

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Close to 100 children got to Shop With a Cop

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Members of the Blairsville Police Department, Union County Sheriff's Office, the Blairsville Cruisers and other volunteers treated children of Union County Schools to a morning of shopping at Walmart on Saturday, Dec. 10, thanks to the annual Shop With a Cop program.

On top of providing a Christmas shopping experience for 90 children this year, the police department, and all those involved with the event, were able to help the 70 families of those children

during this season of giving, gathering food donations from local churches and even giving out gift cards to purchase food for the holidays.

"Fellowship of the Hills provided a five-gallon bucket full of food," said Cindy Neely, Clerk of Municipal Court/Secretary for Blairsville PD. "Then we also gave a gift certificate to Save-A-Lot to all the families. That takes care of the needs or anything that they may have for their Christmas Dinner. We've just had an outpouring from the community."

"We've had great support from the Cruisers, Fellowship of the Hills, a lot of retired law enforcement

people. We've had a lot of people who donate every year. I couldn't even begin to name everyone; it's just been great.

"We're represented by the Cruisers, Union General Hospital, United Community Bank, Harmony Grove Church, Union County Sheriff's Office and the Blairsville Police Department.

"We have wives and husbands and girlfriends and teachers, just a lot of people here who want to give back and help out these kids. It's a really great thing, and I can't thank the people in this community enough."

Everyone met at the  
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Blairsville Police Department got help from the Union County Sheriff's Office, the Blairsville Cruisers and friends.

## Hundreds attend Annual Vogel Tree Lighting

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

It's a tradition full of family togetherness, of music and communal bonding, of hot cocoa and Santa Claus, and a way for area residents to enjoy the season – it's the annual Vogel Tree Lighting and Christmas Program.

This year marked the 13th such tradition, where hundreds of people got together to listen to carols and feel the love of local refreshments and activities for children at Vogel State Park.

The event took place on Saturday, Dec. 10, and though the weather was remarkably chilly compared to earlier in the week, it felt right for the time of year.

To combat all the cold, Vogel broke out the metal bonfire bins, which only a couple of weeks back would



Santa Claus poses with a youngster at Vogel State Park. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

have been a no-no thanks to the exceptional drought level the entire area has been experiencing.

Fortunately, recent bouts of rainfall have caused a relaxation of burn bans, so the bonfires were on, and visitors

to the park could enjoy the musical program well into the darkness of the evening, when the big tree at the baseball field was finally lit.

That tree was originally planted near the Visitor's Center, in memory of Nathan Dyer, a longtime park employee who tragically died while working at the park in 1985. The tree was moved sometime later up to the ballfield.

Dyer's grandson, Shawn Dyer, also used to work for Vogel State Park, as has nearly every member of his family in generations past.

And while Shawn Dyer, now a deputy with the Union County Sheriff's Office, has been to many tree lightings over the years, this past Saturday marked the first that he had taken charge of toy collections for the Sheriff's Give-A-Gift for

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## City council reworks water rate at GA Mtn Experiment Station



Councilwoman Betty Easter and Councilman Tony Dyer

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Blairville City Council and Mayor Jim Conley held the last city council meeting of 2016 on Tuesday, Dec. 6,

where a preferential water rate for the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center was one of the highlights of the evening.

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## World War II Veteran Johnson remembers Pearl Harbor



Bud Johnson, center, with Todd Kimsey at the October opening of Bell Mountain County Park. Both Johnson and Kimsey are Iwo Jima veterans who live in Towns County.

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

HIWASSEE – On Wednesday, Dec. 7, Americans paid tribute to the countless brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice,

dying for their country, on that very same day in 1941.

Observed nationwide as Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Dec. 7 is reserved in honor of those who suffered the terrors of an attack on American soil during the "date which will live in

infamy."

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the event that would bring the United States to join the Allied Forces and into the skirmish of World War II.

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## Fine Arts Christmas show benefits those in need

By Lily Avery  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County High School band, chorus and theater students presented their Christmas concert, "A Clause

to Celebrate," on Thursday, Dec. 8, and Friday, Dec. 9, at the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center.

The concert served as both a holiday spectacle as well as a multipurpose benefit

for various organizations within the school system and the community.

All proceeds gathered during both nights of the

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UCHS students held a trial after grandma got into an accident involving a reindeer.

## ZZ Top coming to Anderson Music Hall

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Save the date: Friday, Dec. 16.

That's when tickets to one of the most anticipated events ever at Hiwassee's Anderson Music Hall go on sale.

ZZ Top, one of the most celebrated Rock 'n Roll acts in history, is coming to The Hall on March 7, 2017.

Tickets are \$75 plus \$2 handling.

"We anticipate tickets will sell in a hurry," Georgia

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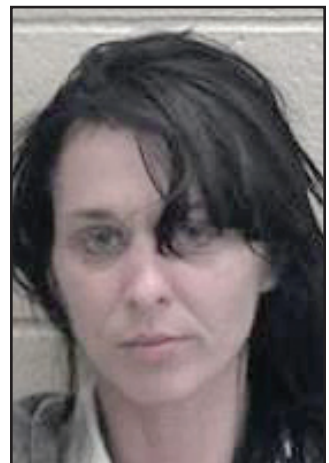
## Sheriff's Office arrests Missouri couple, ending multistate manhunt

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

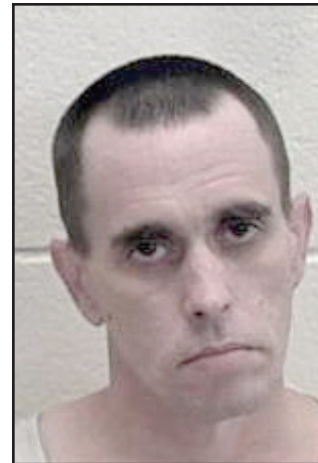
The Union County Sheriff's Office arrested Angela Laycock and Timothy Perkins on Sunday, Dec. 11, following a tip that they were staying at the Lakeside Inn up Murphy Highway, said Union County Sheriff Mack Mason.

Laycock, 34, and Perkins, 37, had been fugitives from justice since Dec. 5, when they allegedly attacked Laycock's husband in Missouri and fled with the married

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Angela Laycock



Timothy Perkins

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**Blairsville PTO Fundraiser**

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**Friends of Union County Library Bake Sale**

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**AARP Smart Driver Course**

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**PANTHERS BASKETBALL**  
Fri. Dec. 18 vs. North Hall 7 & 8:30 PM  
Sat. Dec. 19 @ Hayesville 5:30 & 7 PM  
**WRESTLING**  
Friday, December 16th  
Dual Tournament 5 PM at the Pit