

Memorial Day...from Page 1A

country.”

Last year, Blairsville native and World War II Veteran John Hoyt Hamby served as the 2017 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal, and his nephew, Roy, will be the Grand Marshal in the 2018 parade.

Sadly, Hoyt passed away earlier this year on April 13, though at the age of 97, Roy said his uncle had a good, long life.

“I’m glad he got to do that before he died,” said Roy, looking back on last year’s parade.

For his part, Roy said he was honored to be the 2018 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshal.

“They’ve been after me about 10 years to do this, and I kept saying, no, somebody else deserves it more than me,” said Hamby. “This year, they wouldn’t let me out of it.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Roy Hamby served 23 years in the U.S. Army before retiring.

He then served 23 years with the Georgia Department of Veterans Service before retiring again, and he encourages all residents to attend the parade and subsequent Memorial Day Ceremony.

“It’s everybody’s parade and ceremony,” said Hamby. “Everybody should come out, especially to support the veterans and show the veterans that they care about them and appreciate them, and that they support what the active duty people are doing right now.”

The entry of patriotic floats or cars into the parade is encouraged, as parade organizers would love to see the parade grow even more this year.

Entrants should keep in mind the theme, “For God and Country, Support Our Troops.”

Those who plan to participate in the parade should show up for check-in around 8 a.m. in front of the

old recreation gym off School Circle, and entries can be made all the way up to the morning of the parade.

Floats will be judged and awarded either First, Second or Third Place in several categories, with one lucky float being deemed Best in Parade.

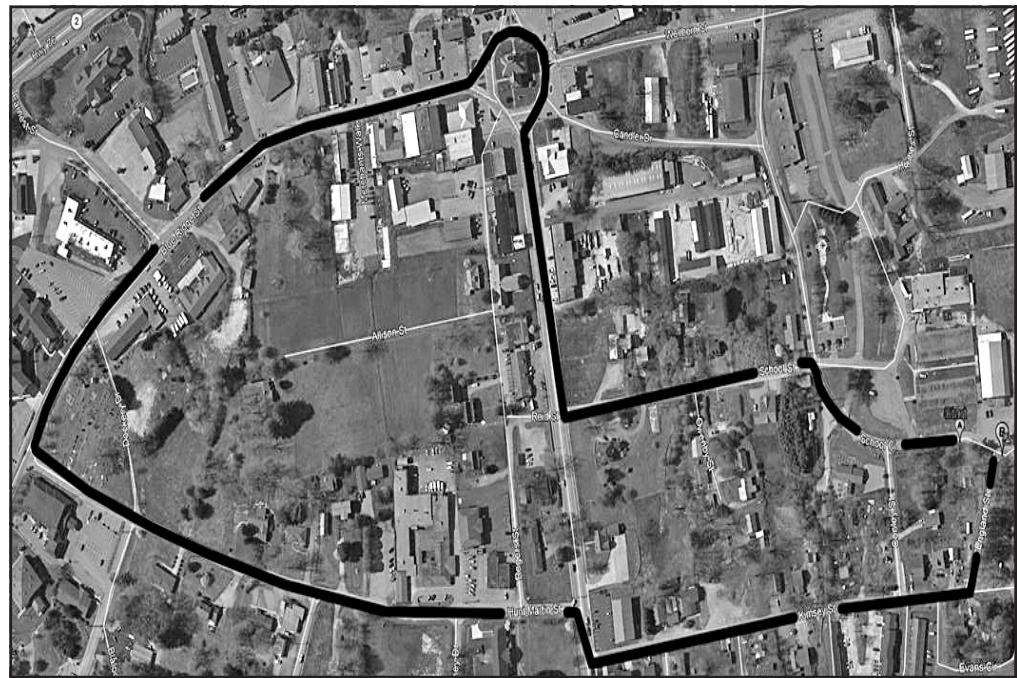
A Memorial Day Ceremony will take place at the Union County War Memorial Park at the close of the parade, and the keynote speaker for the event will be Veterans of Foreign Wars District 2 Cmdr. Richard J. Hack.

Bob Spaulding took over from Hamby years ago as office manager of the local Department of Veterans Service in Blairsville, and he helps to coordinate the ceremony and parade each year with help from the following sponsors:

American Legion Post 121 and associated Auxiliary, Legion Riders and Sons of the American Legion; Disabled American Veterans Chapter 11; Marine Corps League Unicoi Detachment 783; Navy Seabee Veterans of America Island X-3; North Georgia Honor Guard; Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7394; Vietnam Veterans of America Georgia Chapter 1101; and the United Community Bank.

As always, residents should remember to display their U.S. flags proudly, and to replace faded or worn flags.

Also taking place over



This is the parade route for the 2018 Memorial Day Parade, which will take place in Downtown Blairsville at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 26.

The Memorial Day Weekend is the annual Spring Arts, Crafts & Music Festival on the Square, which begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 26.

“This two-day festival

features artists from all over the South, great food, and of course, lots of music,” according to the Blairsville DDA Facebook Page. “This family-friendly event is hosted

by the Blairsville DDA and the Union County Historical Society. So, join us for two days of fun in Downtown Blairsville.”

Abercrombie...from Page 1A

out on Facebook to let the family know what he meant to the them.

“I remember when I was little my daddy would sit me on the conveyer belt and let me ride up and Wayne would give me a sucker,” said Gedgit Davis. “I thought that was the best thing ever. He will truly be missed by this community. Prayers for his family.”

“Wayne was the last of the neighborhood merchants,” said Sam Ensley. “Uplifting greeting when you walked in, whatever your mood, it was moved by Wayne’s greeting. Wayne left memories and a legacy.”

“I will never forget him,” said Millie Arrowood. “The

best boss I ever had. He was a (pallbearer) for my mom. She had requested him to. He was so happy to do that. Everyone loved Wayne. Prayers for all his sweet family.”

“Blairsville and Union County have lost a wonderful small businessman, grocer and friend,” said C.J. Worden. “It’s a sad day for our loss but it’s heartwarming to read all the folks who agree that Wayne was truly a treasure that we lost too soon.”

“What a great man to help us out as newcomers 23 years ago,” said Margie Bowron. “He restored our faith in humanity. We will miss him. God bless all his family and friends.”

“I can’t believe it, I’m so sorry to hear this,” said Melissa MacCallum Ekeberg. “I can’t tell you how many times he helped me shop with all my youngins in tow. He’ll surely be missed.”

To read hundreds more comments like the ones above, visit the Foodland Grocery Facebook page.

Funeral services for Abercrombie were held on Thursday, May 17, in the Chapel of Cochran Funeral Home in Blairsville. Memorial contributions may be made to the local American Cancer Society, Southeast Division, Inc., Union Unit, P.O. Box 2984, Blairsville, GA 30514.

Jay and the Americans to play Fairgrounds



Jay and the Americans will be performing at the Anderson Music Hall on Saturday, May 26.

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Assistant Editor

HIWASSEE – Jay and the Americans will ask area residents to “Come a Little Bit Closer” over Memorial Day Weekend, as the group headlines Anderson Music Hall.

Joining Jay and the Americans on May 26 will be The Tams and The Classics IV, and tickets are still on sale for the concert that starts at 7 p.m. inside the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds.

Jay and the Americans is a Pop Music group that rose to fame in the 1960s with hits like “She Cried,” “Only in America,” and of course, “Cara Mia.”

Moviegoers will have heard the aforementioned “Come a Little Bit Closer” in last year’s massively successful “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2,” which put the group back in the spotlight with a big feature in the film and on the movie soundtrack.

And it’ll be a very special evening for the group’s members, as they return to perform in Georgia for the first time in decades.

“We were there probably in the ‘60s, ‘70s maybe, but not since the group reorganized (in 2006),” said Sandy Deanne of Jay and the Americans. “So, we’re looking forward to playing down South. Atlanta’s beautiful, and I’m sure Hiwassee’s beautiful.”

As far as what fans have to look forward to during the May 26 show, original member Deanne said it’ll be a trip through time with Jay and the Americans.

“They can expect a group that was fortunate enough to have a lot of hit records in the ‘60s and ‘70s, and we’re going to sing all of them,” said Deanne. “They’re not going to miss a single song that charted

in the Top 20 for us.

“We do kind of a history lesson of the group’s progression from its inception in 1961 to the present day. It’s a fun trip. We don’t just sing the songs – we tell stories about some of the people who wrote them, some of the artists that we crossed paths with.”

Continued Deanne: “They’ll leave with a lot of knowledge about what happened with the hits and how they were created, and who was responsible for helping that happen. That’s pretty much what the show is about.”

Deanne said much of their fanbase has matured right alongside the group, but that new vehicles for music like iTunes and online streaming services have opened them up to younger fans, too.

“We also get exposure through all of the touring that we do and the places that we play,” said Deanne. “We’ve been gathering young fans, but

‘Galaxy’ was really the pièce de résistance to bring in a whole new young generation of fans.

“We’re very excited about it. We’re blessed that our music holds water after all these years. We like to think of them as Pop Rock classics, and we were fortunate to have those kinds of records.”

Tickets for the May 26 show are available at the Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds office and website, and they are going for \$45 plus fees for Level I seats, and \$35 plus fees for Level II seats.

“We love what we do,” said Deanne. “At this point in our lives, it’s such a blessing to be doing this music still and having the job of going out and singing your own music. That’s a terrific thing. The audiences seem to love us, and we love them.”

Added Deanne: “Come out to the show and bring your party hats, because we’re going to have a good time.”