

Taylor...from Page 1A

deaf or something, and I thought something bad was going to happen, like she was going to pass out.”

Fortunately, Taylor’s great-grandmother called, and when he asked her what he should do, she advised him to

call 911.

“So, I got on the phone with (911),” Taylor said. “And then I remember giving (the dispatcher) the address and the information. EMS arrived a couple of minutes later. They got the stretcher out and

brought sugar in, and then they took her to the hospital.”

Taylor recounted his harrowing experience last week at an E-911 meetup with Dispatch Lt. Millie Baxter, alongside Dispatchers Marlana Bryson, Carrie King and Ashley Churchill, who participated in the call.

“Do you know that you stayed on the phone with Marlana 12 minutes? Did it seem that long?” Baxter asked.

“Nope,” Taylor said, to laughs all around.

Bryson, King and Churchill all said they were amazed at Taylor’s presence of mind throughout the emergency situation.

“As soon as we hung up the lines and everything started to calm down, we talked about

him a lot,” King said. “We were just floored at how good he actually did.”

“We get a lot of calls, and they don’t normally go that way. He had all the information right there. It was incredible, it really was. It was unreal. We just sat there and talked about it; we were amazed.”

Continuing the thought, Churchill said, “Even things that I wasn’t thinking of asking, he was telling me about it – he already had the information.”

“You made our job easy,” Bryson told him, and all three dispatchers agreed that many adults don’t do nearly as well as Taylor did under that kind of pressure.

911 Director David Dyer, who also serves as fire chief and Emergency Management Agency director for the county,

was also present at the meetup last Wednesday, and he asked Taylor if he had been nervous about calling 911.

“A little bit, because I don’t want to ‘false alarm’ them,” Taylor said. “But now I know, next time it happens, to call immediately.”

Looking back on his and his mother’s ordeal, Taylor said he would advise other kids to call 911 if they think someone in their family is possibly in need of medical assistance.

For her part, Parker said she doesn’t remember much of what happened. In fact, she doesn’t remember much of the next 24 hours following the 911 call.

“I was in and out,” she said. “Little things here and there, but it’s like a blur. I remember being poked and

prodded, waking up and seeing EMS standing around me. And then I faded back out.”

Parker homeschools her son, who is at the fifth-grade level this year, which explains why he was home in the morning on what would usually be a typical day at public school.

“It’s a good thing he was there with momma that day,” Baxter said, to which the 11-year-old replied, “I’m willing to do anything for mom.”

“If my mom’s life was on the line, I’d be willing to walk a mile on lava, barefooted,” Taylor said.

“You’re truly a hero,” Baxter said, and Parker echoed the 911 lieutenant’s sentiment, saying that her son was “my hero forever.”

Lee...from Page 1A

around the three-county region that were attended by 2,300 people, with one puppet show posted to the library system’s YouTube channel garnering almost 200,000 views.

Stone had led the libraries since 2015 following the departure of longtime director Donna Howell, who retired in December 2014 after 25 years with the libraries.

As previously reported, Stone suffered a massive stroke in July 2019, requiring the regional board to hire Claudia Gibson Aug. 1 to serve as interim regional director during Stone’s medical leave.

Gibson has 38 years of library experience, including as director of the Chestatee Regional Library System, where she retired in 2016. The regional board said in October that Gibson would continue in her role as interim director until the libraries hired a new director.

Another recent change in the system includes the addition of Vicki Adkison, who came aboard last July as business manager for the libraries. The board expanded her position to include assistant directorship in September.

“Her responsibilities

include all financial records, human resources, and overseeing the branches when the director is not available,” MRLS Board Chair Paula Whitehead said last year.

It was not known at press time whether Adkison’s role as assistant director – a new title in the Mountain Regional Library System – would continue now that Lee has been hired.

For more information on the libraries, including recently revised hours announced in October for the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris, visit mountainregionallibrary.org.

Double Gym...from Page 1A



As the name suggests, the new recreation building will feature two gyms, one gold and one purple. Photo by Mark Smith

months,” McGrath said. “We’ve run into some delays with weather trying to get the building dried in. So, we’re capitalizing on every opportunity we can.”

“We’re working Saturdays and Sundays. Whenever we have dry weather, we’re working, and we’re trying to do as much as we can on the inside right now. The site was pre-graded, so we’ve had no issues with any of the soil conditions.”

Concurring with McGrath, Kingsley said that the project was “definitely trucking along.”

“The weather has been an obstacle, but we’ve been out here,” Kingsley said. “We were out here over the holidays, and we’re pushing through.”

BM&K will be pouring the second floors of the building soon, Kingsley said, adding that the roof system is nearing completion and that the initial stages of mechanical and electrical work should be completed soon as well.

The county has site meetings with the contractors and the architect every two weeks, and Paris is optimistic about the project, which experienced an extended period of delayed construction last year that almost cost BM&K the contract, though everything seems to be back on track.

“Today is the first time we were inside the building; to be inside that building and see how large it really is, there’s so much more there than I even thought,” Paris said. “Besides the two gyms, the fact that we’ve got a really big, nice meeting room is wonderful, along with a front office and concession area.”

“We’ve got several different staff offices in there. We’ve got storage room for all sorts of stuff. We’ll have a hydraulic lift in the back that you’ll be able to go in and, if you get new equipment or need to store all offseason equipment, you can put it on a pallet and raise it right up to the second floor.”

“And then, I didn’t anticipate how beautiful the entrance was going to be. You can look at it on a drawing, but it’s not like being there and seeing that beautiful wood and the design. I think the public’s going to be really excited. I know I am.”

“If you drive by, it doesn’t look like that big a building, but you’re looking at almost an acre of ground under roof. Having the two

gymnasiums – it’s just going to expand our recreation program so much, and not just for kids, but for adults.

“Our youth recreation basketball is our fastest growing sport, and we were simply out of space, with kids often having to practice up to 9 and 10 p.m. on some school nights just to get gym time.”

Paris said he’s already fielded plenty of questions about the Double Gym, with people asking him regularly if the building will be open all the time, and if anyone can just go in there “and start shooting basketball anytime they want to.”

“Well, there’s got to be some organization, because it’s going to be a multiuse facility,” Paris said. “It’ll be used for different activities at different times. Some will have a charge and others may not.”

“There will be the opportunity for a lot of different programs there for adults and youth, drastically expanding our recreation program. As we get older, there is nothing better than to offer exercise and dance programs for the adults, as our physical health is so critical to our wellbeing.”

County Manager Larry Garrett, also on the walkthrough last week, said that one gym will feature purple coloring and the other gold to signify the colors of Union County Schools, both to encourage pre-K and school-age youth and to differentiate between the two gyms.

There are currently no plans for exercise machines to be installed in the building, Paris said, as there are three privately-owned places in Blairsville where people can access exercise equipment.

“Our job as county government is not to compete with private business, but to provide services and facilities that no one will provide otherwise,” Paris said.

However, there will be an indoor, ground-level walking path around the inside perimeter of the building for adults to enjoy.

The facility will be managed by the Union County Recreation Department, which will be tasked with scheduling events and activities for the Double Gym.

With about 35% of the building done to date, the Rec Department has estimated that the Double Gym will be completed by September, to include all interior gym work the county will undertake once BM&K is finished constructing the building located off the Glenn Gooch Bypass.

The contract price with BM&K Construction is \$3.22 million, though the total estimated cost for the SPLOST-funded project will be about \$3.9 million after factoring in the architect, engineering, testing, site work, parking lot, lighting and furnishings. The Rec Department will provide the operation cost within their budget.