

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Tropical Storm Zeta floods Nottely River, knocks power out

By Shawn Jarrard
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Tropical Storm Zeta left thousands without power in Union County last week after delivering a one-two punch of wind and water Oct. 29.

Equipment at the Experiment Station in Blairsville measured 45 mph winds as the storm moved its way into Union early Thursday morning, dropping enough water to flood the Nottely River and many of her tributaries.

The storm made landfall in Louisiana as a Category 2 hurricane around 5 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, traveling swiftly across the southeast corner of Mississippi to cut up through Alabama, where it was downgraded to a tropical storm before entering North Georgia.

Emergency Management

Agency Director Dyer said he and his staff opened the county's Emergency Operations Center about 4:30 a.m. Thursday to coordinate and track first responder efforts during the storm.

"It moved pretty quickly from being a little storm in the Gulf to, we may have to look at this because the track comes right over us," Dyer said. "We only had a couple days to prepare, so we went through our plans, got people together, had weather briefings, called folks, got things lined up, extra personnel. And like flipping a switch at 5 o'clock in the morning, it hit."

Union County experienced maximum wind gusts at 4:53 that morning, with the storm causing hundreds of trees to go down around the county, in turn dropping phone lines for many and resulting in

over 8,000 people losing power in Union alone.

More than a million people lost power throughout the northern half of the state, with BRMEMC reporting roughly 21,000 customers in the dark for its five-county territory at the peak of the outage as its tireless crews worked through the weekend to restore electricity systemwide.

The Road Department and EMC tag teamed clearing about 100 trees from county roads, though that tree tally did not include private roadways and property in the county, Dyer said.

Several homes in the area received damage from falling trees, which kept Manny Carrion of Carrion Tree Service busy, who posted photos to social media showcasing some of the damage.

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Union County Firefighters on the Swiftwater Rescue Team assisted a couple of residents to safety at Pappy's Plaza Thursday. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

See Election Results Insert Inside This Week's North Georgia News

VSOs, Cruisers and schools to honor local veterans

By Shawn Jarrard
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As outlined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Armistice Day is celebrated on

Nov. 11 every year to honor American veterans for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

Better known as Veterans Day, the holiday will feature observances by local patriotic groups, including the American

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The Maj. Leon Davenport Veterans Building will host two Veterans Day events on Nov. 11. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Community makes Halloween special for area youngsters



Dakota Havard and Alex Guglielmo handed out candy to costumed kiddos at the Nottely Marina Halloween event Saturday. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Shawn Jarrard
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Despite societal-wide disruptions to normal life, COVID-19 could not derail Halloween in 2020, with

several organizations in the community providing outdoor experiences for hundreds of young monsters, superheroes, princesses and superheros, handing out candy at stations

Nottely Marina hosted

a three-day Halloween extravaganza, featuring spooky decorations, theme appropriate music, and costumed volunteers

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Voting, COVID-19 remain top of mind

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Last week, in the runup to Tuesday's big election, people in the area seemed to be concentrating on two main things: voting and COVID-19.

Ann Smith of Rome said she felt the election had pulled people away from COVID talk, adding that she can't wait for things to calm down in the coming days.

"Everyone has the

election on their mind," Smith said while shopping at the Dollar General Oct. 28. "It is all I have heard. I just want it to all go away. I feel like being cooped up in the houses all this time and not being able to do much has left everyone restless."

"After this election, we all just need a few days to come together and rest on what needs to be done for the future. This is a stressful time, and you can see

how people are. Plenty of people are still struggling to make ends meet, and we need to take care of those people."

Wanda Downy believes COVID will take over headlines again once the election is over and people no longer have voting to discuss.

"It used to be all about COVID," Downy said at Saver-A-Lot Friday. "No matter where you went, COVID was there, and people were talking about it."

pre-election

"The election has taken that away a little, but it will be back no matter who wins. COVID is what we need to be focused on so that we can just be over and done with it. I know they say there is a vaccine, but we need more than that."

"A vaccine won't stop people from being so afraid to go outside. A vaccine probably won't make the masks go away. Quite frankly, COVID

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As the months get cooler and the U.S. enters respiratory virus season, many residents continue to wear masks and social distance for COVID-19. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Experimental Aircraft Association holds fly-in at Blairsville Airport

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1211 hosted its annual fly-in and chili potluck at the Blairsville Municipal Airport on Saturday, Oct. 17, inviting pilots from around the area to join them for lunch.

As always, Chapter 1211 group members used the event to socialize with other pilots who share their passion, with around 50 people expected to fly in and join the event, Chapter

President Frank Cornett said. "We try to do this every year, and it is a little bit of a moneymaker for us," Cornett said. "It gives people a chance to get out and fly somewhere, and the members contribute lots of chili and labor to help out with this."

The Experimental Aircraft Association is a group whose members takes their passion for planes to the next level.

"EAA in general got started with people building their own airplanes," Cornett

building their own aircrafts, here EAA is a lot more than that.

"We have an event called Young Eagles where kids 11 to 17 can come and we give them a free flight just to introduce them to aviation. We have another event called Flying Start which is aimed at adults 18 and up, and we tell them what it's like and getting them involved in a pilot license."

"So, EAA is involved in a lot of stuff, and the organization

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Several dozen planes attended the Experimental Aircraft Association's local 2020 Fly-In at the Blairsville Airport last month. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

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November 10

Mountain Coin Club Meeting
November 10

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