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Cooperstown, NY is the home of Major League Baseball's Hall of Fame.

The Tigers finished among the top 16 teams out of 104 teams taking part in the weeklong tournament.

The event was highlighted by Griffin's first-ever competitive home run, a three-run shot that had his parents screaming at the top of their lungs.

Griffin, who primarily played right field, finished the week with a .320 batting

average, including his three-run homer, a double and 6 RBIs.

The Tigers are a travel team based out of Gainesville, and include players from Flowery Branch, Buford, Gainesville, Cleveland and of course Blairsville.

The Tigers were one of the most dominant teams in the tournament, winning seven games while losing only two games the entire tournament. The Tigers won

six tournaments to advance to the Cooperstown series.

A team from Florida eliminated the Tigers on Thursday, June 29, by a score of 14-3 – the Florida team smacked six home runs.

Griffin's mother, Gina Young, said, they couldn't be more proud of their hometown hero.

"We made it to the Sweet

16, so we were definitely a top 16 team," Gina said. "We're just so proud of him, it's hard to express in words."

Griffin is the grandson of Union County's Ray Parson, who watched the series via the Internet, Gina said.

His father, Craig Young, said watching this team play ball was the thrill of a lifetime.



Gina, Griffin and Craig Young, as Griffin clutches his home run ball.

Meth...from Page 1A

a nine-month narcotics investigation by the Union County Sheriff's Office, netted 37 arrests including the persons responsible for bringing the drug into the county, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason said.

At least eight people were charged with RICO or Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, Union County Jail records show.

Operation Ghost got started on a tip from a neighboring county sheriff's office. From day one, the investigation grew and grew, culminating in 37 arrests on June 22, Sheriff Mason said.

"It was a total team effort," the sheriff said. "We had everyone in the department working this one, from our office personnel to folks in the jail, patrol, CID, Warrants, Blairsville Police Department and State Probation Services."

Based on the tip the department received, the Narcotics Division, headed up by Capt. Chad Deyton, and Sgt. Miller, started gathering information and went with it from there.

"We worked controlled buys and built our case from top to bottom," Sgt. Miller said.

The sting operation netted two vehicle seizures, \$16,000 in cash, and more than 200 grams of methamphetamine valued at more than \$20,000 on the street, a substantial amount of marijuana, three firearms, and one stolen firearm, Capt. Deyton said.

The more than 200 grams of methamphetamine and \$16,000 in cash were seized from Christie Goode – aka Christie Blair and Matthew Vaughn, Sgt. Miller said.

Sixteen persons were identified as the distributors of methamphetamine and or heroin, Sgt. Miller said.

Goode, 40, and Vaughn, 29, both move-ins to the Union County community, were the main traffickers of the drugs,

"I thought he did really good, of course I'm his dad though," Craig said. "He hit a three-run home run, that was the first one he ever hit."

"He is the littlest kid on the team, I never would have thought he would hit a home run," Craig said. "There were five kids that hit home runs up here, and Griffin was one of them."

The Tigers were 30-13 before they got to Cooperstown. They came home with a 37-15 record, Craig said.

"They've played a lot of baseball this year," Craig said. "And that is what you want to do at this age group."

Griffin is excited about the opportunity to play for the Union County Panthers as his baseball career progresses, his father said.

"He wants to play baseball, basketball and football," Craig said. "He's anxious to play for Union County. And he wants to continue to play travel ball. He just loves to be an athlete."

All the while Griffin was with his family in Cooperstown, his biggest fan was his younger sister, Bella,

Sgt. Miller said.

Vaughn was charged with felony trafficking methamphetamine, felony possession of marijuana, three counts felony distribution of controlled substance – methamphetamine, and violation of RICO Act, Union County Jail records show.

Christie Goode (Blair) has been charged with three counts felony distribution of a controlled substance – methamphetamine, violation of RICO Act, and felony parole violation, Union County Jail records show.

Reminiscent of a pyramid scheme, Goode and Vaughn handed the drugs off to a network of local dealers to sell within the community, Sgt. Miller said.

"Goode and Vaughn were the main ones bringing it into our county," Sgt. Miller said. "They handed it down and the 14 other folks were selling it in the community."

who cheered profusely for No. 15, Griffin Young.

The following were sponsors for the trip to Cooperstown, NY: Transplanted Treasures-Kris and Glendon Gooch; Michael Brooks; High Country Tire; Laney Construction-Thad and Sandy Laney; Papaw and Nana, Ray and Debbie Parson; State Farm Insurance, Jerry and Karen Henderson; Lauren and Derick Dillinger; Kim Farner Insurance; Michelle Vaughan, Attorney at Law; Lamar and Dinah Paris; Stacy, Diane, and Lindsey Dyer; DH Communications, Danny and Jana Hemphill; Gaylord Lawn and Sprinkler, Mark Gaylord; Salon Tru Master Cosmetologist, Lindsey Gaylord; Beautiful Things, Connie Bristol; Jeff and Karen Odom; Nanon Wiles; Rich Trucking, Trint and Christa Rich; Scott Carter Insurance; Chad and Kristie Lariscy; Colwell Construction, Curtis and Mary Colwell; Tim and Cindy Odom; Lyn Harbin; Busy Bee Printing; Builders First Source; and all those who supported Griffin by purchasing raffle tickets.

Where the drugs came from remains under investigation, Capt. Deyton said.

"It wasn't generated here in Union County, we know that much," he said.

Also charged with distribution were Keelen Nix, 26; Kayla Green, 19; Stephanie Goode, 21; Angela Patterson, 41; Timmy Hollis, 36; Jennifer Kanady, 39; William Wooten, 23; Savannah Stanley, 27; Serena Queen, 18; and Darrick Brown, 43.

Nix, Stephanie Goode, Hollis, Wooten, Stanley, and Patterson also have been charged with violation of the RICO Act.

Outstanding warrants for distribution of methamphetamine remain for the arrests of Lawler, 26; Parker, 32; Cordle, 21; and Banks, 38, at press time.

At press time, the four were still on the loose.

Farm...from Page 1A

selling both chickens and milk commercially, though now they have a more locally focused operation.

Ronnie named the family-owned and operated business Mountain View Farm in 1987 after the sight that always greeted him upon exiting the milk barn: a clear view all the way to the Great Smoky Mountains.

As for Jennifer Kerr, one of Dyer's three children, she's proud to be part of a farming family. She, too, is raising her children on the farm.

"I want my kids to grow up the way I did," said Kerr. "My kids are learning things that kids don't learn anymore. They know how to farm, they know how to grow cabbage, broccoli.

"They know how to cut hay, they know how to plant corn. They know how to pull a calf that needs pulling. They can look at a calf and tell if it's sick or not. Farming teaches you a lot. You're there at life, you're there at death, and you're there in between."

Many will recognize the Dyers and the Kerrs of Mountain View Farm from Booth 25 at the Union County Farmers Market, where they have sold their farm fresh milk, eggs, meat and produce for years.

Of course, everything they sell at the Farmers Market is available at the store and more. Hours of operation are Monday and Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Wednesday, then Thursday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed Sunday.

Southern Mountain Livin' sells the farm's fresh raw milk – labeled pet milk per state guidelines – eggs, Amish butter and cheese, whole free-range chicken, hamburger, a variety of steaks including T-bone, porterhouse, New York Strip and ribeye, plus beef liver and filet.

On the pork side of the business, the selection is even more varied: hot and mild sausage, ribs, bacon, fatback, cubed ham, tenderloin, chops, bratwurst, sweet Italian sausage, spicy Italian sausage and liver.

The store, which accepts debit/credit and checks, also sells jellies, jams, bread and butter pickles, pickled beets, and a wide variety of produce.

To see a family farm in action, head on over to Southern Mountain Livin' at Mountain View Farm, and remember to check the store out on Facebook and at the Farmers Market.



Ronnie Dyer showing off some farm fresh broccoli. Photo: Shawn Jarrard