

# Man wanted out of Union County arrested in Canton

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
Assistant Editor

A man wanted for sex crimes against a local child was arrested in Canton on Wednesday, April 18.

Union County investigators have charged Cory Michael Upchurch, 33, with statutory rape, aggravated child molestation, child molestation, sodomy, and enticing a child for indecent purposes, all felony charges, per UCSO Lt. Tom Mangifesta.

Upchurch, a former resident of Ellijay, had been working for a local tree trimming company and staying with friends in Blairsville until recently, per Lt. Mangifesta.

After several months of living at the residence, in January, Upchurch began staying up late with the victim, supplying drugs and alcohol before performing sex acts with the child, per Lt. Mangifesta.

"This happened until he finally moved out of the residence," said Lt. Mangifesta.

Earlier this month, the child broke down and spoke with their parents about what had happened, and they immediately went to the sheriff's office, per Lt. Mangifesta.

Investigators scheduled a pair of forensic interviews with the child, and based on the



Cory Michael Upchurch

information gleaned from those interviews, they obtained warrants for Upchurch's arrest, per Lt. Mangifesta.

"And he was nowhere to be found," said Lt. Mangifesta. "The information we received is he moved back to the Gilmer County area."

Added Mangifesta: "He was also on state probation, so once state probation was notified, they in turn obtained an arrest warrant for violation of probation."

Thanks to the BOLO issued by the sheriff's office and cooperation with other agencies in the area, Cherokee County (Georgia) authorities were able to locate and arrest Upchurch, who had been staying in a Canton motel, per Lt. Mangifesta.

## Patriots Friends of NRA meeting

The Blue Ridge Patriots Friends of NRA (National Rifle Association) will hold its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Thursday, April 26, 2018 at the Fannin County Seniors Center located at 440 West First Street, Blue Ridge. Meeting will start at 6 PM. Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month. Dinner will be provided.

Guest Speakers: Pro-

bate Judge Scott Kiker, Magistrate Judge Brian Jones. Topic: State of Georgia Concealed Carry Laws, and State Concealed Carry Reciprocity, and Campus Carry.

If you are interested in this information please join use, there is no membership required or sought.

Point of Contact, Dan Spies, Co-Chairman, Blue Ridge Patriots Friends of NRA, 843-592-1616.

## South State...continued from Page 1A

subsidiary, has merged with South State Bank, a South Carolina banking corporation and the wholly owned banking subsidiary of South State Corporation.

"We are pleased to announce the completion of this merger with Park Sterling and look forward to welcoming their employees and customers to South State," said Robert R. Hill, Jr., CEO of South State Corporation, in December. "This is a significant step forward in accomplishing our vision to build a quality regional bank in the Southeast."

With this merger, South State Corporation has assets over \$14 billion and a market capitalization of approximately

\$3 billion.

"We are proud to partner with South State and this combination will fulfill the vision we laid out in 2010," said James C. Cherry, CEO of Park Sterling Corporation. "Together, we have the scale and resources necessary to deliver value-added services to our customers."

As a result of the merger, 53 locations will be added to the South State footprint: 5 in Georgia, 23 in South Carolina, 17 in North Carolina and 8 in Virginia.

In addition, in connection with the merger, Cherry and Jean E. Davis, a former director of Park Sterling, have been appointed to the South State Corporation and Bank Board of Directors.

Cherry has served as CEO of Park Sterling Corporation since its inception. Prior to Park Sterling, he served in numerous executive roles for Wachovia Corporation.

He is currently a director of Armada Hoffer Properties, Inc. (NYSE:AHH), a Virginia-based REIT.

Davis has been a director of Park Sterling Corporation since 2011.

In 2006, she retired from Wachovia Corporation as Head of Operations, Technology and e-Commerce. She currently chairs both the Safe Alliance Board of Directors and the Charlotte Latin School Board of Trustees.

## Voting...from Page 1A

Tuesday, April 24, was the voter registration deadline leading into the election.

Each of the following candidates will appear on the ballot of their respective political party:

For Governor, L.S. "Casey" Cagle, Eddie Hayes, Hunter Hill, Brian Kemp, Clay Tippins, Marc Urbach and Michael Williams, all Republican; and Stacey Abrams and Stacey Evans, both Democrat.

For Lieutenant Governor, Geoff Duncan, Rick Jeffares and David Shafer, all Republican; and Sarah Riggs Amico and Triana Arnold James, both Democrat.

For Secretary of State, David Belle Isle, Buzz Brockway, Josh McKoon and Brad Raffensperger, all Republican; and Josh Barrow, Dee Dawkins-Haigler and Rakeim "RJ" Hadley, all Democrat.

For Attorney General, Incumbent Chris Carr, Republican, and Charlie Bailey, Democrat.

For Commissioner of Agriculture, Incumbent Gary Black, Republican, and Fred Swann, Democrat.

For Commissioner of Insurance, Jim Beck, Jay Florence and Tracy Jordan, all Republican; and Janice Laws and Cindy Zeldin, both Democrat.

For State School Superintendent, Incumbent Richard Woods and John Barge, both Republican; and Sid Chapman, Sam Mosteller and Otha E. Thornton Jr., all Democrat.

For Commissioner of Labor, Incumbent Mark Butler, Republican; and Richard Keatley and Fred Quinn, both Democrat.

For Public Service Commissioner District 3, Incumbent Chuck Eaton; and Lindy Miller, John Noel and Johnny C. White, all Democrat.

For Public Service Commissioner District 5, Incumbent Tricia Pridemore and John Hitchins III, both Republican; and Dawn A. Randolph and Doug Stoner, both Democrat.

For U.S. Representative in 116th Congress from the 9th Congressional District of Georgia, Incumbent Doug Collins, Republican; and Dave Cooper and Josh McCall, both Democrat.

For State Senator from the 51st District, Incumbent Steve Gooch, Republican.

For State Representative in the General Assembly from the 8th District, Incumbent Matt Gurtler and Mickey Cummings, both Republican.

For District Attorney of the Enotah Judicial Circuit, Incumbent Jeff Langley, Republican.

For County Board of Education District 2, Incumbent Tony Hunter and Joan Anderson, both Republican.

For County Board of Education District 4, Incumbent Keith Potts, William McQuillan and John T. Strickland, all Republican.

For County Board of Education District 5, Incumbent Patrick White, Republican.

On the Nonpartisan General Election Ballot, John Ellington and incumbents Michael P. Boggs, Britt Cagle Grant, Harold D. Melton and Nels Peterson are all running unopposed for Justice, Supreme Court of Georgia.

Incumbents Charlie Bethel, Stephen Dillard, Amanda H. Mercier, M. Yvette Miller, Clyde L. Reese III and Brian Rickman are all running unopposed for Judge, Court of Appeals Georgia.

Ken Hodges and Ken Shigley are running against one another for Judge, Court of Appeals Georgia, to succeed John Ellington.

Raymond E. George and N. Stanley Gunter are both running unopposed for Judge,

Superior Court of the Enotah Judicial Circuit.

Union County voters will also be asked to support or reject ESPLOST V in the May 22 primary.

An ESPLOST (Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) is a 1-cent sales tax that is collected by school systems for up to five years, for the purposes of building new facilities, renovating existing facilities, upgrading HVAC systems in the schools, adding to aging bus fleets, updating technology and more.

The sales tax in Union County is 7 cents on the dollar, which includes a penny for current ESPLOST IV collections.

Since the schools are already collecting ESPLOST money, if residents decide to renew the ESPLOST, the sales tax rate within the county will remain at 7 percent.

Should residents choose not to renew the ESPLOST, the sales tax rate will drop to 6 cents on the dollar.

ESPLOST V would have a collection cap of \$21 million over its five-year collection period, just like ESPLOST IV.

The board has retained the ability to sell bonds for up to \$13.5 million in the event of an emergency, though current board members have pledged to maintain a "pay-as-you-go" model of SPLOST project funding to keep the school system out of debt.

## Hogan...from Page 1A

been stolen over the last several weeks and recovered following his arrest on April 19, per UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn.

Earlier this month, detectives with the Cherokee County, North Carolina, Sheriff's Office had been in contact with the UCSO Criminal Investigations Division about some property stolen in Cherokee County.

At the time, Lt. Osborn asked them to be on the lookout also for a silver Dodge Ram 3500 flatbed pickup that had gone missing out of Union County on April 10.

"I knew it had been taken to North Carolina, and that's basically all the evidence I had on it," said Lt. Osborn. "And I knew that from witnesses at the state line Marathon that had seen it going that way."

"They knew the owner and had recognized the truck, but it wasn't the owner, it was somebody who had stolen the truck."

After obtaining the information, Cherokee County (NC) investigators passed the description of the truck to their department's patrol deputies, per Lt. Osborn.

"Their road deputies actually were working a breaking and entering at a residence close to the state line in North Carolina, and this truck drove by," said Lt. Osborn. "Come to find out, some of the items that were on this truck that was stolen in Union County were at that house."

"A fuel tank, truck tires - it was a farm work truck that was stolen, and the items had been offloaded at the residence that had been broken into."

North Carolina deputies

at the scene recognized the truck from its description and a chase ensued, bringing the truck back across state lines into Union County, per Lt. Osborn.

Hogan was behind the wheel of the truck, which was pulling a 16-foot stock trailer, and he ended up taking it down a private drive that dead-ended on him, per Lt. Osborn.

After bush bonding, Union County investigators called on K9 Deputy Lacey to find their man, whom she located in a barn loft some 200 yards from the truck he abandoned, per Lt. Osborn.

Following his arrest, Hogan was charged with theft by taking of a motor vehicle, obstruction, bringing stolen property across state lines, and making false statements, per Lt. Osborn.

Additional charges against Hogan are expected, pending further investigation, per Lt. Osborn.

Property recovered includes the truck, a boat and trailer stolen from here and taken to North Carolina, as well as a Kawasaki Mule that had been missing for at least a year, per Lt. Osborn.

## Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



March 30, 2018  
In Honor of  
Terry Meeks  
Last Chemo Treatment  
by UC Historical Society

In Honor of  
Ethelene Dyer Jones  
Genealogist  
by Eva and Jim Wike

April 6, 2018  
In Honor of  
Shawn and Joy Foster  
5th Anniversary  
by Joy Foster

April 13, 2018  
In memory of  
Fred L. Miller Birthday  
by Lorraine Miller

April 19, 2018  
In memory of  
Virginia B. Meeks  
Anniversary  
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

April 28, 2018  
In memory of  
Dollie C. Meeks Birthday  
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

April 28, 2018  
In loving memory of  
Lori Michelle Nuce  
Happy Birthday  
"Forever in our hearts  
and memories"

by Mom, Dad, Bette Lou,  
and Maryann

April 15, 2018  
In memory of  
MSgt USMC Eric England  
Semper Fi  
by Friends

Bell ringing information  
at 706-745-5493

## Retired Firefighters Breakfast

The Retired Firefighters Breakfast is held the first Friday of each month, 9 a.m. at Cook's Country Kitchen, Blairsville, GA. NT(Apr25Z2)CA

## Local Al-Anon meetings

For friends and families who are troubled by someone's drinking, please call 1-828-837-4440 or 1-888-425-2666 for local meetings. NT(Apr25Z2)CA

**VISIT OUR**

# OPEN HOUSE

**Union County**  
**Volunteer Fire Stations 2, 6, 9**  
**Will be having its annual**  
**Open House**  
**on Saturday, April 28th**  
**11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at**  
**Station 2, 15 Jones Creek Road**

**Residents of Precinct 2 are invited to join us for food, fun, and fellowship. Please join us!**