

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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October 1, 2014

More than 230 attend Coosa UMC's 180th Homecoming

By Charles Duncan
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Homecoming has various meanings. In 1834, when Coosa United Methodist Church became a reality, homecomings meant those in attendance were ready to come home and be with Our Lord.

In some instances, it meant that folks had moved away, and were literally "coming home" to be with friends and family.

"Not so many people do that anymore," the Rev. Watkins said, referring to the cost of travel being expensive, and the fact that folks don't travel like they used to.

Sunday, Sept. 28 marked the 180th anniversary of Homecoming at Coosa



Homecoming at Coosa UMC brought out the antique clothing on Sunday as members turned back the clock. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

United Methodist Church off Mulky Gap Road.

Rev. Watkins said the 238 people gathered just off

Mulky Gap Road in rural Union County came together Sunday to honor those who came before them and to look



Coosa UMC member Evelyn Payne was honored Sunday for her good works and community support. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

to the future. "We celebrate and remember because there is much to learn from his-

tory," he said. "We're proud of where we have come from and it helps us to get where we are going."

"History is not just the events of people's lives, it is also understanding how God has influenced and guided lives. Each of us has our own individual mission. The lives you live, the place you work, the family you have, the work you do, and the places you travel to are your mission fields. You'll speak to and meet people that no one else will have a chance to. There is nobody better to spread the Gospel of Christ than you. Love others as Christ has loved you and accept them for who they are."

The Rev. Watkins said the gathering on Sunday was a time to reflect how the present day congregation ties into what has already happened at

See Coosa, 2A

Gov. Deal speaks to hundreds at UC Arena

By Charles Duncan
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Nathan Deal has never lost an election.

He isn't about to buck that trend in November.

Georgia's 82nd Governor won his first race in 1980 when he was elected to the State Senate in District 49. He served there until 1991 when he chose to run for the vacant seat of retired 9th District U.S. Rep. Ed Jenkins.

Deal won that race and served until March 2010, when he stepped down to focus on his successful run for governor. He defeated former Gov. Roy Barnes, taking 53 percent of the vote.

Gov. Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal came to Union County Arena on Saturday, socializing with locals, breaking bread and enjoying some tasty Northeast Georgia barbecue.

"When I came into office four years ago, our state was in a Great Recession, the



Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley greets Gov. Deal on Saturday at Union County Arena. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

economy had slumped considerably," Gov. Deal said.

Under Deal's leadership, Georgia turned things around, becoming the No. 1 state in the nation for business. By cutting taxes and downsizing bureaucratic red

tape, the Governor helped to create 235,000 new jobs. As a result of his fiscally conservative leadership, Georgians now enjoy one of the lowest tax burdens in the country.

"With the help of the General Assembly, we decid-

ed to focus on job creation," Gov. Deal said. "If a person has a good job, they can take care of themselves, they can take care of their family."

Deal also has overseen three balanced budgets without raising taxes, saved millions of taxpayer dollars by maintaining Georgia's AAA bond rating, and increased the state's rainy day fund considerably.

He has focused on returning Georgia to a state rich in the manufacturing industry. To do that, he has focused on making the Port of Savannah the busiest seaport for moving cargo on the East Coast.

Gov. Deal wants to get started using \$266 million in state funds to make that happen. First, the state must reach a cost-sharing agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency overseeing the project.

Gov. Deal told the Union County crowd that he

See Deal, 2A

UGH Chapel Dedication to honor George Gowder

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union General Hospital, Inc. will honor Dr. George Gowder with a Chapel Dedication at the hospital on Thursday, Oct. 2, from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

There is no doubt that Dr. Gowder has meant much to Union County over the years, as the patients he has treated and babies he has ushered forth into the world are, to his own reckoning, "countless."

In January of 1959, the Union County Clinic opened its doors, and Dr. Gowder was one of two doctors in the county.

"Dr. Charles Little and I, along with our two nurses, cared for the 15 patients who came to the outpatient clinic that first day," said



Dr. George Gowder

Dr. Gowder. "We weren't licensed to accept inpatients, but we did have two beds available for observation, and they were used mostly for delivering babies."

"That little clinic was the humble beginning of what

See Dr. Gowder, 3A

Indian Summer Fest returns Saturday

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Suches will be the center of attention in the Northeast Georgia Mountains as the Indian Summer Festival gets underway Saturday at 9 a.m.

Before the festival opens its 15th Annual Open Above the Clouds 10K race and the 1K Fun Run kickoff the weekend event.

"The festival feels more like a family reunion," Althea Cantrell said. "Old friends, family, and former Woody Gap classmates all try to return to Suches for the weekend."

Arts, crafts, music, and entertainment last all afternoon before closing its gates at 5 p.m., so anyone who doesn't make it on Saturday won't miss



a thing as the gates reopen at 9 a.m. on Sunday.

"We get a lot of folks riding through the mountains for the weekend who don't know about it," Cantrell said.

"But they stop and most keep coming back. There is something here for everyone."

The festival, held behind Woody Gap schools on Ga. 60 is a project of the Woody Gap Sports Club, a non-profit organization and all proceeds go to the Woody Gap School. The school might be the smallest public school in the state but there is nothing small about the way the Suches community comes together to benefit its young men and women.

"The first year the festival was held in someone's yard as a way to raise money for the school," Cantrell said. "The second year is when it moved to the school and it's been here ever since."

The Saturday night Country Square Dance is one of the festival's most popular

traditions. Held in the school's gymnasium, the dance will feature a live band when the doors open at 8 p.m. Admission is \$7 at the door and \$6 in advance. Proceeds of the dance go directly into the Woody Gap Scholarship Fund for graduating seniors.

Other Indian Summer Festival traditions include a play performed by Woody Gap Elementary School students, clogging, an auction, a hand-to-hand combat demonstration by the Mountain Rangers, an archery demonstration, live mountain music, and the popular turkey shoot, Gaddistown Homemakers booth and the Local Studies booth.

There is plenty of food to suit just about anyone's fan-

See Fest, 3A

Smith crowned Homecoming Queen



Emma Smith is the 2014 UCHS Homecoming Queen. Photo/Todd Forrest

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County Panther fans were on the edge of their seats last Friday night at Mike

Colwell Memorial Stadium and it had nothing to do with football.

With the Panthers up 38-0 in the second quarter, the

See Queen, 2A

1957 Panthers remember past, future

By Charles Duncan
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Coach Dave Hardin, D.L. Martin and Ray Rogers are names to remember in the

legacy of Union County Panthers' football.

The three were present as members of the first football team in 1957 and many who have followed in their

footsteps witnessed the unveiling of the granite monument, and the bronze Panther at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium on Sept. 12.

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Perdue and Collins stump in Union

By Charles Duncan
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GOP U.S. Senate hopeful David Perdue and 9th District U.S. Rep. Doug Collins greeted Union County GOP members Saturday at the Union County Arena as they make the push for the November General Election.

Perdue, seeking the seat of retiring Republican U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss, told the crowd they could help put U.S. Sen. Majority Leader Harry Reid and the White House one vote short in the U.S. Senate by voting to send him to Washington.

"She wants to sound like us," Perdue said, referring to his Democratic opponent Michelle Nunn in the U.S. Senate race. "But



David Perdue

I can tell you this, she will be a rubber stamp for Harry Reid. She's too liberal for Georgia. If you like what's going on in Washington, you better vote for my opponent.

"But I have to tell, that is a failed administration in

Washington," he said. "This country is headed in the wrong direction. They blame the dysfunction and gridlock in Washington on Republicans."

"Here is the reality, there are 384 bipartisan bills on Harry Reid's desk today, waiting to be debated in the U.S. Senate," Perdue said. "Some of those are jobs bills, some are those initiated by Democrats and half of those bills will pass by two-thirds majority."

"There are only two forms of gridlock in Washington today, Harry Reid and Barack Obama," he said. "The President has figured out how to run this country without a Congress (executive order). With executive

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