

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

www.nganews.com

Legal Organ of Union County

Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1909

November 28, 2012

Open House Saturday at Reece Farm and Heritage Center

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Saturday will be the last chance to visit the Byron Herbert Reece Farm and Heritage Center until April.

On Saturday, *A Christmas Open House* will be held at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., the Reece Society has announced.

It's a chance to get an up close look at the center and all things Reece for free.

The Reece Society encourages locals and tourists alike to come grab some refreshments and enjoy the day.

Several door prizes will be drawn at 2 p.m., 3 p.m., and 4 p.m., according to the Reece Society.

Also on hand on Saturday, Georgia author Terry Kay will be there to sign his award-

winning books. Kay has won four Georgia Author of the Year awards, the most recent one this year in the short story category for his book, *The Greats of Cuttercane*.

Three of Kay's novels have been made into Hallmark Hall of Fame movies, including *To Dance with the White Dog*, starring Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy. His books will be available for purchase, or you may bring books authored by him for him to sign, according to the Reece Society.

The event is also a pretty good opportunity to purchase a unique Christmas gift.

The Gift and Craft Shop will feature books by and about Reece and others on subjects pertinent to Appalachia; note cards; homemade and handcrafted items including jewelry, baskets, soap, scarves, wooden bowls,



Byron Herbert Reece

pottery, ornaments, quilts, and Reece Farm embroidered towels and pillows. There's a gift here for someone you love.

A Union County native, Hub Reece, who died at the age of 40, farmed, worked and cultivated the land in the Wolf Creek bottoms.

"The Mountain Poet" spent his free time reading the works of literary greats, and writing prose about the Mountain way of life.

During his short-lived career, Hub Reece, who attended, but did not graduate from Young Harris College, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, earned two Guggenheim awards, and served as writer-in-residence at UCLA, Atlanta's Emory University, and Young Harris College in Towns County.

In his lifetime, Reece had his work published in the local newspaper, and later went on to compose four books of poetry and two fiction novels. His work, which included *Ballad of the Bones*

and *Other Poems*, was highly acclaimed, earning esteemed literary praise and national attention.

Other works included novels, *Better a Dinner of Herbs*, and *The Hawk and the Sun*.

Hundreds of unpublished Hub Reece poems still exist today, Reece Society spokesman John Kay said.

Atlanta Constitution Executive Editor and later Publisher Ralph McGill once said that Reece was "one of the really great poets of our time, and one to stand with those of any other time."

Hub Reece was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his 1950 work entitled *Down in Jericho*.

By January 1951, Hub Reece had been recognized on the national scene in a

See Reece, Page 2A

It's officially Christmas in Blairsville

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

The Christmas Shopping Season is alive and well in Union County.

Black Friday actually started Thursday night at the Blairsville Walmart, with the first of several sales events beginning at 8 p.m.

Cars were parked to the top of the hill at the entrance to the retail giant. Shopping continued throughout the weekend as locals and commuting shoppers scrambled for holiday shopping deals.

Some of those deals included Nikon and Canon cameras, Emerson television sets, roaster ovens, and many kitchen-related items. There also were ample supplies of DVDs and video games.

Also, there was no shortage of Christmas savings at Alexander's Store.

The store unveiled its Black Friday, actually, on Friday. Shoppers discovered that men's and women's sportswear was 20 and 50 percent off. And firearms and bows were sold at cost from 8 a.m. to noon only.

Hoyt's had a huge sale on furniture and appliances



Christmas in the North Georgia Mountains has arrived. The weekend is packed with Christmas activities in Union County. Business leaders and local businesses urge shoppers to shop local. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

from 8 a.m. Friday until 7 p.m.

The next great shopping event takes place Thursday through Saturday as Jingle Bell Buys takes center stage.

The event, sponsored by the Blairsville-Union County

Chamber of Commerce includes 29 local merchants offering gift items during normal business hours.

For three days only, savvy shoppers can take advantage of a variety of "buy

one, get one free" deals and featured 50 percent off store items.

Whether you are a newcomer to the area, ready to discover all that Union

See Jingle Bell, Page 2A

Spend the Holidays on the Downtown Square

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Assistant Blairsville Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter has it on good authority that Santa Claus will be here this weekend.

The Jolly Ole Elf, who was sighted in Hiwassee over the weekend, will be here to help celebrate the *Holiday On The Square*, sponsored by the Union County Historical Society, Baxter said.

The hometown event features Open House at the Historic Union County Courthouse, a Live Nativity Scene at the Mountain Life Museum, an opportunity for pictures with Santa Claus at the Historic Courthouse, and of course the Annual Christmas Parade in Downtown Blairsville.

"The parade starts at 2 p.m. and it's the quote, unquote, kickoff of the Christmas season here in Blairsville," Baxter said. "This will

See Holiday, Page 2A



The manger scene at the Mountain Life Museum will come alive this weekend. It's all part of the annual Holiday on the Square. Photo/Todd Forrest

Word on the Street: Santa's coming to town

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Even Santa Claus has heard about all the excitement at the Union County Farmers Market.

It's time for the Third Annual Kris Kringle Mountain Market and the event is somewhat different in 2012.

The event has expanded to the original one-day event in years past. Sixty vendors will be on hand to kickoff the Christmas season at the Market and there will be plenty of stocking stuffers and gifts available for all.

"We have 60 vendors that will be selling their pro-



duce, food treats and crafts this weekend," said JoAnne Leone, event co-coordinator. "We've got about half of our regulars and the other half are food and craft vendors that have not been to the market to sell before."

The excitement starts Friday at 3 p.m. at the Market.

The *North Georgia News* has learned that Santa Claus will personally be at the event. The word on the street is that the Jolly Ole Elf will be at the Market around 4 p.m.

"The shopping should be extraordinary," said Market Manager Mickey Cummings. "I can't believe how many new and unique craftsmen have

joined us for this event. If you are Christmas shopping for something special and unique, you want to be sure to attend this event."

From a gourmet coffee hut, to funnel cakes, and foot-long hand dipped corn dogs, there will be plenty of food on hand, so everyone is encouraged to bring the family and plan on staying awhile.

One of the vendors, Joy Nywening, said she's looking forward to Kris Kringle Mountain Market, which goes from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday, and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday.

"The vendors truly need this extra income to level out

See Kris Kringle, Page 3A

Poandl allegedly molested 10-year-old boy 30 years ago in Union County

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

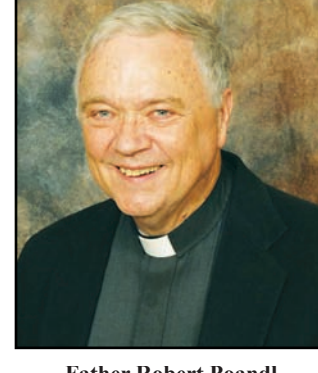
A Catholic priest formerly associated with the local Catholic church has been accused of molesting a 10-year-old boy 30 years ago in Union County, the *North Georgia News* has learned.

Father Robert Poandl, now 71, oversaw Catholic churches in Blairsville, Cleveland and Dahlonega in the late 1970s and early 1980s, according to the Glenmary Home Missionaries' Website.

The priest was indicted Nov. 15th by a federal grand jury for transporting a minor across state lines with intent to engage in sexual activity. The incident allegedly occurred in 1991 in West Virginia, according to a release by Glenmary.

Union County Sheriff's spokesman and Investigator C.J. Worden said that an Atlanta man, now 40 years old, contacted the department about being molested here 30 years ago.

"In Georgia, acts of child molestation must be reported within seven years of



Father Robert Poandl

the victim turning 16 years old before a case can be prosecuted," Worden said. "We took the victim's statement, looked at every angle and knew there was nothing we could do."

"However, we did turn that information over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation," Worden said.

The incident was reported July 14th, Worden said. "On that date, we received a call about an incident that happened at the local Catholic church 30 years ago," Worden said. "The victim was 10 years old at the time of the alleged molestation."

"The victim told us

See Poandl, Page 6A

Scrap metal the target of burglars

By Charles Duncan
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Union County sheriff's deputies foiled a Nov. 16th burglary in progress that resulted in the arrest of three men - two from Towns County and one from Blairsville, Union County Sheriff's reports show.

Deputies arrived at John Smith Road answering a prowler report. A Jeep Cherokee



Brading



Crawford



Franklin

Vol. 103 No. 48
3 Sections, 24 Pages
Weather
Wed: Sunny Hi 56 Lo 29
Thur: Sunny Hi 58 Lo 31
Friday Clouds Hi 59 Lo 39

Inside	
Arrests	13A
Church	10A
Classified	2B
Opinion	4A
Legal	4B
Obits	12A
Sports	8A

Christmas Tree Lighting at Vogel

Saturday, December 8
4:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

See page 7A

Care to Share

Donate Personal Care Items at Union County Library or North Georgia News

Help Our Community!

See page 13A

Jingle Bell Buys in the Mountains!

First Annual Tour of Trees
Saturday, December 1
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.

See page 3A

UCHS Basketball
Fri., Nov. 30 • 7pm vs. Fannin
Sat., Dec. 1 • 6pm @ Towns Co.

UCHS Wrestling
Nov. 30-Dec. 1 @ Towns Co.
Fri. 4:30 pm • Sat. 9 am