately 110 survivors turned out for the Survivors Picnic. Countless team members also took part in the event as the collective effort to raise money for a cure and awareness of the deadly disease brought in more than \$72,000.

Saturday marked the



20th time Union County families and friends came together to beat back the killer that has claimed so many of its loved ones.

It was an event to behold as a community came together with one common cause - find a cure for cancer.

The event included cancer survivors that began their fight back in the 1970s.

They walked the track and proved that cancer can be fought back.

There also were folks there that were preparing for

See *Relay*, 2A

## Knight publishes property sales list

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

If you ignored a recent letter from Union County Tax Commissioner Lee Knight alerting you that your name would be in the *North Georgia News* for owing taxes that date from 2010 and back, it's out of the commissioner's control.

Tax Commissioner Knight and his staff have now collected more than \$3.5 million in back taxes for years 2012 and past.

The collection rate for the 2012 and back is at 94.7 percent. The county is at 97.9 percent collections on the 2013 property taxes.

"Your taxes go to support our schools, county, and city with over 99 percent distributed to these municipalities," Knight said. "Our office and staff continue to work on the delinquent taxes and have



Lee Knight

tax liens still filed on more than 120 properties.

"We will continue to move these properties through the process to levy on them and will run these in the legal section of the *North Georgia News* beginning this week," Knight said. "Properties still

not paid and that are still on this list after they have run in the legal section four weeks will be put out for sale on the Courthouse steps on July 1st."

Knight said this process is the hard part of the job, but is necessary to be fair to the taxpayers that have paid their taxes.

The tax commissioner is bound by state law to collect back taxes according to his fiduciary responsibilities.

"The property actually stands good for the taxes and can be levied against it to collect the property taxes," Knight said. "If your property is sold on the Courthouse steps and someone buys that lien, they are able to collect a 20 percent premium on that lien from the property owner or security deed holder for up to 12 months."

See *Tax List*, 2A

## Rain couldn't stop a Downtown Festival

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The real estate agent's mantra of location, location, location rang true at last weekend's Downtown Arts and Crafts Festival.

With construction around the Historic Courthouse completed, the new pedestrian-friendly town square was put to the test for the first time and it passed with flying colors.

The new set up received tons of praise from vendors and visitors alike.

"The way that the old Courthouse has been incorporated into the festival, truly gives it a small town, authentic feel," said Lindsey Buchanan of Canton.

Unfortunately with all the praise raining down on the



festival, the skies refused to be out done.

Much to the chagrin of vendors and their merchandise,

there wasn't a location anywhere in downtown Blairsville

See *Festival*, 2A

## Farmers Market debut set for Saturday

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The phenomenon continues Saturday morning, June 7th, at 7 a.m.

The Union County Farmers Market kicks off its 2014 season as fresh produce finds its way to the most popular gathering spot ever in Union County.

Thousands are expected to greet the more than 70 vendors, Market Manger Mickey Cummings said.

"We have 65-plus vendors signed up to be with us this year," Cummings said. "More produce and plant producers than ever before will be selling their fresh vegetables, fruits and plants."

Saturday's grand opening couldn't come too soon for most folks, vendors and patrons alike.

From June 7th through the end of October, the Mar-



ket will be open every Saturday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. and every Tuesday from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., rain or shine, Cummings said.

Though most home gardens aren't producing just

yet, the Market vendors will be there with locally grown greens, radishes, beets, onions, and yes, some tomatoes, lettuce, swiss chard and even

See *Farmers*, 2A

## MECHS grads ready for life

By Matthew Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

**Blue Ridge** - Seniors from Union County and Towns County high schools gave an anticipatory hats off to Mountain Education Charter High School as proceedings commenced for the Class of 2014 on May 29.

The procession began with Pomp and Circumstance as the seniors lined up to sit down front and center before their Curriculum Director Roy Perren.

"I want to extend a special welcome to our guests--parents, grandparents, extended family and friends who



assembled here this afternoon to help us celebrate the graduation of the Union Site and Fannin Site Mountain Education Charter High School stu-

dents," Perren greeted. "We've grown so large the past few years that we're having four graduation ceremonies. These diplomas not only reflect the hard work and dedication of these students, but the support of their families, many organizations, local businesses, and the MECH staff and governing board," said Perren.

Holly Diane Davis, Union Site's High Honor Graduate as well as Dual Enrollment Scholarship recipient, who held the title for the highest Grade Point Average this year from Union County, spoke of diligence and courage.

See *Grads*, 3A

## Fire Station 4 celebrates Open House

By Todd Forrest  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Fire Department's Station 4 put its equipment on display for the community, as well as showing off its fire fighting expertise.

Station 4, located in northern Union County opened its doors for its annual Open House, held once a year at each of the county's fire stations.

See *Open House*, 3A



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**Don Byers in concert**  
June 6th  
Old Courthouse  
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**Blairsville Cruisers**  
2 car shows this weekend!  
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**Gospel Fest**  
Union County Saddle Club Arena  
June 6th & 7th  
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**Butternut Creek Ladies Golf Invitational**  
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**AARP Smart Driver Course**  
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