

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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## Historical Society to hold Christmas on the Square on Dec. 1

By Jarrett Whitener  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Thanksgiving may be over, but the holiday season has just begun, and the Union County Historical Society is hosting its annual Christmas on the Square event on Saturday, Dec. 1.

Activities run all day, starting at 11 a.m. with Open Houses at the Historic Union County Courthouse and the Grapelle Butt-Mock House and Annex in Downtown Blairsville.

At 1 p.m., the Historical Society will begin its bake sale with hot chocolate on the square, and people will be able to purchase lunch, too, with hot dogs, chips and drinks for sale.

Leading up to the parade, guests will have access to various vendors set up around the square, and kids can get

free pictures with Santa from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. inside the Old Courthouse.

From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., all are invited to check out Santa's Workshop on the square and partake in reindeer games while enjoying Christmas music and plenty of food options.

The parade itself will be a nighttime parade for the second year in a row, and it will begin at 6 p.m. Following the parade, there will be a tree lighting on the square.

"We made this year's theme 'Our Little Town of Blairsville' for the parade," said Libby Stevens, president of the Union County Historical Society. "The whole idea is just a small town celebration of Christmas."

Parade float registration is open to all who wish to join, and participation in the parade requires that floats and other vehicles be at the lineup on

time Saturday, with no forms needing to be filled out.

"What we would like for people to get out of it is that this is what hometown USA looks like," said Stevens. "We do this for all the ages, because I get just as excited as the kids do. The lighted parade was such a success last year and is all to pull the community together to start the holiday season."

"I think last year's nighttime parade was so much better than previous years, and I think that more people will come out to enjoy this year's because of that. Any and everybody is welcome to join in the parade. All they have to do is show up and try to keep up with the parade theme. We don't want anything political or anything with an agenda."

Also that day, the society will hold the dedication of their new building, which will take place at the Mock House at



Santa, Mrs. Claus and a Helper Elf during the 2017 evening Christmas Parade by the Union County Historical Society.

Photo by Shawn Jarrard

11 a.m. Society members will name the building and have a short ceremony explaining its

background.

"I'm really excited for the day," said Stevens. "There's

a lot going on, and we want people to come out to enjoy it with us."

## Runoff early voting ends Friday; vote at precincts on Dec. 4

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Early voting in the Dec. 4 General Election Runoff began on Monday, Nov. 26, and will continue through Friday, Nov. 30.

The runoff election features Republican Brad Raffensperger facing off against Democrat John Barrow for Secretary of State, and Republican Incumbent Chuck Eaton will be vying for re-election to the District 3 Public Service Commissioner seat against Democratic challenger Lindy Miller.

Between now and Friday, all registered Union County voters who were eligible to vote in the Nov. 6 General Election can take part in runoff early voting from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Union County Registrar's Office.

The Registrar's Office is located within the Union County Courthouse at 65 Courthouse Street in Blairsville, and it will remain open to voters even during lunchtime.

Runoff Election Day will be on Tuesday, Dec. 4, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and instead of voting at the Registrar's Office, voters should report to one of the



11 pre-assigned Union County voting precincts: Ivy Log, Dooley, Gumlog, Blairsville, Pat Colwell, Trackrock, Coosa, Jones Creek, Owltown, Choestoe and Suches.

"Georgia law requires registered voters to show photo identification in order to vote in person," according to the Secretary of State's office. "When you vote in person, you must show one of the following photo IDs:

"A Georgia driver's license, even if expired; any valid state or federal government issued photo ID, including one issued by the Department of Driver Services or your Voter Registrar; valid U.S. passport; valid employee photo ID from any branch, department, agency, or entity of the U.S. Government, this state,

or any county, municipality, board, authority or other entity of this state; valid U.S. military photo ID; valid tribal photo ID."

As previously reported, Republican Brian Kemp will be the next governor of Georgia, after Democrat Stacey Abrams ended her bid in the gubernatorial race on Friday, Nov. 16.

The drawn-out governor's race was a contentious one, involving close vote margins and interventions by a couple of U.S. District Judges to ensure every vote counted.

In the end, Abrams acknowledged that she didn't have the votes to continue her challenge of Kemp, the majority vote getter.

Kemp's vote margin of victory was about 55,000 votes, or 50.22 percent of the statewide vote to Abrams' 48.83 percent.

Robyn Crittenden, former commissioner of the Georgia Department of Human Services, is serving out the remainder of Kemp's term as Secretary of State.

Appointed by Gov. Nathan Deal on Nov. 8 after Kemp resigned from his

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## School board honors students and faculty in November meeting



XC Coach Paige Dyer with State Champ Zoe Sanchez and Coach Beau Kelley at the Nov. 20 Union County Board of Education meeting.

Photo by Mark Smith

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Retired U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Art McCann was one of many individuals to receive special recognition at the Tuesday, Nov. 20, meeting of the Union County Board of Education.

McCann is an assistant administrator at Union County High, and he received the "Going the Extra Mile Award" that evening.

The board office reserves this particular award for people in the school system who go the extra mile on a daily basis – people of great integrity who have the best interests of the students at heart at all times, and who aren't afraid to bring out the best in those students.

"You have a war hero working with your children every day," said Superintendent John Hill to those gathered. "And I will give you the title to my house, the title to my vehicle, if the man wouldn't lay

down his life for your kid." Other awards given were the UCHS National Merit Scholarship Awards to Matthew Patrick, Adalyn Rogers, Leilani Schroeder and Andrew Walker.

These four students were in the top 3 percent nationally out of about 1.5 million students who took the Preliminary SAT.

"I just want to commend them and recognize them, because this is just not

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## Kris Kringle to bring Christmas cheer to Old Smokey Road



A view from a past Kris Kringle Market. The 2018 version will take place on Saturday, Dec. 1, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Christmas is once more returning to the Union County Farmers Market, as the 2018 Kris Kringle Market prepares to welcome Santa Claus, holiday vendors, children and guests this weekend.

Running from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 1, the Kris Kringle Market has been a tradition at 148 Old Smokey Road in Blairsville since the Farmers Market moved there from the parking lot of the

Union County Courthouse in 2011.

And seven years later, the Kris Kringle event is bigger than ever.

For the first time ever, the entire market has been booked full by more than 75 vendors, and Market Managers Mickey Cummings and Kristy Penney have had to implement a waiting list.

From decor and gifts to produce, plants, honey and baked goods, the Kris Kringle Market will have something for everyone this holiday season.

"This helps our farmers, and it helps bring the community together for our Christmas event, where you feel good about each other and you can talk to your friends and neighbors," said Cummings.

Santa Claus will be on hand to take Christmas requests and pose for pictures with children, and kids will be able to ride both the Christmas Train and the replica 1890s wagon made by Farmers Market regular Paul Reeves.

Also a part of the tradition, See Kringle, Page 2A

## Fifth-graders learn about agriculture during Ag Day event



Union County Elementary School kids enjoyed Ag Day on Nov. 20, which included some hands-on time with goats and other animals.

Photo by Mark Smith

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

Fifth-graders with the Union County Elementary School enjoyed Ag Day at

the Agriscience Center on Tuesday, Nov. 20.

"We're taking the entire fifth grade and we're introducing them to agriculture," said ag teacher

Ryan Talton. "Agriculture, as you know, is extremely diverse. They've got 10 different stations that they're looking at today, just trying to

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