

# Griggs...from Page 1A

about \$7 million, plus additional sales tax revenues to help fund local initiatives.

"It's also an important flag for us, because normally, a LongHorn is not going to be in a community of 24,000 people," Griggs said. "This is a very unusual location for a company like this ... and it's kind of a flag in the ground, and it will get noticed by other retailers and give us a big leg up when we go and recruit other retailers, just like Chick-fil-A did."

More than 120 people attended the Aug. 14 breakfast at the Community Center to

hear Griggs discuss seemingly every aspect of economic development in Union County, including education, housing and employment needs, the current state of retail, expanded local manufacturing and more.

He also addressed the latest news on the Arby's Restaurant that is currently under contract on one of the Haralson development properties in Downtown Blairsville.

"It's not quite a done deal," Griggs said. "We've been working with them for a number of different years on

other sites and everything – it just never worked out on any of those.

"We finally got them where they are, and we're very hopeful that it'll work out. We have gone through most of the hard barriers. A corporate real estate committee at Arby's has approved the project, and that's a really, really big deal.

"But we still need to close on the project with the developer, and we still need to do the lease between the developer and Arby's ... So, keep your fingers crossed, send good thoughts that way, and hopefully we can get that one done as well."

Also in the Eggs & Issues

Breakfast, Chamber President Steve Rowe and other Union County stakeholders presented Chamber Board Chair Dr. Renee Deibert of North Georgia Technical College with a special

award. The award was presented in appreciation of the college, under Deibert's leadership, for its "dedication and continued contributions to Union County

and the city of Blairsville, Union General Hospital, the Union County School System, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce and the entire Blairsville community."



Dr. Renee Deibert and North Georgia Technical College were recognized for their many contributions to the community in the Aug. 14 Eggs & Issues meeting. L-R: Kevin Bierschenk of Union General Hospital; David Murphy of Union County Schools; Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris; Deibert of North Georgia Tech; Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley; and Chamber President Steve Rowe. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

## Sixth Annual Maters and Music Day a rousing success

The Reece Farm and Heritage Center and The Byron Herbert Reece Society welcomed 200 or more guests on Saturday, August 10, to celebrate "Maters and Music Day" with fine food, music and fellowship.

Throughout the event, visitors made their way to the farm's Heritage Center to tour the grounds, including the path to Reece's favorite writing place, Mulberry Hall, past the Dahlia Garden and on to the Barnyard animals. Flowing beside the Original Barn with its many treasures inside is Wolf Creek with its gurgling waters adding to the serenity of the Reece Farm. Each year, the "Maters and Music" event gives the Byron Herbert Reece Society an opportunity to highlight the lifework of the group's author namesake and historical proprietor of the farm, Mr. Reece himself. Reece Farm is considered by many to be a little piece of heaven on earth, and it was there that renowned Appalachian farmer, novelist and poet Byron Herbert Reece lived and worked most of his life.

Legendary Georgia Country Music Hall of Fame's John Nix kicked off the entertainment with some "Hoe down fiddling and singing classic country songs. Wayne Ciucio entranced the crowd with contemporary gospel music as only Wayne can do. James Spiva adapted some of the ballads written by Byron Herbert Reece, one of the most popular being "The Stay-at-home," set them to music and performed them in a classic manner. Sam Ensley and his family, local musician who coordinates and presents Friday Night Music at the Historic Union County Courthouse sang his popular "Coat of Many Colors." Justin Terry pleased the crowd with his bass voice booming throughout the Pavilion. Justin hails from Knoxville, Tennessee, and sings at other local venues such as the Anderson Music Hall and Mountain Home Theater throughout the year. The Nearly Normal String Band entertained the afternoon crowd with Bluegrass and Folk Music. Winding



Maters and Music Day 2019

down the day with beautiful old Western songs like "Cool Water" was local musician John Cochran and the Cowhands. Another crowd pleaser on a warm August day was the arrival of "Nana's and Papa's Homemade Ice Cream."

Now in its sixth year, "Maters and Music" is all about showcasing The Reece Farm and the ways of early 20th century Appalachia. The Farm is a part of the Union County Parks and Recreation System. It was there that renowned Appalachian farmer, novelist and poet Byron Herbert Reece lived and worked most of his life.

He plowed the land, moved the rocks and produced food in the fertile valley that is located between the two highest peaks in Georgia – Blood Mountain and Enotah Bald – part of the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. When he had to be away from the North Georgia Mountains, Reece was known to have said that he felt his home calling him back. It was when he was in Los Angeles, serving as poet-in-residence at UCLA, that Reece penned the words to "I Know A Valley Green with Corn." Reece served as poet-in-residence at UCLA, Emory University and Young Harris College.

Alongside long days of often backbreaking work, Reece somehow found the time to compose four volumes of poetry and two novels on the farm, "Better a Dinner of Herbs" and "The Hawk and the Sun." The novelist and poet was a five-



Byron Herbert Reece time recipient of the Georgia Writers Association's Literary Achievement Award, and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for "Bow Down in Jericho."

Reece loved the land and the meaning in the land, and derived the words of his poems from the meaning he found there – meaning derived through hard work on the farm. If his hands were busy, his mind was busier, and he could hardly wait to put his thoughts on paper.

"There never was time for everything," Reece once lamented, but it was likely those very same feelings that spurred on much of his work. It has been said that a lifetime is measured by the life in one's minutes and not by the minutes in one's life. The words Reece wrote are now for posterity to remember and try to understand as he did when he wrote them. NT/Aug21/Z27/CA

## Sons of the American Revolution Speakers Bureau



The Speakers bureau established by the award winning Blue Ridge Mountains Chapter, SAR has been providing presentations to elementary school children and civic groups for over ten years. These presentations are made by accomplished speakers on the subjects of the Colonial Pe-

riod of American history and the American Revolutionary War as well as other American historical events.

Current presentations include: Demonstration of Colonial household goods-display; Little known facts about President George Washington-slides; The History of American Money- Display; King Phillips' War and the awakening of American Independence; Etymology (word history) and Historical Terminology-slides; Colonial music-slides; Religion and Our forefathers; Revolutionary War Spies. The National Society of

the Sons of American Revolution has the purpose of providing education, preserving history, and promoting patriotism.

Presentation times run from 15 minutes to 45 minutes. The presentations are excellent programs for many civic and other organizations with no cost incurred. All presentations are educational and entertaining with timing flexible.

Contact Chapter president Jared Ogden at 770-855-0007 or Chapter Secretary David Cook at 706-835-5910 to schedule a presentation.