

Terminal...from Page 1A

needs with Sen. Gooch, who in turn will reach out to Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal for support for the local municipal airport.

The City of Blairsville has received funding for Phase I site development for the North Terminal of Blairsville Municipal Airport.

Those funds amount to \$866,060.31 and are split between \$784,164 from the Federal Aviation Administration, \$39,516 from the Georgia Department of Transportation, and \$42,380.31 from the city's match.

That funding is being used for site development that include alleviating safety issues for Instrument Approach at the Blairsville Municipal Airport.

Mayor Conley says the new terminal, estimated to

be 5,000 square feet of space, will move airport operations from the current location off Old Highway 76 to Georgia 515.

The cost of completing the project is estimated at \$850,000 to \$900,000.

The project is all about moving local airport operations into the 21st century.

Blairsville Municipal Airport is a destination airport, with tourists and business folks flying into the airport from all over the Southeast.

It's a free enterprise airport, meaning the money it generates goes back into the City Airport Fund, not into the general fund.

"We pay for ourselves," Airport Manager John Hamler said. "We operate in the black and pay for everything associated with the airport.

It's sometimes hard for people to understand, but we're not a tap on city finances."

The airport serves a regional audience of more than 80,000 people. There are 66 aircraft that are lodged at the airport, with a capacity for more than 200 additional aircraft.

"The completion of the North Terminal facility will help the city and the county become strengthened players in attracting economic development," Mayor Conley said. "The Blairsville Municipal Airport will become an increased economic engine for Union County as anything else we could do.

"It's right where all the (Union County) Development Authority property is," he said. "And to make it even more of an economic devel-

opment asset, we're working on making the airport instrument approach accessible to the airport."

The project will include adding more touches through 2014.

"All of our operations at the Blairsville Municipal Airport will be moved to the North Terminal," Mayor Conley said. "The current terminal is one of the old houses that were condemned years ago from the Airport Road project and moved there to use as a terminal.

"We've got a facility that people love to come to, and with a new North Terminal, we'll have an airport that more people will be able to access," Mayor Conley said. "It's an economic driver that we fully intend to utilize in the future."

Esposito...from Page 1A

problems. Parkinson's Disease is more common in older people, with most cases occurring after the age of 50, he said.

"It's a progressive disease," Esposito recently told a crowd attending the Union County Commission meeting. "It's going to get worse and there is no known drug or therapy that will slow, stop or prevent the disease.

"There is no cure," he said.

Parkinson's Disease came into the national spotlight after actor Michael J. Fox and boxer Muhammad Ali were diagnosed with the disease.

Fox was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 1991, and disclosed his condition to the public in 1998.

Fox semi-retired from acting in 2000 as the symptoms of his disease worsened.

He has since become an

advocate for research toward finding a cure; he has created the Michael J. Fox Foundation with that purpose in mind.

Thanks to Fox, research is helping those afflicted with the disease, Esposito said.

"I don't foresee a cure in my lifetime, but, it's possible," he said.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris declared April as Parkinson's Awareness Month in Union

County.

Esposito accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Blairsville affiliate of the Georgia Chapter of the American Parkinson's Disease Association.

Before he departed, Esposito had a gift for Paris, a therapeutic guide to Parkinson's Disease. Paris donated the book to the Union County Library.

Big News...from Page 1A

5 & 10 building, currently under restoration by new owner Chris Ladle.

Restoration of the Haralson Law Office, which also served as the Law Office of his son-in-law, Ben Carr, marks yet another crown jewel for Downtown, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley said.

"This is wonderful news," Mayor Conley told the crowd attending Saturday's Open House and Fundraiser. "This is yet another preservation of the history that we who live in Blairsville and Union County treasure so fondly."

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris praised the Historical Society for its continued preser-



Raven and Red perform at Saturday's Historical Society Open House. Brittany Jones and Mitchell Lane make up the performing duo. Their performance was well received. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

vation of local history.

"When the courthouse got in such bad condition, everybody decided it needed to be torn down," Paris said. "It took some people here who really cared about our history, to step up and be able to save the courthouse. I've heard a lot of names mentioned today, but Ann and Maurice Farabee were probably two people that worked really hard to get the work done. There is so much work that got done at this courthouse that wouldn't have been done without them."

Another name that rings a bell with the Historical Society is Loretta Honea, who passed away Jan. 6.

Loretta spent much of her 16 years in North Georgia on Blairsville's Wilson Mountain, with her husband (high school sweetheart), Larry Honea, who was a building contractor. Larry and Loretta were together for five decades before he passed away in 2006.

Upon her arrival to Union County, she immediately involved herself with the Union County Historical Society where she volunteered to set up many of the displays you see there today, as well as spending countless hours researching and cataloging records for the Society.

Loretta bequeathed a substantial amount from her estate to the Histori-

Ray Payne...

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son Greg were the brain trust behind the beauty outside the Historic Courthouse.

They began a professional landscaping business.

Ray Payne started growing rhododendrons and hostas more than 30 years ago.

On Saturday, the Union County High School Class of 1956 dedicated a "Rhodi" in Ray Payne's honor.

A plaque also was placed in front of the "Rhodi," or rhododendron in Ray's memory.

"In memory of Ray Payne, the Class of 1956 has set out one of his 'Rhodis,'" Akins said. "We're so grateful for Ray Payne. He has done so many projects for Union County; he was truly a treasure for Union County."

Ray Payne's wife Dot, daughter Gwen, and son Greg were on hand for the ceremony.

serve the history of Blairsville and Union County."

After the announcements, the Society served up some hamburgers and hot dogs and the Downtown Square was blessed with the splendid sounds of mountain music, all compliments of the Union County Historical Society.