

North Georgia News

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Wet Bandits revisited; Union, Fannin detectives nab burglars

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

There's a new generation of *Wet Bandits*. Dakota Dillard and Cheryl Anne Cantrell now share a common bond with Harry Lyme and Marv Merchants, the original *Wet Bandits*, of *Home Alone* fame.

However, Dillard, 21, and Cantrell, 53, can articulate their trip behind bars to sheriff's investigators in Union and Fannin counties, not the ingenious exploits of one Kevin McCallister (Macaulay Culkin) in the 1990 hit movie.

Dillard and Cantrell are charged with taking a price-

less memorabilia collection and other items from a home in the Queen's Gap community.

That collection included a one-of-a-kind framed 1976 Sports Illustrated autographed by 1976 Olympic Gold medalist and Decathlon champion Bruce Jenner, that included an autographed dis-



Cheryl Cantrell

cus, baseballs autographed by the likes of Mickey Mantle, Joe Dimaggio, Ted Williams and Hank Aaron, and a priceless Pittsburgh Steeler NFL helmet autographed by the heroes of the Steelers' first four Super Bowl victories. It also included a framed inaugural issue of Sports Illustrated and an autographed San Francisco



Dakota Dillard

49ers' helmet signed by Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Montana.

Many of those items have been recovered, many remain at large and many were actually left behind, said Union County Sheriff's Investigator Sgt. Lamar Dyer.

"They left as much or more behind than they took," Dyer said.

Sgt. Dyer said the two entered the home through the garage area.

"There was no sign of forced entry," Dyer said.

The suspected burglars opened the garage, pulled their vehicle inside, closed the door, and loaded their vehicle up, Sgt. Dyer said.

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Sheriff Scott Stephens and members of the Union County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division show priceless stolen memorabilia items recovered from burglary suspects. Several items are still missing, Sheriff's detectives say. Photo/Charles Duncan

Weekend marks 35th Indian Summer Fest

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Suches - Thirty-five years ago, a group of concerned parents and community members came together to figure out a way to supplement the programs at the Woody Gap School, the smallest public school in the state.

They came up with a plan to hold a festival, a mini-Sorghum Festival of sorts.

However, the festival would be unique to Suches, with proceeds going to benefit the school's academic and athletic programs. It would provide scholarships for the school's graduating seniors who plan on gaining a secondary education, be it traditional college or technical college.

"There's a scholarship for every graduating senior pursuing secondary education," said Woody Gap Sports Club President Kelly Taylor. "We also purchase equipment for the school like computers and their money for each teacher to spend on supplies for their classrooms."

The festival has been a hit, growing in attendance



Althea Cantrell's Local Studies Group will be selling homemade fried pies, local honey, jams and jellies, and boiled peanuts during the 35th Annual Indian Summer Festival.

each year. Thirteen years ago, the Woody Gap Sports Club, which oversees the festival, added a new dimension to the event, the Run Above the Clouds 10K Run.

Taylor said the festival features arts, crafts, live music, fun for the kids and of course, plenty of barbecue and hot dogs and hamburgers.

Plates of each are available upon request. There's a cost involved, but it's for a worthy cause.

"The Sports Club will do a barbecue booth, pulled pork sandwiches or plates," Taylor said. "The teachers will have a hot dog and hamburger booth."

Musical entertainment

includes Highway 76, Cartecay River Band, Fort Mountain Boys, Morgan Pruitt Band, and Jim Wood and the Woodpile, Taylor said.

"There's an auction about noon on Saturday and Sunday," Taylor said. "The proceeds go to benefit the

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Run Above the Clouds set for Saturday in Suches

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com



Suches - The runners come from near and far to take part in one of the most unique 10K runs anywhere.

At 2,900 feet above sea level, the Run Above the Clouds is believed to be the highest altitude race in the state.

It's also an important part of the financial equation for Woody Gap Schools as money raised through the Run and the Indian Summer Festival support athletics and academics at Woody Gap.

The 13th Run Above the Clouds is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Saturday in Suches.

The foot race is run simultaneously with the Indian Summer Festival, scheduled for Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Both events support programs and students at

the Woody Gap School, the smallest public school in the state, said Woody Gap Sports Club President Kelly Taylor.

The 10K race is run over a challenging but beautiful course through the North Georgia Mountains. The event also includes an accompanying 1 mile Fun Run, which covers basically a flat course.

That race starts at 9:10 a.m.

The Run, unlike the Peachtree Road Race, does not draw tens of thousands of runners with other tens of thousands of spectators and attendant media presence.

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Garnto's art becoming widespread

By Janice Boling
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Al Garnto's fame is spreading throughout the Southeast and beyond.

He recently installed two large kinetic sculptures in the city of Suwanee for the 2012 SculptTour. Weathervane and U Circle 58 stand as a testament to Garnto's widespread appeal.

Garnto, of Blairsville, is working on a new sculpture soon to be unveiled at the Union County Community Center. The unveiling should be in the next few weeks.

Meanwhile, as Weathervane whirls in the breeze,



Blairsville's Al Garnto poses with a recent sculpture erected in Suwanee. He'll be unveiling a new one in Blairsville soon.

viewers might imagine everything from childhood whirlygigs to scientific weather instruments.

Whatever Garnto's sculpture brings to mind, the piece is remarkable for its ease of movement, its quality craftsmanship, and its ability to mesmerize.

It took more than five years for Garnto to get the look he wanted. Both Weathervane and U Circle 58 were inside his head long before they took shape in steel.

With U Circle 58, Garnto challenges the viewer to observe normal everyday objects in a new way.

He resurrects an ob-

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Sheriff prepares for KKK

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com



Scott Stephens

Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens has spent the last two weeks in preparation for Saturday's Ku Klux Klan rally at the Union County Courthouse.

The Klan applied for and received a permit to rally at the Courthouse in May from the Blairsville City Council.

According to a flyer sent to the North Georgia News from the Keystone Knights of the Realm of the Ku Klux Klan, the rally will take place from noon until 2 p.m.

Sheriff Stephens said that Commissioner Lamar Paris and the Georgia Department of Public Safety have been key allies in preparation for the rally.

"We have to make sure we're ready for anything," Sheriff Stephens said. "We're

hoping every one is peaceable, but we have to be prepared for the unexpected."

The Georgia State Patrol will have a presence at 35 troopers at the rally; every uniformed deputy in the Union County Sheriff's Office will be on duty.

Pat Haralson Drive will be closed to thru traffic, Sheriff Stephens said. See *Klan*, Page 6A

Cecil King grows a 'taterzilla'

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Cecil King has grown some big sweet potatoes in his time, but nothing like this before.

King, of Blairsville, came by the North Georgia News to proudly show off his 4-pound, 15-ounce sweet potato last week.

After one look, we labeled this sweet tater "taterzilla."

It was large enough to make three sweet potato pies.

You rarely see photographs like this on the front page of any newspaper.

However, this sweet tater was front-page material.



Cecil King of Blairsville

"It's the biggest one I've ever grown," King said with a smile on his face. "But you know, there might be a bigger one in the tater patch. I've still

got a bunch left to dig up."

Many more like that one and Cecil will have a enough to feed a small army.

Of course Cecil has a ways to go to break the world record for the largest sweet potato.

The record is 24 pounds, 9 ounces and it was grown in Tyre, Lebanon.

Sweet potatoes are rapidly becoming a popular menu item in local and national restaurants. They're good for you and packed with nutrition.

For many households, the sweet potato has become the potato of choice.

Sweet potatoes are full of antioxidants and they're tasty too.

Mountain Shelter's Puttin' on the Dog

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

On Saturday, the Union County Farmers Market played host to the 12th annual Puttin' on the Dog, the premier fund raising event for the Union/Towns Humane Society's Mountain Shelter.

The event was sponsored by the Wine Shop and United Community Bank.

This event also offered a variety of activities such as: Wine Tasting by "The Wine Shop," live music, an exciting live auction, silent auctions, raffles, delicious catering from Tina DeVilliers, and golf contests.



Saturday's fund raiser for the Mountain Shelter was a success. Photo/Todd Forrest

All proceeds from this event went towards helping to care for the animals at the Union/Towns

Humane Society.

The Humane Society

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Suches, Georgia

Saturday, October 6
9am

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Coopers
Creek
Sportsman
for Kids

October
5th & 6th

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Wine Country
Suches, Georgia

Last
Block Party
of the
Season

Friday, October 5
5pm to Dusk
Walmart parking lot

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UCHS Football
Friday, October 5
at Oglethorpe Co.

Lady Panthers Softball
Region 8-AA Championship Game
Thursday, Oct. 4 • 5pm @ Union Co.
Jefferson vs. Union Co.

UCMS Football Playoffs
Thurs., Oct. 4 • 5:30pm at Lumpkin