

Heist...from Page 1A

born said.
 "There was one vehicle between them," Sgt. Osborn said. "The vehicle had North Carolina plates. It took off and started passing vehicles on double yellow lines. It

was moving at a high rate of speed."

The chase took Sgt. Cruz into North Carolina.

"Once they got into North Carolina, they pulled into the music shop," Sgt. Os-

born said. "Before the vehicle even got stopped, a male and female exited the passenger side. Sgt. Cruz had the driver under control and took him into custody.

"A Cherokee County, NC deputy arrived, a tracking dog was involved, and they got the other two persons into custody," Sgt. Osborn said.

The driver was Fran-

cisco Serrano, of North Carolina. He was charged with two counts fleeing and eluding an officer, one was felony, felony theft by shoplifting, reckless driving, passing in no passing zones, and failure to maintain lane, Sgt. Osborn said.

"The felony shoplifting warrant was taken by Blairsville Police," Sgt. Osborn said. "He's got a \$15,000 bail."

Passenger 1 was Katarina Frances Pilotis, of Murphy, NC, was charged with felony shoplifting, she's under a \$3,000 bail, Sgt. Osborn said.

Passenger 2 was James Darren Nelson, of Murphy, NC. He was being held in the Cherokee County, NC Jail on outstanding felony warrants, Sgt. Osborn said.

"We've got Serrano and Pilotis in jail here," Sgt. Osborn said. "We've got a hold on Mr. Nelson."

Nelson has felony shoplifting warrants out of Blairsville, Sgt. Osborn said.

"All of Mr. Serrano's charges from us will be traffic-related," Sgt. Osborn said.

Burglary...from Page 1A

old child with her. The aunt looked up, saw the workshop ablaze, Lena's mom told her sister that Lena set the shed on fire."

Thompson disappeared into the woods. She was going to houses on Earl Patterson Road, Mangifesta said.

"We got a couple of prowler calls," Mangifesta said. "One of these persons said that there was a person messing around with their grill. As the homeowner walked out, this person fled into the woods. The homeowner couldn't tell if it was a male or female."

Thompson then went to the end of Earl Patterson Road and breaks into a home there through a patio door, Mangifesta said.

"The man who originally called in the prowler, starts walking around the house," Mangifesta said. "He sees a big fire. He calls in again and reports a fire. She broke out the patio door with the hammer. While she was there, she drank a couple of beers. She also left behind some of

her personal property that she had stolen from her parents' house.

"She then took an aerosol can, left the house, went to a shed, stacked some scrap wood," Mangifesta said. "She lit a candle beside that stack of wood, using cardboard, she tried to light the stack of wood on fire.

"It wouldn't catch on fire," Mangifesta said. "We had a lot of evidence there, including blood stains. We're going to have to rely on GBI for DNA and fingerprints."

As soon as the Union County Fire Department knocked down the fire at the workshop owned by Thompson's father, Arson investigators Lt. Damon Hood and Dustin Lee were summoned to the scene, Mangifesta said.

"The arson investiga-

tors responsibilities are going to be very important in determining the cause and origin of the fire," Mangifesta said. "Having worked arson cases for many years, it is a very difficult crime to prove. Lt. Hood and Firefighter Lee are working very hard with the State Fire Marshal's Office on that. They'll present their results to me and hopefully have probable cause to get arson warrants for (Thompson)."

Thompson was taken into custody, Mangifesta said.

"When she was taken into custody, she was almost catatonic," Mangifesta said. "Based on that, we decided that rather than taking her to jail, she needed to be evaluated. She was taken Union General Hospital for evaluation, and they then sent her to Avita in Flowery Branch for

mental health evaluation."

The Union County Sheriff's Office anticipates Thompson will be released Tuesday whereby she will be arrested on a first-degree burglary charge.

"We'll continue to process the evidence that we have," Mangifesta said.

Thompson was free on bail prior to the Nov. 12 incidents on a charge of burglary allegedly committed in March, said SSgt. Darren Osborn.

"Basically, she broke into a house on Low Gap, didn't set anything on fire, but, she drank beer," Sgt. Osborn said. "She was roaming the country breaking into houses and drinking beer."

Thompson also faces charges in Towns County for reckless conduct, Towns County Sheriff's reports show.

Veterans...from Page 1A

thy veteran who has demonstrated outstanding contribution to the community and the veterans organizations throughout the year," Spaulding said.

"This is a tremendous honor," an emotional Hoi-braten told the audience. "This award goes to all of you because I'm just a servant. Thank you and God bless you, and God bless America."

The Missing Man Table and Honors Ceremony remembers America's Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action from each of the five service branches, Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, along with civilians who died during service alongside the armed forces or missing during armed conflict.

"This honor symbolizes that they are still with us in spirit," Spaulding said. "All Americans should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation's call and served the call of freedom in a special way."

As the Missing Man Table ceremony concluded, each of the five armed services were recognized by Spaulding. As each branch was named, its veterans stood up. After recognizing each branch, the North Georgia Honor Guard was recognized as Spaulding called out the names of its members.

Laurie Boyer took center stage to present the meaning of the red poppy flower that was placed at each table. After the meaning, she read the poem, Flanders Field that was written in 1915 by Lt. Col. John McCrae of the Canadian Army.

"Flowers have accompanied us through times of great happiness and times of great sorrow," Boyer said, "but one flower has remained a symbol of life, death, and remembrance since World War I. The red poppy was immortalized in the famous poem, In Flanders Field."

"We are thankful for all that (our veterans) have done and continue to do," Boyer said in closing. "You are what makes the United States the Land of the Free, and the Home of the Brave."

After a lunch catered by Jim's Smokin' Que, retired chaplain and Brig. Gen. Kevin Turner, the guest speaker, addressed the Veterans Day audience.

Chaplain Turner, a North Carolina native, became the Assistant Chief of Chaplains for Mobilization and Readiness on Oct. 1, 2011. The University of North Carolina graduate has served as a chaplain at the Battalion, Brigade, and Division levels for the 108th Division. In 2005 he was called onto Active Duty and served as the Plans and Operations Chaplain and later as the Deputy Command Chaplain for Central Command at MacDill Air Force Base. Chaplain Turner was selected to serve as the Command Chaplain for Special Operations Command South in Homestead, Fla, in 2007 and served in that capacity until August 2011.

Despite retirement, Turner still spreads his message of "do your duty, love God, love one another, and come home safe."



Bob Spaulding oversees the Veterans Day ceremonies at FUMC of Union County last week. Photo/Todd Forrest