

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Mason, Byers, Sen. Gooch return; Akins claims BOE Seat; Cox is Chief Magistrate

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County's local Primary races provided little drama on Tuesday evening as four of the five races were lopsided victories.

Incumbent Union County Sheriff Mack Mason defeated challenger Eric Wood in a landslide with Mason earning 3,588 votes (72.5 percent) to Wood's 1,362 (27.5).

The Chief Magistrate Judge race belonged to Cary Cox with 3,134 votes (60.5 percent). JoAnne Leone received 1,336 votes (25.8 percent) and Rick Knox picked up 707 votes (13.7 percent).

Janna Akins was victorious in her bid for the District 1 Board of Education seat with



Union County Tax Commissioner Lee Knight and Union County Sheriff Mack Mason share an election night victory for both. Knight was unopposed, while Sheriff Mason scored a landslide victory over GOP challenger Eric Wood. Photo/Todd Forrest



Cindy Byers
3,017 votes (67.4 percent), while Andrew Smith tallied 1,457 votes (32.6 percent).

Incumbent Coroner Benny Erwin also gained more than 65.7 percent as he defeated with 3,080 votes to



Cary Cox
Benny Brookshire's 1,605.

The closest race of the day was for the District 3 seat on the Union County Board of Education and incumbent Cindy Byers defeated challenger

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UCHS sends 165 to walk the aisle

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The future looks bright for 165 Union County residents, as they prepare to embrace one of young adulthood's first big milestones - high school graduation.

"We're very proud of our graduates," said Union County High School Principal John Hill. "I have a lot of pride in the fact that these kids have worked, and our system has worked and parents and the community have worked together since Day 1 in kindergarten.

"To see these kids come all the way through high school - all the different things they've achieved, participation in all the different clubs and athletic events, and chorus and band and theater and drama, and just to see these kids mature from Day 1 in school until now, and all the things they've accomplished - it's a tremendous sense of pride right now for me and for all their teachers throughout the school system."

Union County High School will hold its commencement exercises on Friday, May 27, at 8 p.m., in Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

Anna Danek was announced as the Class of 2016 Valedictorian during the Senior Recognition Day Program on Thursday, May 19,

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Salutatorian Brooke Hamby and Valedictorian Anna Danek share a moment at Senior Honors Recognition Day at UCHS. Photo/Shawn Jarrard



Union County seniors take part in Sunday's Baccalaureate ceremonies at First Baptist Church of Blairsville. Photo/Lily Avery

Paris gets a surprise at Station 1

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
Editor@nganews.com

Saturday's Open House at Fire Station 1 took on special meaning.

May 21st was a day to celebrate with friends and family of the Union County Fire Department. It also was a day to say Happy Birthday to Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris.

"I got tricked," a smiling Paris said. "They told me to be here by noon and then they sprung a birthday cake on me. I had no idea that was

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Commissioner Paris gets the first slice of cake at Saturday's Open House at Fire Station 1. It was his birthday cake after all. He was pleased with the cake. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

No millage hike expected by schools

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
Editor@nganews.com

The Union County Schools' millage rate has been on the decline since 2011.

The county's Board of Education is expected to continue that trend for 2017, Union County Schools' Superintendent Gary Steppe said last week.

The Local Fair Share, or the first 5 mills of a school system's tax collection goes

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BOE members Cindy Byers and Tony Hunter discuss the School System's proposed FY 2017 Budget. Photo/Lily Avery

King Ford No. 1 in customer satisfaction



Union County's Chris King holds a very cherished piece of hardware - King Ford in Murphy, NC has been chosen as No. 1 in Customer Satisfaction for Ford Motor Company. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Murphy, NC - The Ford Motor Company has honored Chris King and his entire staff at King Ford with the prestigious President's Award, presented to dealers with the highest customer satisfaction ratings in the company.

Led by Regional Sales Manager Kevin Giacomini of Atlanta, the Ford Team visited King Ford in Murphy, North Carolina, on Thursday, May 19, to hand-deliver the award.

"It's the President's Award, which is given to our top-performing dealers across the country for superior sales and service and customer satisfaction," said Giacomini, who oversees 158 dealers in the region. "Fewer than 10 percent of our Ford dealers nationally earn this award."

King Ford has been honored with the Ford President's Award seven times in the 19 years it has been in business, and King Ford

owner/operator Chris King said the honor goes to those who work hard for him.

"The employees are the ones who earn it," said King. "We take care of our customers. It's not only the sale, we take care of them after the sale, too."

To commemorate the Ford Team's arrival and to show appreciation for his award-winning staff, King held a cookout luncheon just outside of the new King Ford building that Thursday.

Last month, on Friday, April 15, King Ford opened the doors to its brand new, state-of-the-art facility right across the road from its former location.

"Convenience is one of the big highlights, the access coming in and out," said King Ford Sales Manager Curtis King, who believes customers will appreciate the same-level layout of inventory over the tiered, terraced layout of the previous property across the way.

Curtis has been with King Ford since his father took over the business in 1997. He

started mowing the lawn, washing cars and working in the parts department, before moving up to selling cars and then managing the sales department.

"I just thank the community for all of their loyalty and dedication through the years, and their continuous support," said Curtis King. "They're the ones who helped us get here. This facility is for their enjoyment, that's what it was built for - for their convenience, for them to come in and enjoy it. Easier access to get in and out, to look at cars, to get cars serviced."

Chris' wife, Patsy King, also works hard behind the scenes to make sure King Ford continues to be one of the most successful dealerships in the Tri-State area. For his part, Chris said he felt fortunate to be working side by side with his wife and son.

"It's a family owned and operated business," said Chris King. "It's not a chain store and it's not a group, a

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Wolf Creek gets a boost from UCMS

By Lily Avery
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Months of waiting came to an end for Union County Middle School Life Science students as they released their class-raised trout into Wolf Creek at the Byron Herbert Reece Farm on Thursday, May 19.

At the beginning of the school year, Jacquie Tallman's seventh grade Life Science classes teamed up with the Chattahoochee-Nantahala chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Chattahoochee National Forest Fish Hatchery at Rock Creek to bring the Trout in the Classroom program to UCMS.

Students were given the opportunity to feed and monitor trout hatchlings, learning

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UCMS Life Science students release trout they raised in the classroom into Wolf Creek at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center.

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RELAY FOR LIFE
American Cancer Society

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Retirement Reception
Gary Steppe
Tuesday, May 31st
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Graduation Ceremonies

Union County High School May 27, 2016 8:00 PM Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium	Woody Gap School May 28, 2016 10:00 AM Woody Gap HS Gymnasium	Mountain Education Charter High School May 26, 2016 5:00 PM Union County Performing Arts Center
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