

Wet Bandits...continued from Page 1A

They also attempted to flood the home following their alleged burglary of the residence, following the lead of the *Home Alone* burglars Lyme and Merchants, Sgt. Dyer said.

"The upstairs bathtubs had been stopped up and filled with water and the faucets were still on," Dyer said. "Two sinks were also stopped up but they were able to drain.

"It appears that as the suspects left, they tampered with the outside valve, possibly thinking they were going to flood the outside as well, but, they turned the water off," Dyer said.

"The home was ransacked," Dyer said. "They literally trashed the place."

Union County Sheriff's Investigator Patrick Martin said that the value of the memorabilia collection would be hard to determine.

"The Jenner item alone could be worth \$10,000 or as much as \$1 million - it's a one-of-a-kind item," Martin said. "In the memorabilia market, the value of an item is dependent on how much a person wants an item. If they want it bad enough, they'll pay top dollar for it."

Apparently, the *Wet Bandits* were giving the mem-

orabilia items away, Sgt. Dyer said.

"In late September, items believed to be stolen were turned over to Fannin County Sheriff's Office," Dyer said. "Fannin County Sheriff's Deputy Mike Davis called us and asked if Union County had had any burglaries where any items such as these had been stolen or if any burglaries had been committed.

"All this came after Fannin County had arrested two individuals regarding an unrelated instance," Dyer said.

A realtor had reported the Queen's Gap burglary in August, Sgt. Dyer said.

Deputy Davis made Sgt. Dyer aware of the presence of the stolen items brought to his department.

Dillard and Cantrell would later confess to crimes and admit to the sports memorabilia burglary in Union County, Sgt. Dyer said.

"A college class ring, and a high school class ring stolen from the Queen's Gap residence were also recovered," Dyer said. "Despite the recovery of these items, it is believed that there are still several similar items that have not been recovered."

Not recovered items include a Tiger Woods autographed golf ball, four Sterling

Silver place sets, Ray Kelley's Dakota Winter Sculpture, a pink Depression glass with gold trim, and a Canon 40D camera with the strap and bag, Sgt. Dyer said.

Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens said he couldn't be more proud of his department's rapport and cooperation with the Fannin County Sheriff's Office during the course of the burglary investigation.

"This is an example of the fine work that can be accomplished when agencies work together," Stephens said. "We would like to thank Fannin County for their assistance in this matter. Our Criminal Investigations Division works very hard on these types of cases as well as murders, rapes, fraud, and many others.

"I am proud of their work and their dedication to doing a great job for Union County," The homeowner/victim, in an interview with Sgt. Dyer, expressed that he is pleased with the law enforcement efforts of Union and Fannin counties and the recovery of these items stolen from his home, Dyer said. "He also expressed that if anyone has any information regarding the items still missing, please contact me (Sgt. Dyer) at (706) 439-6066."

Garnto...continued from Page 1A

ject from its death and gives it a new life, a second chance. Garnto sees beauty in what most people in society discard as trash.

Garnto's interest in art began during early childhood when his mother taught him how to draw.

After struggling through school, Garnto was accepted into Young Harris College as an art major.

While at YHC, professors recognized that Garnto had a learning difference and after testing, the diagnosis was a rare form of dyslexia.

The official diagnosis helped change Garnto's life.

It allowed him to understand for the first time that his brain processed information differently than the rest of the population.

The college faculty was able to develop ways to help Garnto understand his course work.

By the end of 1993 Garnto had brought his grade point average up to a 4.0.

That same year he received several awards for his paintings and sculptures, was named to the Dean's List, and was presented with a Presidential Scholarship to the Atlanta College of Art. Finally his dream was becoming a

reality.

At the Atlanta College of Art, Garnto was especially awed by the work of Alexander Calder, David Smith, Robert Rauschenberg, George Rickey, and other modern artists.

In 1994, Garnto returned to his roots, his hometown of Blairsville, and opened his own business - the Al Garnto Fine Art Studio where he has made a living as a professional artist for almost 20 years.

Garnto works in a variety of mediums including oil paints, composite fine art photography, and kinetic sculpture. His sculptures are made from recycled materials and then put into motion by harnessing the wind's energy.

A lot of Garnto's sculpture is directly related to the working community and area in which he lives. Most of the

time his designs come out of the materials he finds from work places like sawmills, machine and welding shops, construction sites, dumpsters, and old barns that are being torn down.

The past 18 months have been an especially prolific period for Garnto.

Projects include the critically acclaimed "Al Garnto - Retrospective," an art show at Young Harris College featuring examples of his early work and recent pieces, several more kinetic sculpture additions to the Appalachian Sculpture Project, spearheaded by Garnto out of Meeks Park, a prototype for home edition kinetic sculptures, several new paintings, and "Recycle Art Cycles."

Garnto also has been featured on several television shows and in regional maga-

Dog...continued from Page 1A

was founded in 1987 to serve Towns and Union County (Blairsville, Hiawassee and Young Harris) as a private, non-profit, charitable organization. They are dedicated to preventing overpopulation, cruelty, suffering and inhumane treatment of animals.

The Humane Society Mountain Shelter provides custodial care to animals within their facility and are looking for a perfect match for you.

The Humane Society's Mountain Shelter greets and provides care for more than 800 animals each year. The Shelter houses and feeds everyone, keeps them in a healthy safe environment and sees to all their medical needs.

A few will find their way back to their original owners, but most are placed for adoption. Working with several nearby organizations and those hours away, they make it their mission to ensure every animal finds a safe and loving home.

Despite all their efforts there is always a dark side - hundreds of animals (millions nationwide) will never know the love and comfort

of a home. The mission of the Humane Society is to not allow any of God's creatures to be treated badly. Whether it's cruelty, starvation, lack of medical attention, education and compassion.

Any non-profit organization is only as good as its volunteers. The Mountain Shelter and Thrift Store are always looking for enthusiastic animal lovers willing to work for the cause - the animals.

For more details on volunteering, contact the Shelter at (706) 781-3843 or stop by during their hours of operation.

There are many ways to volunteer, including: Shelter work - "hands-on" work with the animals, like cleaning, loving, feeding, walking, bathing, and petting.

Your time can also be spent helping to answer the phone and performing other duties.

According to Tricia Spear the exact amount of dollars raised during the 'Puttin' on the Dog' fund raiser has yet to be totaled, but based on the turnout and overall enthusiasm on Saturday night, it looks as if the 2012 event has been another successful one.

Klan...continued from Page 1A

"If the local folks want to see this or attend for one reason or another, they'll have to park somewhere and walk to it," the sheriff said. "We hate to do that, but the lower parking lot of the courthouse is reserved for Ku Klux Klan parking.

"We don't know how many Klansmen are coming," he said. "There's no way to be sure. If it's like the rally in Ellijay a couple of years ago, there could be 500 Klansmen here. They bused them in from as far away as Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas."

An e-mail from Klansman April Chambers, of Morganton, indicates that the Imperial Wizard and other speakers will discuss the econ-

omy, foreclosures, upcoming national and state elections, unemployment, immigration and Obamacare.

Sheriff Stephens says he and members of his department will meet with a group of Klan members this week to lay down the ground rules before the rally on Saturday.

"We're making sure everyone is on the same page," the sheriff said. "This is an unpleasant moment for our community, but we're going to do everything in our power to make sure everyone stays safe and that there are no abrupt outbursts.

"We don't expect any trouble, but we're ready for it if it occurs," the sheriff said.