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And 20 healthy young people witnessed the Cruiser difference in our community on Thursday.

Programs like Shop With a Cop and Give-a-Gift Christmas know that the Cruisers are there when they're needed to help.

They're one of the special groups of individuals that give back, and work for the community.

Union County is very fortunate to have the Blairsville Cruisers. Shop With a Cop would be hard pressed without this group of caring individuals.

Give-a-Gift Christmas would be in the same shape.

Those Cruiser donations make an impact for those programs, as well as the volunteer help.

The Cruisers deserve recognition, but, they don't

ask for it. That's what the true meaning of giving is all about.

These individuals don't want their names sprayed all over the paper, they don't even want a pat on the back.

What they do want is for folks to keep giving to their cause, keep buying those raffle tickets for those hot rods they auction off each year and a side donation is always welcomed.

Let's make sure when we see the Cruiser signs referencing a Block Party at Walmart or an event on the Downtown Square, stop in and pay them a visit.

You'd be surprised how much you've just helped make Christmas a little brighter in Union County.

It would make you smile.



There wasn't a frown in the house at Walmart on Thursday as the Cruisers took 20 UCMS students on a shopping spree. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

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who lived over in Blairsville at the time," Gooch said. "I'm not the postmaster, but I hope I can carry on the family tradition.

"I also want to recognize my son and daughter-in-law, Steven and Becky," Doug Gooch said. "I'm not always here, but Becky puts in a lot of hours at this store, and she deserves the recognition. My wife Nancy works a lot of hours here too.

"I want to thank my loyal customers who showed up here today, and I hope this Village Post Office will serve them and this community well," Doug Gooch said.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris was on hand for the ribbon-cutting. He bought the first book of stamps at the Suches Village Post Office and said a few words.

"We're proud to be a part of history," Paris said. "We're proud that the folks in Suches are going to have increased postal options within the community and we're proud for Doug and Nancy Gooch.

"This is an historic day and one that will be remembered in Suches for a long, long time," Paris said. "I was proud to be a part of the occasion."



The U.S. Postal Service's Angie Ross says Wolf Pen Gap Country store and the Postal Service are a win-win for Suches. Photo/Charles Duncan



Students enjoy Wendy's chili

Holiday happenings at MECHS

Every year during the holidays the Mountain Education Charter High School faculty and staff provide the students with special treats. Some years there have been catered holiday dinners, but this year, the festivities were spread over an entire week.

The week began with chili donated by Wendy's and a special presentation at the monthly SADD club meeting by treasurer Caleb Patterson. The students enjoyed chicken strips on Tuesday, Taco Bell fare on Wednesday, and Papa's pizzas on Thursday. It was a special week leading up to a long holiday break. MECHS wishes all the students and their families a happy holiday season and looks forward to a new year when the students return to school on January 8.

Mountain Education Charter High School is an accredited, night high school that helps students who are not enrolled in the traditional day school earn a regular high school diploma. Tuition is free. Students attend according to their own schedule, Monday through Thursday between 4 and 9:30. Because it is self-paced and mastery-based, there is no failure at MEC. Each student is assigned a mentor to help him/her set academic and career goals every month and to assist the student in overcoming any problems that might be a barrier to accomplishing his/her goals. For more information about Mountain Education Charter High School, call (706) 745-9575 for the Union site or (706) 632-2081 for the Fannin location. NT(Dec19,Z14)CA

Bagpipe instruction

The Appalachian Saint Andrew's Pipes and Drums Bagpipe Band is offering free instruction to all who want to learn how to play the Great Highland Bagpipe or to learn Regimental Drumming.

The band meets each Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until 12 noon in the Parish Hall of Saint Clare's Episcopal Church for instruction and practice.

For further information, call 706-781-3382 or 1-828-557-3812. NT(Dec19,Z1)CA