

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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Authorities seeking help to locate missing teens

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Editor

Two local teens allegedly took off together in the early morning hours of Wednesday, July 4, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

They had not been located as of press time Monday. Kirstin Ledford, 16, is believed to have left town with her boyfriend, Cole Garrett, also 16.

Sheriff's investigators are asking the public to help them find Ledford and Garrett.

"They are missing, unendangered," said UCSO Detective Marc Pilote. "There is cause for alarm because nobody has heard anything since the night of July 3. No texts, no messages, no letters, no forwarding, nothing - they just up and left."

The two were last seen in

a gray 1992 Toyota pickup with a Georgia license plate reading RLR9341.

According to the latest information on the "Union County -Georgia Sheriff's Office" Facebook page, the teens were spotted on Saturday, July 7, in Bryson City, North Carolina, at the Country Girls RV Park.

The pair left the RV park at dark, traveling in an unknown direction, and they are reportedly

doing side jobs for money.

So far, the sheriff's office has notified fellow law enforcement agencies all over the region, and they are asking anyone with info to please come forward.

"Any information, please call law enforcement or Union County Sheriff's Office at 706-439-6066, or Union County 911 Center at 706-439-6038," according to the Facebook post.



Cole Garrett



Kirstin Ledford

Annual chamber fireworks offer biggest blast ever

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce put on its biggest and brightest Independence Day Fireworks Show to date over Meeks Park on July 4.

Chamber Events Coordinator Liz Henley said the feedback she got the day after the July Fourth fireworks was all very positive.

Henley said the fireworks show by East Coast Pyrotechnics, Inc. lasted just under 25 minutes, making it the longest show ever for Union County. She said people have told her that the finale was "one of the best."

North Georgia Technical College allowed the use of its campus grounds, directly across from Meeks Park, for people to watch the fireworks show, and everyone was able to get home in a timely manner.

"We were able to clear



The Annual Fourth of July Chamber Fireworks was a community success another year running, bringing in thousands of area residents to watch a patriotic showing of lights.

Photo by Mark Smith

both parking lots, the college and the park, in 20 minutes. So, as far as traffic and parking, it went fairly well," Henley said.

"We were happy to have the support of the public safety team. (Union County Sheriff's

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Fireworks light up the night sky in Suches

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

SUCHES - The community of Suches has built a solid reputation over the years for being one of the premier Independence Day celebration locations in North Georgia.

And each year, the community somehow continues to find ways to improve on an already fabulous Fourth of July extravaganza.

Sometimes, it's difficult to fathom that this hasn't always been the norm in the Valley Above the Clouds.

As the legend goes, locals would fire bottle rockets from the Suches General Store every July Fourth, but one year, the store owner decided to make the drive to Copperhill, Tennessee, where he returned with more than \$200 worth of fireworks.

As the sun went down on that particular July 4, crowds began to gather around the



Happy Birthday, America! From the Suches Fire Department.

Photo by Todd Forrest

General Store, so a few other entrepreneurial locals rushed over to the fire station, grabbing hot dogs, hamburgers, and colas to sell at Woody Gap School.

When all was said and done, that first makeshift concession stand raked in around \$200 in profits, enough to cover the yearly

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Union County Fire Station No. 3 holds community open house

By Mark Novak
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The volunteer firefighters of Union County Fire Station No. 3 in Owltown held their annual Community Open House on Saturday, June 30, giving residents a chance to get to know their local firefighters.

Just prior to being called away on an emergency response that Saturday, the station's 1st Lt. Tim Schroeder gave a brief overview of the firefighting equipment available onsite and at sister Station No. 12.

"At Station 12, we have one tanker that holds 2,000 gallons of water," said Schroeder. "We also have a brand new light rescue vehicle, which we use for car accidents, medical calls and minor fire calls."

"At Station 3 - that is the

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Blake Melton and Justin Davenport with the Georgia Forestry Commission hanging out with a couple of youngsters at the June 30 Union County Fire Station No. 3 Community Open House.

Photo by Mark Novak

Nottely Marina parade a boatload of patriotic fun

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

People had fun in the sun at Nottely Marina on Saturday, June 30, as the Doucette clan once again hosted its annual Fourth of July Boat Parade.

Plenty of patriotic parade participants lined up to make the parade loop for all the people who turned out to watch along the shoreline, and the whole event was a rousing success.

Moriah Doucette, who manages the marina, said her grandmother, Carleen, has been putting on Blairsville's only known Independence Day boat parade for over 20 years.

The parade used to run all the way to the dam, which was about 10 miles on the water, but Doucette said it was usually too hot for the kids, and when gas



Kids holding up the trophies for First, Second and Third Place contest winners at the Nottely Boat Parade.

Photo by Mark Smith

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UCSO Investigators make 10 arrests in one day

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Editor

June 28 was a busy day for the Union County Sheriff's Office, as investigators arrested 10 individuals in four separate incidents that Thursday.

The first six arrests stemmed from an ongoing investigation into a residence on Copperhead Road that featured heavy drug activity, according to the sheriff's office.

David Burrell, 33, is the primary occupant of the residence on Copperhead Road, and the sheriff's office received information that a fugitive named Robert Payne, 42, of Young Harris, was staying with Burrell.

Authorities executed a search warrant at the residence, and Burrell and the following individuals were arrested: Keith Thomas, 46, of Blairsville;

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David Burrell



Robert Payne



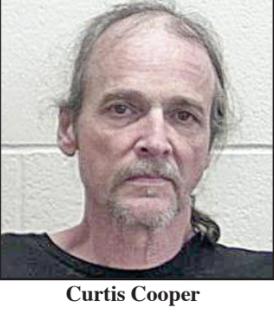
Keith Thomas



Edward Houston



Cassie Cooper



Curtis Cooper



Tabitha Barton



Courtney West



Dillon Mullavey



Fumiko Snow

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