

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

## General public grateful for mass vaccination clinic

### Organizers administer 1,000+ shots

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Jan. 22 mass vaccination clinic at the Union County Sports Center was a resounding success, so much so that organizers can't wait to host additional clinics in hopes of maximizing the life-saving potential of creating COVID-19 immunity in the community.

Sponsored by the Union County Government, Union County Emergency Management Agency, and the health departments of Union and Towns counties, the clinic featured 1,050 COVID-19 vaccinations administered over 12 hours, or roughly 15 shot appointments every 10

minutes. "This is amazing," Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said of the endeavor. "Our No. 1 goal in Union County is to get as many people vaccinated as quick as we can for those that want it. That's our goal, and that's what this is all about."

The socially distanced, masked undertaking was a week in the making and required close coordination between all stakeholders to get the job done.

EMA Director David Dyer and his leadership team plotted the logistics in painstaking detail, enlisting the Fire Department's medical-grade firefighters in giving shots as other firefighters worked parking and controlled the flow

of people into and through the building.

The nursing staff of each health department provided and prepared the free vaccinations and counseled folks with questions and concerns. And if the health departments can keep recruiting volunteers and acquiring vaccines, they, too, are looking forward to hosting other clinics.

"This takes a lot of stress off me and (Nurse Manager Bethany Barrett) at Union County trying to vaccinate the whole county," Public Health Nurse Tiffany Zimmerman said. "And the two nurses at Towns County as well, it takes a lot of stress off them trying to vaccinate their whole county."

See Vaccination Clinic, Page 2A



Firefighter/Paramedic Derrick Pruitt gave WWII Veteran Clyde Harkins his COVID shot at the clinic Friday. Harkins, 95, is looking forward to visiting with his family and many friends again. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Schools honor Avis Shaw for dedication to local health

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

When Union County School officials decided to dedicate the High School Health Care Science Lab to Avis Shaw, it was as if they were actually dedicating the future to the retired nurse, for the lab is where untold generations of students will follow her example of healing and helping for the sake of it.

The dedication was at least a year in the making, having been sidelined in 2020 due to COVID-19. Fortunately, Shaw and school faculty and staff members were able to meet Jan. 22 for a ribbon cutting facilitated by the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce.

As per usual on Fridays, students were home for digital learning to give the Custodial Department time to do extra sanitation due to COVID-19 in the community, so the Health Care Lab was empty and ready for the dedication.

The event featured a small gathering of family and friends from the school and community to commemorate the occasion with Shaw, and



Avis Shaw poses in front of student art outside her namesake Health Care Science Lab at Union County High on Jan. 22. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

nearly everyone present offered kind words and warm memories regarding the very real impact the longtime nurse has had on their lives.

And she has had ample opportunities to make that impact, having served as a local leader in health care since 1960, the year she and her husband Carlton moved to Blairsville from the Atlanta area.

Her first local health care

position came in 1960, when she took a job as a nurse at the recently opened Union General Hospital.

She worked there until 1969, when she took over from Betty Barnes as Public Health Nurse at the Union County Health Department, which had only been open for about two years at the time.

Shaw served there for See Avis Shaw, Page 6A

## WWII Veteran Striebich to celebrate 100th Birthday

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

On Feb. 1, Union County resident Kathryn Striebich will reach a remarkable milestone that most never see – she'll be turning 100 years old. And in that time, she's seen more than most, too.

Striebich was born in neighboring Blue Ridge in 1921. Her family moved during the Great Depression to Atlanta, where she spent her teenage years and graduated high school in 1938.

Times were tough, and her family couldn't afford to send her to college; it was the Depression, after all. To make matters worse, Striebich, her sisters and mother suffered a major blow when her father died in an accident in 1939.

But they made the most of their time, Striebich said, always striving to enjoy activities with friends while remaining industrious at home.

"It wasn't too bad for us," Striebich said. "In fact, we had a good time during the Depression because they turned over the schools. We could go there for dancing, and we put plays on. We would go there in the evening and would always go with a crowd."

"We didn't have a lot of money then and lived very sparse, but my mother was a very good seamstress. She made all of our clothes, and she could just see a See Striebich Birthday, Page 2A



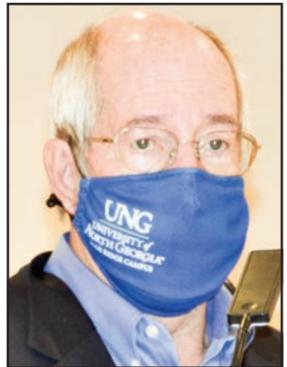
World War II Veteran Kathryn Striebich, pictured here holding a photo of herself during her time in the U.S. Naval Women's Reserve, will turn 100 on Feb. 1. Be sure to tell her Happy Birthday! Photo by Jarrett Whitener

## Paris shows Second Amendment support, discusses COVID-19

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris adopted a resolution explicitly supporting the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution before a packed house during his Thursday, Jan. 21, regular meeting in the courthouse.

The resolution coming partly due to the upcoming Union County Gun Range project and partly because of queries Paris has been getting from members of the community who have grown concerned with the seemingly increasing



Lamar Paris hostile conversation around gun rights. "I was requested to adopt

this resolution because of existing issues at the proposed gun range," Paris said. "The sheriff had asked me to wait until the approval of our gun range application."

"However, after it has taken longer for the approval than anticipated, the sheriff told me that it was OK to go ahead and adopt the resolution, and I thought we needed to."

Basically, the range project is moving right along, but the U.S. Forest Service announced last year that it required an additional sound study, which delayed things but was successfully completed

See Paris, Page 6A

## Driver in fatal wreck charged; man caused scene pre-accident

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The driver of the vehicle in which a passenger died during a Jan. 16 Murphy Highway crash has been charged with misdemeanor vehicular homicide, failure to maintain lane and a seatbelt violation, according to Georgia State Patrol.

Kristin Maze, 44, of Jacksonville, Florida, is the driver facing charges, per GSP, See Fatal Wreck, Page 6A



Responding to the fatal Jan. 16 crash were multiple emergency agencies, including GSP, the Sheriff's Office, Union General EMS, Fire Department, Air Life Georgia, with coordination by Union County E-911. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Affordable Hearing Aid Solutions holds grand re-opening after fire



L-R: Louise "Hot Mama" Wilson, John Moore, Marie Davis, Brian Jolley and Tammy Evans at the Jan. 20 Grand Re-Opening of Affordable Hearing Aid Solutions. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

One of the local businesses that suffered when the Greystone Building burned last September was Affordable Hearing Aid Solutions, a Division of Hear Again America.

The hearing aid business is

one of 33 locations throughout the Southeast operated by Hear Again America, offering complimentary hearing aid checkups, non-obligation hearing evaluations/consultations, video otoscopy to evaluate outer and middle ear health as well as to mitigate wax build up or impactions, and demonstrations of the latest

hearing aid technologies to work with any budget.

But for people to start taking advantage of these services and more again following the fire, the company had to get moving fast to find a suitable new location in Blairsville.

"We knew it was a See Affordable Hearing Aid, Page 3A

Vol. 112 No. 05  
4 Sections 24 Pages  
Weather  
Thurs: Cloudy Hi 43 Lo 22  
Fri: Sunny Hi 51 Lo 29  
Sat: Cloudy Hi 48 Lo 39

Inside  
Arrests 2D  
Church 3C  
Classifieds 4A  
Opinion 4A  
Legals 5D  
Obits 4C  
Sports 2B

SPORTS BASKETBALL  
1/26 @ Banks Co. 6 PM  
1/29 @ Elbert Co. 6:30 PM

RELAY FOR LIFE  
American Cancer Society

Daffodil Days  
See page 2D

Blood Drive  
Feb. 2nd  
See page 1D

Cast Off Pet Rescue  
Safe Pet Project  
Jan. 30  
See page 4B