

## Shop with a Cop...from Page 1A



Union County Sheriff's Chief Deputy John George, Blairsville Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter and Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris had a blast at the 2019 Shop with a Cop on Dec. 14.

"You see some kids getting some things (for themselves), but most of them are buying something for everyone in their family before they buy for themselves," Baxter said. "We need to be grateful for what we have, I believe.

"Everything's been smooth. And again, this is not us; this is a community effort. The school system provided the transportation, Fellowship of the Hills handed out food baskets this morning. It's a team effort. It's not us. It's this town, this community. So, thank you."

School Police Chief Chad Deyton served as one of the escorts during the shopping event, and he said he had a wonderful time visiting with the kids.

"It was an enjoyable experience with the Blairsville Shop with a Cop," Deyton said. "It was really good to be involved. A lot of agencies out here, Georgia State Patrol, UCSO, and Blairsville PD does a great job at this. Chief Baxter is really good at doing this."

Georgia State Patrol Cpl. Joshua Hedden was there with Trooper First Class

Martin escorting a couple of youngsters.

"Today was great," Hedden said. "It was a great experience to see all the children and to see all the volunteers and agencies come together to make a child's Christmas better. It was outstanding.

"This is Georgia State Patrol's first year participating, and we would like to thank Chief Baxter for the invitation. TFC Martin and I look forward to participating in the future."

As for First Vice President Charlie Brown of the Blairsville Cruisers, he was impressed by all the kids who were buying presents for their family members.

"One of the guys was buying stuff for his grandma," Brown said. "This year, the guy that was with me, he bought a necklace for his mom. So, the kids are thinking more about other people close to them other than themselves. That's good to see.

"They're teaching them, in a smaller town like this, to respect the law officers and adults better than they are in a bigger town, it seems."

Family Connection Coordinator Katy Jones

attended as well, and she explained how it all worked.

"When the referrals come in from the teachers, our job is to make sure that everybody gets placed, and to make sure that the parents are wanting the assistance. So, when we get to come and shop today, it makes all that hard work totally worth it.

"We work with about 60 or 65 different agencies to make sure that everybody is placed, but also to see that nobody is placed on two different lists. We just try to coordinate with lots of people in the community, and we are amazed every year at the support.

"We absolutely could not do it without the police officers, the individuals who go shopping, the businesses who take on a family. It is amazing."

Chief Deputy John George of the Sheriff's Office was also at the checkout line helping to bag gifts.

"I think it went great," George said. "Walmart really had the plan together with the cash registers and flow of the children, and we had a lot of volunteers, which is really important."

## Reece Farm welcomes guests for Christmas Open House

Although the Reece Farm and Heritage Center is closed for the Winter Season, there was a flurry of activity at the Farm's Christmas Open House event Dec. 6-7.

Those who visited for the first time were happily surprised at the beauty and history of the Reece Farm and the wonderful legacy of Byron Herbert Reece.

The gate to the farm is open year round for visitors, and the buildings and exhibits will reopen on April 15, 2020.

The staff of the Reece Farm and Heritage Center and the Byron Herbert Reece Society wish for you a very Merry Christmas and a blessed 2020. Visit often.

The Farm is located in Blairsville, Georgia, one mile from Vogel State Park on US 129. NTDec18.Z18JCA



Reece Farm Grounds Manager Dorsey Dockery, pictured here at the Byron Herbert Reece Farm, built this sleigh 20 years ago.

## UC Historical Society's Brick Walk

To show our appreciation for the overwhelming community support for the Union County Historical Society's Brick Walk, we are extending the current price of \$50 per brick. Please call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493 or come by the old courthouse to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one. NTDec18.Z1JCA

## Joy Team...from Page 1A

and other goodies.

The gifts were packed into a Christmas-decorated wagon and rolled through the halls with holiday cheer and giving attitudes, inspiring laughter and smiles from nursing home residents.

As they made their way through each hall and each room, Joy Team members stopped to talk with folks about the season or share memories of joyful times of days gone by.

The event is meaningful for the team, which returns year after year to see welcome and familiar faces, and they always look forward to the smiles that greet when they hand out the presents.

"This is mainly something we like to do for them to have someone to come around and leave them a gift and say Merry Christmas to them," Paris said. "A lot of them don't get a lot of people that come and see them, so just to stick your head in the door and say hello is a great feeling.

"Most of us, including

## Young Harris Jamboree

Country Western Jamboree Session at Stephens Lodge in Young Harris next door to Young Harris Pharmacy hosted by John Cochran and the Cowhands. First Friday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Free admission. Food available. Food sales to raise funds for Young Harris Scholarship Fund. NTDec18.Z2JCA



The 2019 Joy Team enjoyed visiting with senior residents of the nursing home and giving them gifts last Thursday.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

me, don't take enough time to come and visit the people here at the nursing home. I regret that I don't get more time to come up here, but it is refreshing to come and see the smiles on their faces.

"It's really a heartening experience, and I love doing it and I wish I could do it more."

The Adopt-a-Grandparent for Christmas event started six years ago when it was founded by Roberta Ford and Kristy Wallace, who simply wanted to give back to the retired community and make sure they were included in holiday festivities.

"Ever since I was a small child, I have always had a heart for the elderly, and I cherish every moment in doing this for them, because they all love

it so much," Ford said. "It just means something to them for us to come in and leave them a little gift to let them know that the community is thinking about them and that we do care.

"We see people here that we remember every year, and we look forward to seeing them when we come through."

The group hopes to continue the Adopt-a-Grandparent for Christmas program moving forward, and the Joy Team appreciates the help and support that the community and local businesses offer to make the program possible.

For more information on the group and program, visit the "Adopt A Grandparent No. GA Community Outreach" Facebook page.