

UCSO...continued from Page 1A

Currently, the Criminal Investigation Division of the sheriff's office is handling about 10 active sex crimes cases, working toward a total of more than 25 so far in 2017. "Right now, we're on the upswing as far as the number of cases coming forward," said UCSO Detective Sgt. Tom Mangifesta. "Unfortunately,

what we're seeing is a younger female victim being brought into this. When I say younger female, even pre-teen."

Added Mangifesta: "You start dating these young girls like this and you engage in sex, you can anticipate going to jail, because that's against the law."

"A lot of these girls are wooed by the boys, especially older boys, telling them, 'I love you, you're the best thing that's ever happened to me,' all this sweet talk that's luring these girls, like, 'Oh my gosh, he loves me.' And all he wants is one thing."

Mangifesta believes that a strong parent-child bond coupled with teachings emphasizing respect, morality, trust and open communication within the home can help parents to stay informed of what's going on in their children's lives, especially in a world where seemingly every child has round-the-clock access to the Internet.

Nowadays, kids don't have to sneak out of the house to hang with their

friends late into the night – they have smartphones that send messages, pictures and videos, and they are pressured to maintain a constant online presence via social media.

"Sexting," or sending sexually explicit messages, is a serious crime when involving minors, and falls under Georgia's child pornography laws, where even minors sending pictures of themselves can be charged with a crime.

Kids should be aware of the law and how serious certain activities can be, and if parents decide to get smartphones over regular cellphones for their children, Mangifesta encourages parents to keep a close eye on their kids' electronic communications.

"Parents have got to start laying down the law," said Mangifesta. "It starts when these parents start buying these kids \$700 smartphones where they can send pictures, they can access the Internet, trade nude pictures back and forth."

Added UCSO Detective Marc Pilote: "Everything we're seeing is essentially done through technology, and it's not just cellphones. PlayStation, Xboxes, they can access the Internet, they can access Facebook. You can chat across them. Pretty much any piece of technology nowadays is a computer in some way or form."

And as Mangifesta puts it, the best line of defense against this and many types of sex crimes is for parents to act like parents, and not like their kids' best friends.

When parents act more like friends, they oftentimes fail to provide their children with the appropriate tools to protect themselves, such as teaching consequences of actions as well as how to recognize potentially dangerous situations.

Slack parenting can even enable behaviors that lead to sex crimes, especially if children haven't been taught how to spot pitfalls.

For example, even if a kid isn't doing anything wrong with their electronic devices, they could still be a potential target for someone else trying to commit a sex crime against them.

"A lot of parents are unaware, they look at a cellphone as a status symbol for their kids, 'I want to buy them the best, newest iPhone,' and everything," said Mangifesta. "Marc and I, when we talk to these parents, it's like, you've got to take some responsibility."

"If you give your kid this type of cellphone, or you allow them to take their laptop in their bedroom, you need to check their devices. If they're password protected, it's a parent's responsibility to get the password, to take that phone from their child, and look at every single app that's on there and open up every app."

Continued Mangifesta: "That's part of being a parent – watching your kids. And if you just let them run loose, there's no checks and balances at home, and it's not until one of these kids shows a schoolmate a nude picture of a boy or girl."

"They then go to the school officials, we get called in, we seize the phone, and then mom and dad are so surprised when Little Johnny has got all these pictures on their phone. Or when Little Suzie has all these pictures of boys on her phone. The parents have to check these devices."

Another high-risk activity that parents should look out for is partying involving drugs and alcohol, which can put minor children at even greater risk of becoming victims of sex crimes.

New GriefShare class

GriefShare, 13-week series, starting Sat., June 3, 2017 at 10 a.m. at Hayesville First United Methodist Church, 989 US-64 Bus, Hayesville, NC for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Workbooks are \$20 each or scholarship is provided. Contact David Young to register and for additional information at hgumcgriefshare@outlook.com or phone: 706-896-0525.

County & City Reports

Local law enforcement provide the following information for publication. Names are spelled as they were received from the law enforcement agencies. It is important to remember that the following individuals have been charged only and are presumed innocent until such time as they are found guilty by a court or enter a guilty plea.



Union County Jail Arrest Report

Mack Mason, Union County Sheriff

- 06/04/17 Lucas Ray Cannon, age 22, Murphy, NC Driving while license suspended/revoked
- 06/02/17 Lee Odell Conrad, age 39, Hiawassee, GA Probation violation (felony)
- 05/30/17 Joseph Timonthy Michael Cone, age 19, Blairsville, GA Forgery 1st degree (2 counts), driving without a valid license, head/tail light requirements
- 06/03/17 Royce Glen Hamby, age 53, Blairsville, GA DUI/alcohol/0.08 grams or more 21 YO or over, possession of open alcohol container, obey traffic control device (stop sign)
- 06/03/17 Jose Angel Leon, age 41, Blairsville, GA Driving without a valid license, expired tag
- 06/02/17 Terra Michelle Silvers, age 30, Hayesville, NC Driving while license suspended/revoked, no proof of insurance, concealing/misrepresent ID of vehicle, missing/defaced/obscured license plate
- 05/30/17 Cory Michael Upchurch, age 33, Ellijay, GA Probation violation (felony)
- 06/01/17 Shana Rayette Walton, age 29, Hiawassee, GA Probation violation (2 counts)
- 08/01/17 Dustin Wayne Wester, age 24, Ringold, GA Child support abandonment

There are 68 inmates now being housed in the Union County Jail. 1 inmate housed outside county.



Blairsville Police Department

ARRESTS AND INCIDENT REPORT
Chief Johnny Carroll

- 06/03/17 Lillie Katherine Dills, age 20, Young Harris, GA Possession of alcohol by minor, pedestrian under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- 06/02/17 Christopher Paul Martin, age 57, Stone Mtn., GA Public intoxication, open containers-vehicle, littering on public or private property
- 05/31/17 Zachary Ty Miller, age 19, Mineral Bluff, GA Probation violation (misd.)
- 05/29/17 Funeral escort, 911 hang up, escort
- 05/30/17 Assist other agency, private property accident, private property accident, accident, funeral escort, shoplifting less than \$300, escort
- 05/31/17 Assist other agency, arrest-probation violations, assist other agency, misc. report, possession of marijuana < one ounce, escort
- 06/01/17 Open container violations, escort
- 06/02/17 Public intoxication, suspicious person/vehicle, escort
- 06/03/17 Alarm business, lost property, lost property, pedestrian under the influence (PUI), escort
- 06/04/17 Alarm business, 911 hang up, escort



Union County Fire Department Incidents

Union County Fire Chief David Dyer

- 05/29/17 Medical Call-Station 5-Suches; Medical Call-Station 9-Coosa
- 05/30/17 Medical Call-Station 6-Pat Colwell; 2 Medical Calls-Station 9-Coosa
- 05/31/17 Medical Call-Station 3-Owltown; Medical Call-Station 3-Trackrock; 2 Medical Calls-Station 10-Blairsville; Motor Vehicle Accident-Hwy 515 West
- 06/01/17 Motor Vehicle Accident-Hefner Road; Smoke Investigation-Eagle Bend; 3 Medical Calls-Station 4-Ivy Log
- 06/02/17 Medical Call-Station 10-Blairsville; Medical Call-Station 8-Gumlog; Medical Call-Station 4-Ivy Log; 2 Medical Calls-Station 5-Suches
- 06/03/17 Public Relations Detail-Farmers Market; Fire Alarm Blairsville; Medical Call-Station 7-Dooley; Medical Call-Station 2-Jones Creek; Medical Call-Station 10-Blairsville
- 06/04/17 Medical Call-Station 5-Suches; Medical Call-Station 6-Pat Colwell; Medical Call-Station 9-Coosa

The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls program



The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls is the only youth organization that teaches what matters most – leadership, confidence, and citizenship.

What Is Rainbow? Rainbow is a nonprofit organization that strives to give girls the tools, training, and encouragement to let their individual spirits shine bright. By providing members with a safe, fun, caring environment where responsible, older girls can interact and mentor younger girls through family involvement.

Every day, across the globe, hundreds of thousands of girls come together to laugh, share, and grow through fun events and challenging workshops designed to empower girls of all ages. Rainbow Girls volunteer for their community and travel around the world, visiting other Assemblies and making lots of new friends. Along the way, they gather

invaluable life skills that help them become the best daughter, sister, student, and friend they can be.

The Appalachia Assembly will meet the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 3 p.m., starting June 18th, at the Allegheny Masonic Temple in Blairsville, located off the square on Rogers Street just behind Cabin Coffee Co.

If you or someone you know is interested in the International Order of Rainbow for Girls Appalachia Assembly and have young ladies between the ages of 11-20, we are currently accepting petitions for members. Contact Ivy Smith at 478-731-6050 or appalachiarainbow@outlook.com for more information on how to join.

Seifarth makes the Dean's List

Peter Seifarth, of Young Harris, GA, majoring in theatre arts, was among 1,920 students at Coastal Carolina University who made the Spring 2017 Dean's List.

To qualify for the Dean's List, freshmen must earn a 3.25 grade point average, and upperclassmen must earn a 3.5 grade point average.