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UCISO Lt. Daren Osborn

length of a football field. citations for it.” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at 55 miles per hour, the average text takes a motorist’s eyes off the road long enough to cover the

“Each day in the United States, over eight people are killed and 1,161 injured in crashes that are reported to involve a distracted driver,” per the CDC. There are three main

types of distraction, according to the CDC: visual, taking one’s eyes off the road; manual, taking one’s hands off the wheel; and cognitive, taking one’s mind off of driving.

“Distracted driving activities include things like using a cell phone, texting and eating,” per the CDC website. “Using in-vehicle technologies, such as navigation systems, can also be sources of distraction. While any of these distractions can endanger the driver and others, texting while driving is especially dangerous because it combines all three types of distraction.”

As far as window tinting goes, Lt. Osborn said that car dealers will not sell a car that has an illegal amount of tinting, and the whole point is to keep law enforcement officers safe when they approach a vehicle.

Unsecured loads have been a problem causing litter along roadsides in Union County. The county spends tens of thousands of dollars a year to clean up litter, so taxpayers can save money by securing their loads properly before heading to the transfer station.

Farmers Market holds Earthfest at Reece Farm

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Vendors from the Union County Farmers Market set up shop at the Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center on Saturday, May 6, to celebrate the beauties of nature and wildlife with the market’s first Earthfest.

While the weather was chilly for an early May morning, that did not stop dozens of visitors from making the beautiful drive out to the Reece Farm to see just what Earthfest was all about.

Market Manager Mickey Cummings thought up the idea of having the event at one of the county’s most beloved historical sites as a way to continue the celebration of Earth Day, observed on April 22, and draw attention to the charm of the Reece Farm.

“We want to do what we can to generate more interest in the farm here at the Reece center,” said Cummings. “There’s a lot of historical events that go on out here and we want as many people as we can to get to come.”

“In addition to that, this is pretty close to Earth Day and we wanted to do a celebration of the environment,” Cummings said. “Everything that we did here today, all the educational classes, had something to do with the environment, whether it was (alerting folks to) hemlock adelgids (a small, aphidlike insect that threatens the health and sustainability of eastern hemlock) or fire prevention and so on.”

“While it was all about the environment, we wanted vendors here so that people could come out and take a look and see some of what our vendors have in place for this year. “We’re going to do this two or three times a year.”

Cummings took visitors who were interested, on a wildflower walk through Sosebee Cove, where spring blossoms are in abundance with wild asters, daisies and much more.



Union County Farmers Market Manager Mickey Cummings leading interested parties on a nature walk along Sosebee Cove last Saturday. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Of the countless educational classes available throughout the four-hour event, Executive Director of the Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D Council, Frank Riley, brought literature on fire safety that was free to the public.

Riley shared how to minimize fire risk with simple chores around the house, such as raking leaves and cleaning gutters, and shared the well-known story of fire prevention icon, Smokey Bear.

While market vendor favorites such as Paul Reeve with his handcrafted birdhouses came out for the Saturday event, there were still some new faces to be found, such as Lily of the Valley Soaps.

A joint effort of husband and wife duo, Shane and Susan Green, this was the couple’s first go at a farmers market event and only their second time selling in a festival environment.

According to Shane, Susan is the brains of the operation and began learning how to make soaps from a neighbor a while back. Now, all the handmade soaps and salves

and lip balms are concocted in the basement of their house in Suches.

“We had an older couple move in next to us,” said Shane. “The woman knew how to make lye soap so she asked my wife if she wanted to learn how to and my wife said yes.”

“Then, she started doing research and trying different herbs and finally decided to quit her job and that this was what she was going to do.”

“So, we’re making our soaps and salves on top of the mountain now.”

On the whole, the event was a success and Cummings cannot wait to host more events at the Reece Farm in the future. On Saturday, May 13, vendors will be heading back to their posts at the Farmers Market for the first big event of the year, Spring Fling, with ramps and strawberries and beef aplenty.

“We’re cooking different foods with ramps in it for people to try” said Cummings. “We also have a couple of local chefs who are going to come and demonstrate how to cook with ramps.”

The event will start at 10 a.m. and last until 2 p.m.

Crash...

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and overturned onto its left side as it traveled down an embankment striking several small trees. The motorcycle struck a telephone pole and Hilliard, 53, of Blairsville, was fatally injured, according to the Georgia State Patrol.

Funeral arrangements for Hilliard were incomplete at press time. Mountain View Funeral Home has charge of the arrangements.

Georgia Bat Working Group at Vogel State Park May 13th

On Saturday, May 13th from 1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. the Georgia Bat Working Group will be hosting an afternoon of batty fun at Vogel State Park. There will be several formal presentations scheduled throughout the afternoon as well as ongoing information booths, interactive games for the kids, tattoos, face painting, displays of mounted bats featuring Georgia’s 16 species of bats, and bat house kits for sale and crafts.

Members of the Georgia Bat Working Group who are bat biologists and bat educators as well as Sharon Elementary School Science Club will be on hand to provide you with information about these wonderful flying mammals. You can also meet live Egyptian fruit bats.

Schedule: 1 – 4:30 p.m., batty afternoon events & activities; 1:30 - Batty About Bats presentation. An introduction to bats, a look at bat myths and a chance to meet live Egyptian Fruit bats; 2:30 - Navigating at Night: How Bats See in the Dark presentation. Learn how bats find their prey; 3:30 - Batty About Bats presentation. An introduction to bats, a look at bat myths and a chance to meet live Egyptian Fruit bats; 7:30 – 9 p.m., Georgia Bats presentation, bat mist-netting and Anabat demonstration.

Blairsville VA Clinic update

It has come to our attention that some misinformation has been circulated regarding the Blairsville VA clinic. The Blairsville Clinic is not closing. The rumors may stem from a construction project planned to widen Georgia 515/US 76 to four lanes between Blairsville and Young Harris. Please pass this information onto our Veterans!



Beloved farmers market vendors sold their wares at EARTHfest on the Reece Farm. Pictured here, Crooked Creek Farm. Photo/Lowell Nicholson