

# North Georgia News

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## Union General Hospital welcomes first baby of 2019

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
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Congratulations to Scott and Alicia Rose of Mineral Bluff, who welcomed the newest member of their family and Union General Hospital's first baby of 2019 on New Year's Day.

Alicia gave birth to daughter Abigail Grace Rose at 9:57 a.m. on Jan. 1, 2019. Dr. Benjamin Harris delivered Abigail, and she came into the world weighing 6 pounds, 1 ounce, and measuring 19 and 3/4 inches long.

Technically, Abigail wasn't due until Jan. 10, and Alicia had scheduled an induced birth for Jan. 4. But as everyone knows, babies have a mind of their own when it comes to due dates.

The Roses went to sleep before midnight on New Year's Eve, only to wake up in the early morning hours of New Year's Day in labor.

They labored at home

as long as they could before heading to the hospital to have little Abigail, with a hospital admittance time of 8:45 a.m.

Abigail's big sister, Kennedy Noel Rose, is coming up on 3 years old, and she was excited to get to meet her baby sister that day.

The Roses are a family of faith, with both Rose children having Biblically inspired names – Abigail, Grace, Noel – and Scott said the family wanted to thank God for the way things went on New Year's Day.

Two other mothers gave birth to New Year's babies at Union General Hospital, though Abigail was the first of 2019.

For having earned the title of First Baby of the New Year at the hospital, Abigail and her parents received a gift basket from the Union General Hospital Auxiliary.

The basket included a baby bathtub, newborn baby medications, clothes, a haircare kit and more.

Brittanie Rowland, the registered nurse who took care of baby Abigail after she was delivered, said she enjoys helping moms bring their babies into the world and taking care of them through their labor.

"When I was in nursing school, I always wanted to go into Labor & Delivery," said Rowland.

Jessica Queen has been a nurse for five years and has worked Labor & Delivery specifically for three years, and she helped Alicia during the delivery.

"It was special to be a part of it, for sure," said Queen. "I love laboring patients, that's my favorite. Just to be part their whole experience, from when they get here to when they deliver – I love taking care of them."

Concerning Labor & Delivery at Union General Hospital, Queen said there was no shortage of caring medical professionals who are ready at a moment's notice.

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Scott and Alicia Rose with their newborn daughter Abigail Grace on New Year's Day. The family received a gift basket from the Union General Hospital Auxiliary for having the first baby born at the hospital in 2019. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Our Hometown Pharmacy welcomes new pharmacist to start 2019

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Since opening Our Hometown Pharmacy in August 2018, Robert Atkinson worked hard to deliver on the name of this business by offering people a friendly environment where he could take care of his friends and neighbors.

And though Atkinson's life was cut short in the Dec. 19 plane crash off Kings Road in Blairsville, the late pharmacist's vision continues to serve as a blueprint for the pharmacy.

"This was always Robert's dream, to have his own pharmacy," said Ansley Kimsey, who manages Our Hometown Pharmacy and is its sole pharmacy technician. "We didn't really know how well we would do, but now we're doing like 100 prescriptions a day."

Together, she and Atkinson ran the day-to-day operations of Our Hometown Pharmacy, while Atkinson's wife, Lisa, handled the



Pharmacist Jennifer Herrell and Pharmacy Tech/Manager Ansley Kimsey at Our Hometown Pharmacy here in Blairsville.

accounting.

Following Atkinson's tragic death, several area pharmacists who had developed a deep respect for him over the years – both professionally and personally – stepped in to allow

Our Hometown Pharmacy to keep serving its customers.

Fortunately, Our Hometown Pharmacy has been able to hire a new pharmacist, Jennifer Herrell, to continue the

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## Senior Center rings in the New Year with annual 'Possum Drop'

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

To help ring in the New Year, the Union County Senior Center put on its Fourth Annual Possum Drop on Monday, Dec. 31.

The event started as a normal lunch that the Senior Center usually puts on, but when the meal concluded, they moved the tables out of the way to make room for the traditional crocheted possum to drop from a fishing line.

"The people here today are the ones that signed up to come in and eat the regular lunch," said Kathy Hill, director of the Senior Center.

With all the seniors

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The Union County Senior Center celebrated its annual New Year's "Possum Drop" on Monday, Dec. 31.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

## Schools turn teachers into first responders with Project S.A.V.E.

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Schools Lead Nurse Leigh Ann Hartley teamed up with Richard Lamphier of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta to conduct on-campus training of school faculty and staff in the use of CPR and AED machines on Thursday, Jan. 3.

Lamphier is the clinical program manager for Project S.A.V.E., which is an initiative that places health care professionals in schools to train faculties and staff in the proper use of cardiopulmonary resuscitation and external defibrillators.

S.A.V.E. stands for Sudden cardiac arrest, Awareness, Vision for prevention, and Education. The project started in 2004, when four students died within a six-month period of sudden



A member of the Union County Schools Faculty & Staff performing CPR training during last week's Project S.A.V.E. event at Union County High.

Photo by Mark Smith

cardiac arrest.

There are now 22 children's hospitals across the country that are affiliated with Project S.A.V.E., said Lamphier.

Out of about 3,300 schools across the country, about 1,400 are Project S.A.V.E. heart safe schools, where faculty and staff

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## Blairsville man, dog survive encounter with angry black bear

By Travis Gibson  
North Georgia News  
Guest Contributor

When Jeff Voorhees was lying on his back and staring into the open mouth of an angry adult black bear in late November, he had a moment. A moment of clarity when the possibility of death turned slightly comedic.

"Just for a second, I thought, 'So this is how it's going to end?'" Voorhees said in a recent interview.

He laughs now when he talks about it with his wife and friends, but he wasn't laughing then. He was just trying to save his dog Cooper and wound up in the fight of his life.

Chance Encounter

It was a quiet Tuesday in November on Mountain Top Road in Blairsville, and Voorhees, 57, had just finished dinner. Around 7 p.m., he went to let the dogs outside to use the bathroom. He flicked on the floodlights and his three dogs ran out the door.

It wasn't long before he heard the dogs react to something nearby, but it didn't sound like dogs discovering a deer or another dog. This was different.

"I look across the street and there is a black bear right at the end of the driveway," Voorhees said.

Cooper, his 5-year-old, 85-pound golden retriever, immediately went after the bear. As Cooper charged, the



Jeff Voorhees and his dog Cooper on Mountain Top Road, which is where the two of them survived a black bear encounter.

bear stood up on its hind legs and the two tangled up. Before Voorhees knew it, the bear had Cooper pinned to the ground.

Voorhees said he still doesn't remember certain parts of that night, a likely result of a burst of adrenaline and the chaotic scene, but he distinctly remembers screaming at the top of his lungs.

"Cooper, no!"

Voorhees thought briefly about going inside to get his

gun, but there was no time. He had to save his dog – so he charged.

"When I got to the bear, the bear turned on me," Voorhees said. "I was backing up the hill, and I remember the bear taking swipes at me."

The swipes knocked him down and, suddenly, he was face-to-face with what the Georgia Department of Natural Resources believes was an angry

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## Lee captured, arrested without incident off Old Blue Ridge Highway

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Investigators with the Union County Sheriff's Office arrested fugitive from justice Jacob Lee on Thursday, Jan. 3, according to UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn.

Authorities took Lee, 20, of Blairsville, into custody without incident at a home off Old Blue Ridge Highway, said Osborn.

Previously, the Sheriff's

Office had been seeking the public's help in locating Lee, who had successfully bush banded after a brief vehicle pursuit on Saturday, Dec. 29, 2018.

Lee had been on the radar of Sheriff's Office investigators since Dec. 21, when he became a suspect in an alleged stolen vehicle case, said Osborn.

He avoided detection by authorities until the afternoon of Dec. 29, when Sgt. Andrew



Jacob Lee

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