

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Christmas Parade to bring holiday cheer on Saturday

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas, and those looking to embrace the holiday spirit out in the community this weekend will have plenty of opportunities thanks to the Union County Historical Society.

The biggest event this weekend will take place in the heart of downtown with the annual Christmas Parade on Saturday, Dec. 3, beginning at 4 p.m.

"The parade route is same as last year," said Libby Stevens, Historical Society President. "We will meet at the Old Middle School Gym. It will come down School

Street, make a left on Veterans Memorial, take a right on Cleveland Street, go three quarters of the way around the courthouse, out Blue Ridge Street, take a left on Hunt Martin Street, go all the way through there, then it will cross over and go down Kimsey Street and back to the Old Gym.

"There is no application for the parade, it's just show up. The theme for this year is 'Once Upon A Time.' That can be religious, it can be secular, it can be using your imagination in any form or fashion.

"I'm hopeful that we'll have several churches and people who just want to start the holiday out, will have cars decorated. It's open to anyone and everyone that wants to be

in it."

Before the parade begins, the Historic Union County Courthouse will open its doors for Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and a few of Santa's elves. Children will have the chance to share their Christmas wishes and have their photo taken with Old St. Nick, from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m., before Santa joins the parade, leading the way after some of Union County's finest police officers.

Also on Saturday, the Butt-Mock House will be open for tours between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., showcasing life in the mid-1800s.

Visitors can come enjoy the rich history of the residence while also getting a little taste of

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Here's a picture from the Ghost of Christmas Photos Past – the 2013 Union County Historical Society Christmas Parade.

## Firefighters celebrate new engine with 'Push-In'



Union County Fire Station No. 1 Firefighters

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Union County Fire Department showed off its latest addition to the fire truck fleet at Station No. 1 with a traditional "Push-In" on Wednesday, Nov. 23.

Christened as the new "Engine 1," the firemen participated in the age-old fire department custom of physically pushing a new truck into the station, a small feat by no means since each truck weighs somewhere between 19 and 30 tons, depending on the equipment and amount of water the truck is carrying.

"The reason we do the push-in is because it's a fire department tradition," said Union County Fire Chief David

Dyer. "A long time ago, the fire trucks weren't actually trucks, it was just a pump."

"There would be about 30 to 40 people out there pushing this pump, and they would also go to the fire station, grab it up and drag it to the fire to pump water. They would have to push these in and out of the station, and that's how this push-in started."

Over the years, push-ins have evolved from manual labor into symbols of pride and statements to the people of the community that the fire department is well equipped to care for residents.

In terms of the engine itself, the primary differences between the retired Engine 1 and the new addition is the age and the chassis of the engine.

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## Union County Burn ban continues as many pray for rain



This satellite image, taken on Nov. 12, shows the extent of smoke caused by wildfires raging in the Southeast. Photo/NASA

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Several churches in the area are praying for rain for rain, spreading their message to parishioners in Sunday services and to motorists with roadside signage.

And while there have been a couple of light showers in the past week, as well as forecasts calling for chances of rain this week and next, it may not be enough to put an end to the total burn ban that's been in effect since Nov. 4.

Drought conditions have persisted and even worsened for

weeks on end in Union County and the surrounding areas, intensifying the tinderbox conditions of the North Georgia Mountains that have contributed to the burning of more than 50,000 acres of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest.

Fortunately, as of press

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## Farm Service is helping livestock producers during drought

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Perhaps no other profession is hit harder by drought than the farmer – crops don't grow as well, streams begin to dry, and feeding livestock becomes increasingly difficult on land that won't support grazing.

During drought, livestock producers often have to make hard decisions about selling livestock they can no longer feed, or they have to start feeding livestock hay earlier than if drought conditions had not been present.

This is problematic because it cuts into the bottom line of the producer.

When a livestock producer has to sell livestock during drought, those livestock



Kevin Thomas of the Farm Service Agency. His office, located in the Haralson Memorial Civic Center, oversees Union, Towns, Fannin and Gilmer counties.

don't usually get top dollar, and when the producer attempts to get their herd back up to the following year, it can cost them more than they sold their livestock for previously.

Furthermore, having to purchase hay to feed livestock when normally the animals would be grazing in

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## Antioch makes Thanksgiving meals for over two hundred people

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Thanksgiving Day is a time for family gatherings, for the offering of thanks, and of course, for the consumption of delicious food.

Unfortunately, not every family can afford to make a big Thanksgiving meal – which is where Antioch Baptist Church comes in.

For five years now, Antioch has held a Thanksgiving Day ministry for families in need, including those who are homebound



More than 30 members of Antioch Baptist Church volunteered their time on Thanksgiving Day to provide meals to those who may not have otherwise had one.

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## Enotah CASA to illuminate Blairsville Square Friday night



Enotah CASA Christmas Luminaries from 2015

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Downtown Blairsville Square will light up the night on Friday, Dec. 2, as Enotah CASA hosts its

annual Lighting of Christmas Luminaries event in honor of the dozens of children in foster care in the Northeast Georgia region.

The luminaries around the square can be bought in

honor of, memory of, or just in thanks of individuals important to those donating, and the proceeds from the luminaries will be put toward assisting the

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