

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

March 26, 2014

## County to close on Shotgun Park this week

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

supplement the payment of the property," Commissioner Paris said.

The shooting range was given a public stamp of approval Jan. 27 when the question was raised by one of the more than 100 residents in attendance, "is there anyone here who doesn't support this plan?"

A hush fell over the Union County Jury Assembly Room. Next, heads began to swivel, surveying the room for any raised hands. Not a single arm went up.

"I am very excited about this and thought the public hearing went very well," Commissioner Paris said. "There wasn't anyone there who was against the project and that's always good when you have a public hearing."

"Everyone realizes the impact that this will have on the 4-H program, the kids, their shotgun program, and not only that, the future," Paris said. "I think that positive impact will benefit our community. This will be one of the only skeet and



Union County has served as home of the District 4-H shooting tournaments over the last several years. Soon, the team will have a true homefield advantage at a 9,502-acre site off Georgia 515.

trapping ranges, eventually a public one, north of Atlanta."

Following Commissioner Paris' pitch for as to why

the property, supporters of the acquisition successfully sold the concept to the residents of

Union County. However, if there was anyone on the fence, or any doubters beforehand, their opin-

ions likely were swayed by the testimonies of the team's coaches, members, former members, and their parents.

The property, on the north side of Georgia 515, near Queens Gap will become the home for the Union County 4-H Shotgun, BB Gun, and Archery teams.

The home turf would bring a welcomed relief to the teams who have been forced to move locations, being spread out like buckshot across the county during its 17 prosperous years, as these upstanding young men and women have served as noble ambassadors for the local community.

They've also proved something else - they're deadly accurate with a shotgun, BB gun, or a bow.

"I anticipate that in the next few days we should be able to close on the property," Commissioner Paris said. Paris approved the contract with

See Shotgun Park, 3A

## Access Explorers near dream trip



By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com



Shannon Hogsed

With just over two weeks to head out to Chicago, Ill., Union County's Access Explorers are \$2,000 from their goal.

Stories in the March 19 edition of the North Georgia

News helped the group raise \$1,800 of the \$3,800 needed to make the trip.

"We are still about \$2,000 short as of this afternoon," Paraprofessional Sandra George said on Friday. "We had a good day at Ingles taking up donations. And El-

See Explorers, 2A

## Union County Schools seek Pre-K grant

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com



Gary Steppe

Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe has announced that the school system is in the process of submitting an application with "Bright from the Start," the administrative organization of Georgia's Pre-K programs, to start a Pre-K program for 4 year olds.

The program will be located in the Union County Primary School, Steppe said.

If the application is approved the new program will begin in August 2014, Steppe said.

Currently, the county only serves a small percentage of the estimated 200-plus 4 year olds in a Pre-K program, Steppe said.

"The Union County School System would like to see more of these students in a high-quality, early educa-

tion program," Steppe said. "Such a program improves a child's preliteracy, prewriting, and premath skills."

Studies show that children enrolled in such a program are better prepared to begin Kindergarten and their road to a quality education, Steppe said.

These vital skills, Steppe said, have been linked to third-grade reading

achievement, which is a predictor of high school graduation.

"They are also linked to success in math in secondary school and later in life," Steppe said. "School readiness and the skills gained from high-quality early childhood education are essential to educating a strong workforce that is able to successfully compete in the global economy."

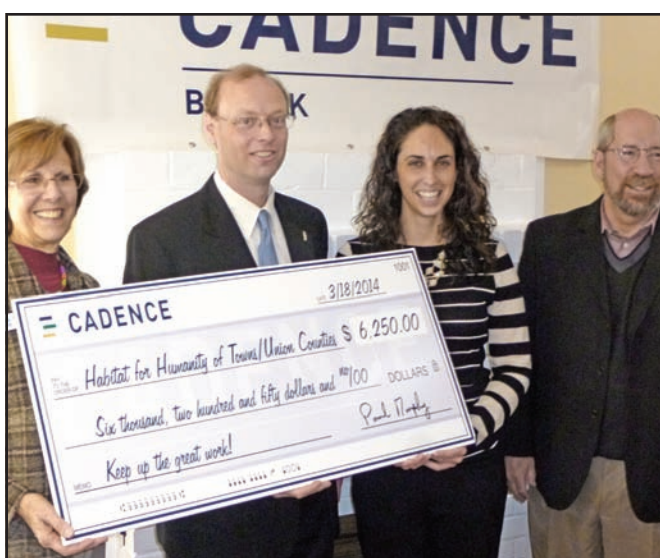
Part of the application process for this program includes documentation that parents have a true interest in the new program, Steppe said.

"If you would be interested in enrolling your 4-year-old in a Union County School System Pre-K program, please see the information below and complete Options 1, 2, or 3 as soon as possible," Steppe said.

See Pre-K Grant, 2A

## Cadence makes a difference for Habitat

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com



A.J. Borowski, left, accepted this \$6,250 check from Cadence Bank President Darrin Sparks last week in support of Habitat for Humanity. Chamber President Cindy Williams and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris also were present at the ceremony.

Borowski said.

Over the years, Cadence Bank has contributed more than \$750,000 to Habitat for Humanity of the Southeast to support affordable housing.

"Cadence Bank strong-

ly believes in a active, responsible corporate citizen and putting our money into action," Sparks said. "By supporting worthwhile organizations like Habitat, we are

See Habitat, 2A

## Owltown Road repaving begins Phase I



Road Crews begin Phase I of the Owltown Road repaving project. The road will be paved in phases until it is complete, County Manager Larry Garrett said. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

Phase I of the Owltown Road repaving project is on-

going, County Manager Larry Garrett said.

Currently, the county will pave approximately one mile and a half of roadway,

Garrett said.

"We have to do it in phases as money is available,"

See Owltown, 2A

## Akins remembers his close friend Jack Lance

By Charles Duncan  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com



Jack Lance Sr.

Bud Akins can't believe that a year has gone by since the last saw his nearest and dearest friend.

But, it has been that long. Jack Lance Sr. died on March 24, 2013.

"I lost the best friend I ever had," Akins said. "I can't believe a year has gone by."

Lance was Mr. Basket-

ball in Union County, playing for Coach James Butterworth.

He led the Panthers to their first Region title in 1955 as well as the team's first state playoff appearance.

He also played baseball, and led the UCHS baseball team to its first Region title and first state playoff appearance, also in 1955.

"Jack and I did everything together," said Akins, a

See Lance, 3A

## Home Depot grant aids Veterans Building



A grant from The Home Depot allowed veterans and their families to do outside work and inside repairs at the Major Leon Davenport Veterans Building off Georgia 515 in Blairsville. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Vol. 105 No. 13  
3 Sections, 26 Pages

**Weather**  
Thu: Clouds Hi 58 Lo 44  
Fri: Rain Hi 61 Lo 44  
Sat: Clouds Hi 64 Lo 33

**Inside**  
Arrests 6A  
Church 7A  
Classifieds 3B  
Opinion 4A  
Legals 5B  
Obits 9A  
Sports 10A

8 0 4 8 7 9 1 9 3 1 4 2

**UGH Auxiliary Fund Raiser**  
March 27 & 28

See page 13A

**Family FUN Airport Awareness Day • March 29**

See page 11A

**Energy Assistance Still Available**

See Page 12A

**UNION COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS**

**BASEBALL:**  
Tues Mar 25 @ Riverside 5 PM • Mon Apr 1 @ Rabun 5 PM

**SOCCER:**  
Tues Mar 25 @ Rabun 5 & 7 PM • Fri Mar 28 vs. Jefferson 5:30 & 7:30 PM

**GOLF:**  
Mar 25 & 26 Tri County Cup @ Old Union 3:15 PM

**WOODY GAP SCHOOL TENNIS:**  
Tues Mar 25 @ Tallulah Falls 4 PM