

Station 4...from Page 1A

those chocolate chip cookies, there were plenty of ice cream sandwiches.

Folks also got to enjoy a meet and greet with none other than Smokey Bear.

The day's events included a visit from the Life Force Helicopter, a close up look at Station 4's fire trucks, and a demonstration of how quickly a fire can start in your home, and how quickly firefighters can get a knockdown on the blaze.

"Today's turnout was really good," said Station 4 Lt. David Ueltzen, who replaced Fire Chief David Dyer, as Station 4 lieutenant. "This is my first open house at Station 4, we've got four or five regulars here. We've got several new firefighters.

"We're proud of the turnout here today, and we're glad to see the small ones (children)," Lt. Ueltzen said.

Lt. Ueltzen said the department's open houses bring awareness to the communities that the various stations support.

"When people drive by, they see a firehouse and some



fire trucks," he said. "The open houses show folks that there is more to that station than that. Firefighting is a community event.

"It takes a village to raise a child, well, it takes a community to support a fire station," Lt. Ueltzen said.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris was in attendance at the open house.

"These fire stations, well, they are what a community is about," Paris said. "These firehouses are the center of a lot of our communities. We've got five fire stations scattered throughout the county.

"The open house gives the public an opportunity to come and meet the volunteers, look at the stations and see what kind of equip-

ment they've got," Paris said. "They also get a chance to let the volunteers know who they are, and where they are. Also, the folks in these communities make a great financial contribution to their fire stations. They play a big part in the success of their fire station.

"We're always looking for volunteers, so if you're retired and you want to make a difference, get involved with your local fire station."

Fire Chief David Dyer was impressed with the turnout for the event.

"We've got Life Force, Georgia Forestry Commission and of course our Station 4 volunteers - they're all here today," Chief Dyer said. "We want everybody to come see their fire station, come see the equipment and meet all the people that make each station happen.

"These open houses are all about fun, fellowship and having a good time," Chief Dyer said. "The people that come to our open houses have been so generous by helping us financially. We really depend on those donations to

make our fire stations as efficient as we possibly can. Every donation counts."

Next up will be Open House for Fire Station 10, Saturday, on Jones Street, behind Circle K.

The Open House will run from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the volunteers serving up hamburgers, hotdogs, and all the fixings.

Don't worry about a cold drink, the volunteers have you taken care of.

And mark your calendar for June 20. That's when Station 3 on Waldrow Road, just past Jim's Smokin' Que will hold its Open House from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Don't worry about eating before you come, the volunteers will take care of you.

Crash...from Page 1A

aru struck the right rear of the Jeep Cherokee. The double impact on the Jeep Cherokee caused the vehicle to overturn on its passenger side and land on its top.

Clark, a backseat passenger, died at the scene; Smith was extricated from her Subaru by Union County Fire & Rescue and transported to Union General Hospital.

Nicotra was transported to Union General Hospital in Blairsville, as was her front seat passenger, Marilyn Di-Castro, 60, of Murphy, NC.

Backseat passenger Paula Jean Murphy, 52, of Murphy, NC, was transported

to Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville.

According to the State Patrol, Smith's auto insurance was cancelled on May 13.

Charges are pending, with the case remaining under investigation by the State Patrol.

A memorial service for Clark will be held at 4 p.m. Thursday, June 4, at Calvary Chapel Mountainside in Murphy with Pastor Brian Saraney officiating.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorials be made in memory of Joni Clark to the American Cancer Society, 120 Executive



Park, Building 1, Asheville, NC 28801 or Make-A-Wish, 4742 North 24th Street, Suite 400, Phoenix, AZ 85016-

4862. Ivie Funeral Home, Murphy, NC, is in charge of funeral arrangements.

Power...from Page 1A

County a unique opportunity to capitalize on its natural beauty in order to become a "second home mecca."

"I'm sitting right in the middle of it right now, because I'm looking at this fantastic view, and what a great industry you have here in the way of tourism and the opportunity to capture second-home markets," said Howard, who is president of Norton's residential group.

"We talked about your land use," Howard continued. "No, you don't have a lot of commercial and you don't have a whole lot of retail, but what you have is this natural resource. What you have are people that want to come visit and get away from all of that. And that's your crown jewel here in Union County, is to bring peo-

ple to it to see what I'm looking at right now."

Compared to the latest figures of nearby second-home concentrations, Union County has 4,564 second homes, while Hall County has 7,916 and Dawson County has 1,992.

"If you look at your estimated average value, you're at \$175,000 for your average second home," said Howard of Union County. "But if you look at the other significant players - Gilmer County was \$175,000, Fannin County was \$200,000. If you look at Rabun, \$700,000. Now, that's Lake Burton, that's Lake Rabun - you're talking multi-million dollar houses on Lake Burton.

"So, from a second home standpoint, if I were to say I want to live in the North Geor-

gia Mountains and have a second home in North Georgia, and I say, where can I afford? Well, guess what, Union County is at the top of the list."

Howard pointed out that when the economy took a downturn in the recession, vacation homes were the first thing to go, but "we're now starting to see folks return to buying that vacation house."

Another piece of advice Howard offered on behalf of the Norton Agency was to concentrate on Generation Y, or people born between 1981 and 2004. According to Howard, the median income of Generation Y is \$68,000, and many are coming into being first-time homebuyers.

"Look out for these guys," said Howard. "These

guys are the ones that are going to be spending money and spending their parents' money."

The lunch was sponsored by Community and Southern Bank, with local businesses and chamber members invited for the presentation.

Local leaders in attendance were State Sen. Steve Gooch, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, DDA Program Manager Darren Harper, Union County Development Authority Director Mitch Griggs, Union County Superintendent of Schools Gary Stepe and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams, and Towns County Chamber of Commerce President Candace Lee.

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