

Active Shooter...from Page 1A

One victim was taken to the helicopter, which powered back up and lifted off headed for the hospital.

Part of the exercise was to overwhelm the emergency room to simulate the needs of a real mass casualty event, and once the victims reached the hospital, the emergency room continued the exercise until completion.

Ham radio operators were on station at the hospital as well, taking part in the exercise and helping with general communications.

Following the exercise, each agency and the hospital came together for an After Action Report, where each

part of the exercise was scrutinized for mistakes and inconsistencies.

The exercise tested 911 communications, response by local law enforcement regarding threat detection and elimination, emergency medical response by EMS and fire rescue, and how well the hospital handled a massive influx of casualties.

"If there was one thing I was extremely pleased about, it's that - we've had some of these full-scale exercises - but this is the first time that so many of the community partners really got involved," said Dan Wickersham of Special Operations Group, who wrote the situation manual for the

event.

For his part, Union County Fire Chief and 911/EMA Director David Dyer thought the exercise went really well.

"It's a good idea to have these drills periodically so that we can practice and train on new procedures and find places for improvement, because no matter what you're doing in this world, you're going to have areas of, and room for, improvement," Dyer said.

Wickersham agreed.

"It's the only way we actually gain some experience in reacting to a real situation," said Wickersham. "Planning it and doing it are different. You have to get involved and make

mistakes to find out where your weak points are."

And that was exactly the point of the whole affair:

to identify and address first responder vulnerabilities.



The all-agency active shooter training featured simulated wounds on people role-playing in the situation. Photo by Mark Smith



Air Life Georgia transported a volunteer "victim" from the scene of the training exercise on May 3. Photo by Mark Smith

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you want.

"I have had them in casseroles, I've had them in a variety of other things, but what we have here today is like a little casserole with a little bit of potatoes and tomatoes and cheese and all that stuff in there, and you can really do anything you want to with ramps, because they are just like onions.

"The only difference is they are wild onions, so they have a little stronger taste to them. I've served over 200 people today, and I'm glad to see so many people coming out to the event to try this food that people have worked hard to prepare."

The beef for the event was provided by the Blue Ridge Mountain Cattlemen's Association, which acquired the beef from local company Brasstown Beef.

"There's a lot of people here that we can introduce to beefalo meat, ground beef, and cubed steaks in a kabob - we did all three of those things," said Paula Myers, president of the local association. "There are plenty of people that do not have room in their budget for beef, but we are here to promote that and convince them that they can make room and still have money.

"Our organization is part of five counties, and our main goal is to promote beef, but also to take good care of our animals and promote good practices like immunizing and deworming, and that in turn keeps them healthy.

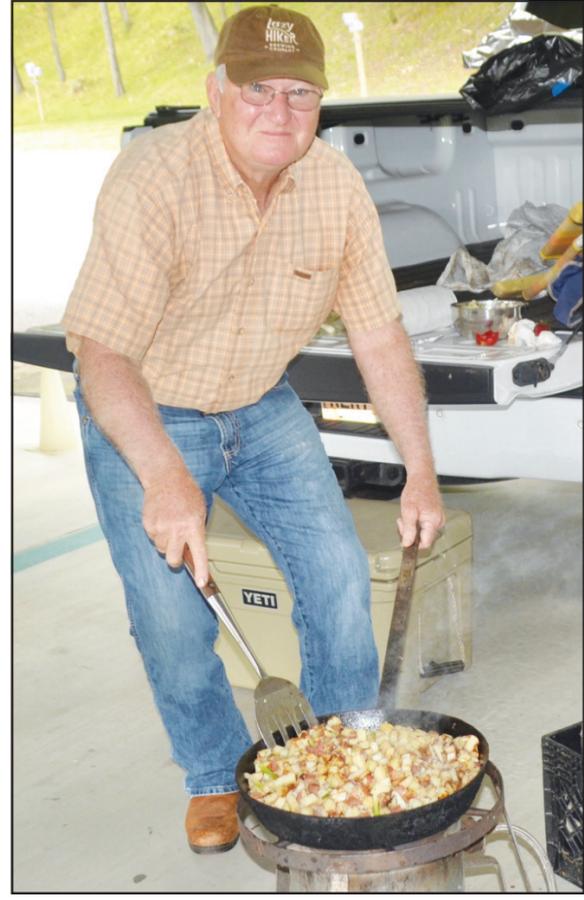
"The thing about our local vendors is they have beef that is really lean compared to what you may find at some

stores. The beef that other places have is not bad, but depending on where you go, they can be higher in fat percentages, which you may not want if you are trying to follow a diet."

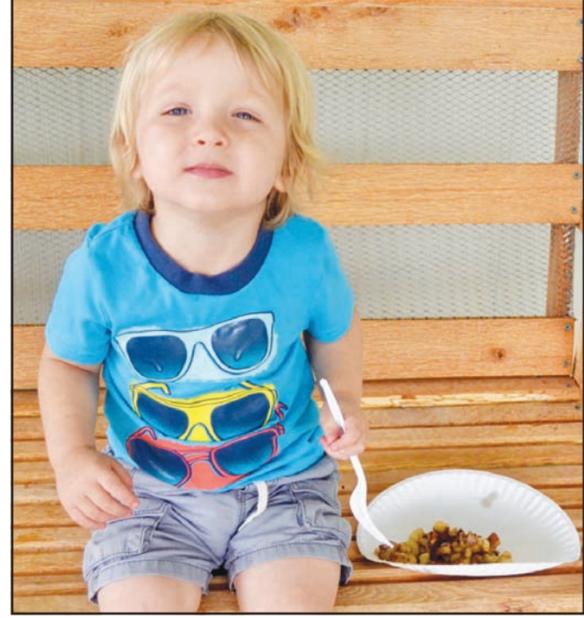
The Blue Ridge Mountain Cattlemen's Association is always accepting new members into their organization. For information on how to join, call Myers at 706-745-5760, or email her at myersgogators@gmail.com.

The farmers market will have many more events coming up this year, with Saturday, May 25, being the Outdoor Extravaganza event, and June 1 being opening day.

For more information on the Farmer's Market and upcoming events, visit UnionCountyGA.gov/Farmers-Market.



Bobby Ledford cooking up some ramps n' taters on Saturday, May 4. Photo by Lowell Nicholson



This 2-year-old loved eating ramps n' taters at the Farmers Market on Saturday. Photo by Lowell Nicholson



Frankie Marino, general manager of Mike's Seafood Market & Grill, demonstrating how to use ramps to make mouthwatering crab cakes on May 4. Photo by Lowell Nicholson