

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Panthers to host Model in first round of playoffs

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Union County Panthers (9-1, 5-1) football team will host its first State Playoff game since 2001 this Friday night as they welcome the Model Blue Devils to Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium for a 7:30 p.m. kickoff.

The Panthers earned the right to host thanks to a 5-1 record in Region 8-AA. And no win was bigger than Friday night's 35-34 thriller over the defending 8-AA Region's No. 1 scoring defense, the Tigers of Washington Wilkes (6-4, 3-3).

With Rabun County knocking off the Tigers 22-7, two weeks ago, and Union County 45-31, three weeks ago, the Panthers needed a win over Wilkes and the Region's No. 1 scoring defense to claim the No. 2 seed in 8-AA and host the first round of the Class AA State Playoffs.

See *Playoffs*, 2A



The Union County Panthers celebrate their first win to host the state playoffs since 2001. Photo/Todd Forrest

75-year-old woman rescued from freezing temperatures

By Charles Duncan
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A 75-year-old Union County woman is recovering in a local hospital after Union County sheriff's deputies and public safety workers rescued her from the weekend cold.

Approximately 20 people – Union County sheriff's deputies, Union County Search and Rescue, Union County firefighters, Blairsville Police, Union County EMS, Dixie, the Gilmer County tracking bloodhound, and a Georgia State Patrol helicopter were searching for the elderly woman after she was reported missing at 12:30 a.m. Sunday by her husband.

The latter, who suffers from the waning stages of Alzheimer's Disease, went missing sometime after 8:30 p.m. on Saturday. That's when her husband told authorities that they went to bed.

"He happened to wake up and went to check on her and



Sgt. Adam Deyton

discovered the front door was open. When her health was better, she used to walk every day. Her husband noticed that her red walking shoes were missing. He went outside, he called for her. He then got in his car and drove around the circle looking for her but couldn't find her. That's when he called 911.

"We got there (Garrett Circle) as soon as we could," Sgt. Deyton said. "We didn't know how long she had been

See *Rescue*, 2A

UCHS hosts Second Annual Tribute to Veterans

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County Schools hosted its Second Annual Veterans Day Program Friday morning in Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium to honor the veterans of Union County and abroad.

Students filled the stands as veterans and their family members sat in chairs placed on the field.

This is the second year in a row that the school system has honored veterans for their special day of recognition.

"The veterans were invited by all of the students," said Union County Assistant Administrator Art McCann of the high school, who was the master of ceremonies for the program. "What we did is we made a special invitation and we spread it out to the schools, and the schools gave it to the students to bring home."

McCann, who is a retired Command Sergeant Major with the U.S. Army, was asked by Union County Superintendent of Schools Gary Steppe to put the ceremony together.

"There were a couple of things that made it great, and it's really the students and the teachers that helped me put it together," said McCann.

The band and chorus from both the middle and high schools performed for the veterans, students and teachers in the audience.

Working in concert, the students produced stirring renditions of the National Anthem and several classic patriotic songs, including God Bless The U.S.A. and America the Beautiful.

Superintendent Steppe introduced and thanked U.S. Army Major (retired) Leon Davenport, who has been

See *Veterans*, 3A



Above, U.S. Army Major (retired) Leon Davenport and retired Director of Veterans Services Roy Hamby take part in the Veterans Ceremonies at UCHS. Below, Civil Air Patrol Cadet Schroeder presents colors at the ceremony. Photos/Shawn Jarrard

Colder weather headed our way; cemetery clean up day still a go

By Charles Duncan
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If you haven't heard of Typhoon Nuri, you will.

Remnants of Typhoon Nuri that hit Alaska's Aleutian Islands with hurricane-strength winds over the weekend are headed South, as in Deep South.

The system's impact is expected to drop temperatures in North Georgia into the 20s by the weekend.

Union County will experience mid-20s beginning Thursday morning, according to the National Weather Service.

That trend continues into Friday and if you're going to the Union County Panthers' playoff game, bundle up. The forecasters say, "it will be cold."

Initially, the system doesn't provide any precipitation. On Sunday, that's supposed to change, with a 60 percent chance of rain entering the forecast. By Monday, expected precipitation is expected to be 50 percent. That includes the possibility of a wintry mix in the forecast.

Temperatures are expected to be in the mid-40s for a high, and mid-20s to low-30s for the lows for the weekend and heading into next week.

The weather system could impact Saturday's expected clean up day at the Old Blairsville Cemetery. Extreme high winds and low temperatures postponed the original



Lamar Paris

clean up day on Saturday, Nov. 15. The day was moved to Nov. 15 at 9 a.m. Again, that's weather permitting.

There are six Confederate soldiers buried in the historic cemetery. The oldest grave marker in the cemetery with a legible inscription is dated 1844. There also is a beautiful large stone covered grave with a headstone, quite possibly this grave could be a Native American grave and could be much older.

Physical help at the cemetery and monetary help with renovations are both desperately necessary, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said.

"The county has already paid for the mapping and ground penetrating radar," Commissioner Paris said. "The city is having the property surveyed and will handle the cost of the title work and weekly maintenance, but the actual beautification process including some new markers,

See *Cold*, 2A

Goodies From the Heart bridges the hunger gap in Union County seven days a week

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

One in every six Americans are dealing with hunger, and here in Georgia that ratio is slightly higher where one in four children live in food insecure households.

Meanwhile in Union County, more than 60 percent of its children qualify for free or reduced lunches.

However, Goodies From the Heart, a local charitable organization has teamed up with Union County Family Connections to extend a helping hand beyond the school cafeteria, not only Mondays through Fridays, but seven



Goodies From the Heart, a local charitable organization is making a difference in the lives of Union County children. Photo/Todd Forrest

days a week.

"When school is in session, many parents rely on the free and reduced lunches to help feed their children, but weekends and holidays are another story," said Leslie Shields from Day of Grace Baptist Church.

That is where Goodies From the Heart step in. With the help of local churches, other organizations, and local food banks, the Weekend Snack Pack Program has been created. This program sends primary and elementary school-aged children home with an assortment of healthy convenient meals and healthy snacks when regular

family connection programs are unavailable.

Family Connection works with local churches and organizations, as well as Georgia Mountain Food Bank, to package and provide bags of food to students determined to be in need.

Local churches who are pitching in include, Day of Grace, Liberty Baptist, Coosa Methodist, Philadelphia Baptist, Pleasant Grove Baptist, New Liberty Baptist, Trackrock Baptist, Antioch Baptist, Zebulon Baptist, The Vineyard, New Harmony.

Family Connection handles the paperwork for the referral process, requests

number of bags needed, distributes food and reports monthly to the Food Bank.

Macaroni and cheese, oatmeal, pop tarts, crackers, and granola bars and many others are a few of the common items that the students who qualify take home each weekend.

In early 2013, the Women's Group at Day of Grace Baptist Church helped set the wheels in motion after they discovered a similar program in Towns County.

"If they have the need in Towns County, then we were pretty sure there was a

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