

North Georgia News

4 Sections 28 Pages

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Wednesday, May 4, 2022

Sosensky, Evans reign as UCHS Prom King, Queen

By Jeremy Foster
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County High School Seniors made memories to last a lifetime over a stylish Prom Night hosted at The Barn in Young Harris on Saturday, April 30.

Students enjoyed refreshments, candy bars, snow cones, cotton candy and, most importantly, some of their final moments together as a high school class before graduating and saying goodbye to the classmates, teachers, coaches and principals they've grown close to over the years.

Former economics teacher and now UCHS Principal CT Hussion was chaperoning his 10th prom on Saturday, and he shared his thoughts on the students who are about to depart for lives

beyond high school.

"They are an amazing bunch of kids," Hussion said. "I have watched them grow up through their entire lives, so they are like my own children. I certainly get emotional every year at prom when you start to see the seniors on their way out and about to graduate.

"I always enjoy being an integral part of them coming into maturity of man and womanhood. We have kids right now already getting hired into the job market before graduation, and others who are already set to attend college in various schools and even the military.

"And I know every single one will do outstanding in whatever it is they want to do in life."

English teacher Emily Cobb has worked for the school for nearly 15 years and has been

the lead coordinator over the last several years.

"We usually plan prom out a year in advance and start hardcore planning around January," Cobb said. "So, we try to put a lot of time and effort to make each year different and creative that the students will enjoy.

"Having gotten to know the kids and get close to them, I am very excited for the step they are about to take in their lives. They are a phenomenal class that jumps in to get things done, full of leaders who have had a positive impact on the school, and I am going to miss them."

At the halfway point, amid the jubilant dancing and music, came the time-honored tradition that every senior looks forward to – the coronation of Union County Prom King and Prom Queen.

The 2022 Union County High School senior royalty were none other than couple Easton Sosensky as King and Savannah Evans as Queen.

Sosensky is a student-athlete who played basketball, performed track and field, and golfed, and he is aiming to attend Georgia College and State University in pursuit of his dream to become a pediatrician with a family of his own one day.

"It has been so awesome going to school here with all of the students and staff – they feel like a giant family, one that will always be there for me whenever I need them," Sosensky said.

Queen Evans, who played varsity soccer and performed as a cheerleader, said she has her sights set on going to Georgia College and State University in

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Union County High School seniors Easton Sosensky and Savannah Evans went to prom together and ended up being chosen by their peers as 2022 Prom King and Queen.

Photo by Jeremy Foster

Early voting began Monday; ESPLOST to be decided

By Shawn Jarrard
North Georgia News
editor@nganews.com

Advanced in-person voting for the General Primary Election and Nonpartisan General Election began this week in the Jury Assembly Room of the Union County Courthouse.

Early voting will run weekdays now through Friday, May 20, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., even during lunchtime.

People too busy to cast in-person ballots during the three weeks of weekday early voting will get a chance to participate in one of two weekend early voting opportunities: Saturday, May 7, and Saturday, May 14,

See Early Voting, Page 2A



Fellowship of the Hills enlists UCFD for safety training



Union County Fire Lt. Justin Blanchard and Public Education Coordinator Sgt. Patrick Schmidt assisted Fellowship of the Hills Church with safety training on Saturday.

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

As a layperson, would you know how to help someone who is the victim of a heart attack? What would you do if somebody collapsed in front

of you at the grocery store, or, for that matter, at church one Sunday morning, and wasn't breathing?

These things can happen anywhere, even at home. How would you cope? Would you know how to try to resuscitate

somebody in an emergency situation? Would you know how to attempt to keep somebody alive until first responders arrived?

On Saturday, April 30,

See Safety Training, Page 2A

Photo by Mark Smith

January Term 2022 Grand Jury Indictments, continued

The following individuals were indicted during the January Term 2022 of the Union County Grand Jury, which met for a second time last month:

Randall Wade Sullens,

three counts aggravated child molestation; eight counts child molestation.

Charlie Lewis Bailey, aggravated assault, Family Violence; two counts aggravated assault; two counts aggravated

and intimidation of disabled adult, elder person or resident; terrorist threats; aggravated stalking.

Raymond Charles Dasilva, possession of

See Indictments, Page 2A

'Queen for a Day' treats cancer survivors as royalty

By Brittany Holbrooks
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

A cancer diagnosis often comes as a devastating blow to the psyche, one that, for many people, foreshadows a corresponding devastating blow to the body that is compounded by treatments that produce terrible symptoms all their own.

During chemotherapy, the body undergoes a host of changes. Long or short, curly or straight, hair falls out, and nausea can rack a person so badly they don't feel like getting out of bed. And while radiation has been shown to kill cancer cells, it also burns the skin, sometimes to third-degree levels.

See Queen for a Day, Page 8A



Cancer survivors were treated to a special day of facials, make-up and hair during "Queen for a Day" on April 25.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

Ramp Day heralds return of Farmers Market in 2022

By Brittany Holbrooks
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The Union County Farmers Market hosted its first event of the year April 30 with the 10th Annual Ramp Day community celebration, which serves as a soft opening of sorts ahead of the regular market season that kicks off every first Saturday in June.

Food samples were for the most part mixed due to lingering safety concerns over COVID-19, and there weren't quite as many guests or vendors this go-around, but Market Manager Mickey Cummings and Patrick Fanning made sure all involved had a bountiful day.

"We don't plan anything until Mother's Day because of the weather," Cummings said, describing how the annual Ramp Day came to be. "We wanted to do something to kind of provide a dress rehearsal for the Farmers Market opening in June, just to get people used to coming back out here, so we thought about something traditional around here."

Unique to Ramp Day is its celebrated namesake. The ramp is a long, thin vegetable comparable to a green onion or leek that sports an unmistakable aroma as strong as garlic, and that smell permeated the market on Saturday.



Volunteer Bill Johnston enjoyed handing out locally harvested, wild-grown ramps at the Farmers Market Saturday.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

Ramps cannot be bought in grocery stores simply because they are a rare and "undomesticated" crop. Usually found in higher elevations in dark, moist climates, they are also finicky about growing conditions and rarely survive long-term in a garden.

Ranging from Northeast Georgia in the U.S. to southern Quebec in Canada, ramps have become a staple of the Appalachian diet. Soups, salsas, dips, butter, and even bread can feature the unmistakable flavor

of ramps, but its most beloved form is in jam. Ramps are also often eaten on their own, caramelized or in a savory side dish fried with potatoes. Basically, anything calling for onions or garlic can be enhanced with the ramps in the same way, as the bulbs and leaves both can be used in a host of culinary endeavors.

That was why Bill Johnston was there with his family and other volunteers handing out free ramps by the

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SPORTS

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Fire Station Open House May 14

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Indictments...from Page 1A

methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

Taylor Noble Thompson, possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

Casey Hugh Vining, possession of a Schedule I controlled substance; simple battery; obstruction of an officer; giving false information to a law enforcement officer; possession of drug-related objects; pedestrian under the influence; possession of a controlled substance; battery, Family Violence; disorderly conduct; cruelty to children in the third degree.

Alex Walter Pierce, crossing the guard line with contraband; possession of marijuana, less than an ounce; driving while license suspended.

Christopher Lee Bryant Jr., two counts cruelty to children in the first degree;

two counts cruelty to children in the second degree; terroristic threats.

Cassie Anne Cooper, possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

Jason Michael Meeks, possession of methamphetamine; possession of drug-related objects.

Clayton Corey Mayers, possession of methamphetamine with intent to distribute.

Martin James McMahon, making a false statement; driving under the influence (less safe) (alcohol); two counts obstruction of an officer; driving without a license.

James Berry Brown, terroristic threats (felony); terroristic threats (misdemeanor).

Anthony James Mull, theft by possession of stolen mail; theft by taking; forgery in the fourth degree.

Jack Shane Bennett,

fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer; speeding; reckless driving; no proof of insurance; failure to maintain lane.

Summer Crystal Teesateskie, exploitation and intimidation of disabled adult, elder person or resident; simple battery; hit and run; driving while license suspended.

Miles Clifton Demings, aggravated assault on a peace officer; two counts aggravated assault; reckless conduct; discharging a firearm under the influence; driving under the influence (less safe) (alcohol); open container.

Christopher Raymond Hulse, driving while license suspended; theft by taking; reckless driving.

The above individuals have been charged only and are presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

Early Voting...from Page 1A

also from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the courthouse.

Election Day voting for both the General Primary and the Nonpartisan General Election will take place Tuesday, May 24, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the 11 pre-assigned precincts of Union County.

Appearing alongside candidates on the May 24 ballot will be the Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax continuation referendum.

Union County voters will be asked to support or reject the continuation of ESPLOST, a 1-cent sales and use tax to be levied on purchases of local goods in support of the Union County School System.

ESPLOST is used by schools to build new facilities, renovate existing facilities, upgrade HVAC systems, add to aging bus fleets, update technology and more. Should voters approve the measure, the local sales tax will continue at its current 7% rate.

All voters will need to

have an acceptable form of identification to cast ballots, such as a government-issued driver's license or identification card.

Voters looking to mail their ballots may pick up the two-sided "Application for Georgia Official Absentee Ballot" from the Union County Registrar's Office located at 65 Courthouse Street in Blairsville or print one by accessing the "My Voter Page" at <https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/>.

The "My Voter Page" website contains other valuable information, such as registration status, precinct information, downloadable sample ballots, mailed absentee ballot status and voter participation history.

"Absentee ballots may be requested any time between 78 and 11 calendar days prior to Election Day," per georgia.gov. Absentee ballot applications can be returned by mail, fax, email as an attachment, or in person to the Registrar's Office no later than Friday, May 13.

People who have voted absentee-by-mail in the past will need to submit a new application this election cycle if they want to receive an absentee ballot in the mail.

Voters are encouraged to request and return their absentee ballots early to give their ballot "enough time to travel through the mail and resolve any issues that may arise when voting by absentee ballot," per georgia.gov.

Folks wanting to utilize the official drop box to turn in their absentee ballots can find it in the Jury Assembly Room during early voting hours. Voters may also drop completed absentee ballots off at the Registrar's Office through 7 p.m. on Election Day.

April 25 was the voter registration deadline to participate in the May 24 elections.

The 2022 General Election will be held on Nov. 8 and will feature the election of political party candidates who clear the primary round of voting this month.

Safety Training...from Page 1A

Union County Fire Department first responders Lt. Justin Blanchard and Public Education Coordinator Sgt. Patrick Schmidt gave a presentation to about 40 members of Fellowship of the Hills Church addressing these very questions.

Blanchard and Schmidt were joined by four other Fire Department first responders to help answer questions.

The presentation was set up by Fellowship of the Hills Chief Safety Officer Robert Rist, a retired 33-year veteran police officer from Lakeland, Florida.

Rist said the City of Lakeland held a safety fair every year where officers would go through a four-hour training with exposure to cardiopulmonary resuscitation, aka CPR, automated external defibrillator use, fire extinguisher best practices, and hazardous materials handling.

Originally, Rist and Church Senior Pastor Marty Duncan wanted to host a safety class for all the churches in the area. However, Lt. Blanchard advised them to have the class for members of Fellowship of the Hills only because of the equipment differences between churches.

The point of the safety initiative was not only educational but also for the church safety team and interested church members to have an operational protocol such that each person has a certain job to do in the event of an emergency. That way, time is saved when it

is of the essence.

Part of facilitating that protocol is to have everyone trained on the equipment their church has available.

The class was introductory in nature, designed for people who know absolutely nothing about administering CPR, practicing basic first aid, or using an automated external defibrillator, known as AED.

No certificates were issued, but given the questions raised, the introductory class was exactly what the church needed.

Schmidt tackled basic CPR, such as the order of administering the steps, how deep to press down when giving chest compressions, and how many chest compressions to give per minute.

In the past, it was thought that clearing the airway and giving mouth-to-mouth breaths between compressions was correct, Schmidt said. Now, it's believed that just starting compressions and keeping them going is the best way to get oxygenated blood to the brain, thereby saving a life.

Schmidt then covered the basic and correct use of the AED device the church has on hand. Of note was the placement of the shock pads and the protocol for using the device, as incorrect use could result in patient death and caregiver injury.

He also covered basic first aid, such as the correct application of a tourniquet, i.e., when to use a tourniquet as opposed to a bandage or

dressings, and substitutes when a tourniquet isn't available. He also briefly covered snake bites.

Fire Department First Responder Caleb Beise gave a presentation on fire extinguishers. There are three kinds of fire extinguishers: ABC, D, and K, with each letter or group of letters designating the type of fire the extinguisher was designed for.

Beise said most household fires can be put out with an ABC-rated fire extinguisher, which are rated for wood, liquid flammables and energized electrical fires. They are the most common.

D-rated fire extinguishers are for combustible metals, like magnesium, which is a component of many cars. Beise said never put water on a magnesium fire, as it will make the fire worse. And K-rated fire extinguishers are for commercial kitchen use where large grease fires might occur.

"The guys are doing a great job, and, of course, it's a pleasure to be able to put something like this together for our church family," Pastor Duncan said. "I hope that this is something that will take off within the community."

"I think we all need to be prepared for any incident that occurs at any time, to be a caregiver to someone or to help someone that's in need in any crisis. It's good for all of us - that's all part of the Good Samaritan (lesson) that the Lord taught us about."

Monthly Blairsville Cruisers Cruise-In Saturday, May 7th

On Saturday, May 7th the Union County Farmers Market will host a cruise-in with classics, hot rods, customs, antique and specialty vehicles invited.. Over 100 registered vehicles are expected to this monthly event. The event starts at 3 PM and at 6:30 trophies will be presented for Club Choice and Best Ford. There is no charge for entering your vehicle. Spectators enjoy free entry also. A donation to the club's needy children Christmas fund is appreciated. Food and drinks are available with all proceeds going to the club's charitable programs and scholarships.

The Blairsville Cruisers is a 501(c)3 non-profit dedicated to our hobby and to helping the community, especially the children. Club members reside primarily in Union, Towns and Clay Counties with additional members located throughout North Georgia plus many seasonal Florida members.

The primary fund raiser for the club is the annual raffle



You could be the winner of this 1999 Z-28 Camaro convertible

car giveaway. This year it is a very nice 1999 Z-28 Camaro convertible which will be on display at the cruise-in. Donation tickets are just \$10 each and your donation is tax deductible. The drawing for the car will be held during the 5th Annual Salute to Veterans Car Show held November 5th. You can also find an order form for mail order tickets on our web site BlairsvilleCruisers.com.

Tickets are available all

season at our club events and at Blairsville United Community Bank, Pinnacle Bank in Blairsville, Jackie Jones Chrysler/Dodge/Jeep/Ram in Hayesville, NC. As well as at area festivals and selected events and at the Memory Lane Classic Car Museum in Young Harris on selected Sunday afternoons. Your donation is appreciated and helps over 100 needy children in the area.

Ramp Day...from Page 1A

bundle and bag. Johnston has been gathering ramps from the mountains for about five years now, and although the process is a bit tedious due to the plant's delicate nature, their limited output makes them an invaluable treat.

"You just have to try them," Johnston said as a fellow volunteer handed out free recipes. "It's good for you."

Not many people know that beef is also supposed to hold some of the center stage on Ramp Day, so to raise awareness of this fact and draw attention to local business, Hill-Vue Farm brought three wee Hereford calves to spend the morning there.

"We're supporting the Georgia Cattleman's Association," said Hill-Vue Manager Garrett Boyd. "We're just here trying to produce for our community and make some healthy, sustainable animals that we're not putting a whole lot into. These are grass-fed animals - no antibiotics, no hormones. We're just trying to do it the right way."

It wasn't just the kids who were attracted to the petting zoo trio, but admittedly, one of their most eager visitors was 2-year-old Malia Dills, who was there with her parents, Josh and Kristina Dills, and little brother, Benjamin. Although Malia was most excited to see the baby cows, Josh said his family had primarily come for the ramps.

"Ramps are a lot like garlic or onions," Josh said. "You either love it or hate it, and for people who live where they grow, why, it's food. It's that simple. Ramps brought us out here, and as long as they keep having (Ramp Day), we'll keep coming."

And the Dills weren't the only ones. While Ramp Day 2022 didn't feature the same volume of guests as the summer Farmers Market, there was still a respectable crowd, especially earlier in the morning.

Many of those guests were attracted to Lanai Breaux's booth, Nana's Sweet Treats, where they could purchase delicious baked goods to satisfy their hunger or a bottle of water to combat the heat.

"This is my third season here - my first Ramp Day," Breaux said. "I've enjoyed it; it's been really welcoming,

(and) people seem to like the treats, so they come back, and I love that for them."

Much of Breaux's experience comes from working in the pastry kitchen of the Hyatt in Atlanta for five years "many years ago," and when she moved to Blairsville six years ago, she brought her skills with her and decided to start Nana's Sweet Treats in 2020.

And not just food items were featured at Ramp Day. As a precursor to the Farmers Market beginning June 4, some craft vendors also attended to offer a sneak peek at their wares before the official start of the season.

In particular, Leigh Ryan boasted a stand of gorgeous pottery and jewelry, all handmade and heated in a kiln before being finished in glaze that added interesting patterns to bowls and saucers.

Having been introduced to the potter's wheel in high school, Ryan discovered her affinity for the art early on and decided to start Barred Rock Studios to share her talent with the community.

"I've done pottery, stained glass, woodworking (and) metal working, but pottery is my go-to," Ryan said. "This year I'm a permanent vendor in spot No. 60 ... I love it. I love the people; I love the community."

"My daughter actually does some pottery, and she'll come out, and my husband will help. My mom helps me, so it's kind of a family business. I just enjoy it."

Just down the way in a different booth, Ruth Murrell could remember when the Farmers Market began in the Union County Courthouse parking lot, and her business has returned yearly in some form or another under her husband, her daughter, or herself.

"I'm a people person," Murrell said. "It's been a good thing, and it keeps me busy in the wintertime (preparing for the summer market). Last year, I made 1,100-something masks, but I didn't sell that many of them. Most of them have gone to the hospitals and doctor's offices."

As a permanent vendor, Murrell returned for Ramp Day and promised she would be present for the upcoming Farmers Market season, selling

her home-sewn crafts like potato bags and the aforementioned masks.

She and her fellow crafters, along with bakers like Dianne Hendry and farmers like Freddy Collins, will be present from June 4 to Oct. 29, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday, and between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. every Tuesday.

Like Ramp Day but on a larger scale, the Farmers Market has a bit of everything, with local agriculturists and artisans touting wares such as fresh fruits and vegetables, cheese, eggs, meat, honey, homemade jams, flowers and other fresh-cut plants, candles, soaps and skincare products, pottery and woodwork, jewelry, quilting and knitting items, and more.

But the Farmers Market isn't the only attraction locals can look forward to this year, as the Union County Cannery will be open July 5 through Oct. 6.

Anyone from professional canners to beginners can make appointments between 6 a.m. and noon on canning days to get assistance preserving their produce, although they must bring their own jars, lids, rings and ingredients.

Canning costs 30 cents per pint and 40 cents per quart, and all cannery proceeds go toward the maintenance of the Canning Plant and the Farmers Market.

Cummings and Fix are hopeful for a positive future, to include the planning of more Farmers Market special events.

"To be honest with you, I feel like people are ready to get out, and I see it becoming a very busy year for 2022," Fix said, and Cummings agreed, saying, "We're hoping to go back to normal this year."

Cummings also wanted to mention some of the upcoming events coming to the Farmers Market if all goes according to plan.

"We'll probably have a Tomato Sandwich Day, (and) another thing that we might do is a Corn Day, where we have taste tests on boiled corn so people can determine which varieties they like," Cummings said.

Also highlighted was the Trash & Treasures Yard Sale, to begin on May 20 and run



The line for ramps during the Farmers Market Ramp Day community event stayed busy while supplies lasted on April 30.

Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

through Oct. 14. Every Friday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., business owners and folks just looking to clear out their homes will be offering everything from toys and tools to furniture and appliances.

"We have an average of 40 vendors," Fix said, likening the event to a flea market. "You've kind of got three

different entities: the farmers, the crafts, and the yard sale people."

Finally, the Farmers Market Dog Park is open from dawn to dusk for most of the week, only closing on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for maintenance. Adjacent to the market, the park features accommodations

for big and small canines, agility equipment and water fountains.

The Farmers Market is located at the Glenn Gooch Bypass and SR 515 at 290 Farmers Market Way. For more information, visit ucfarmersmarket.com, call 706-439-6043 or email farmersmarket@uniongov.com.

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Queen for a Day...from Page 1A



Pat Cook, second from the left, started "Queen for a Day" six years ago to give participants the love and attention they deserve after battling cancer. Photo by Brittany Holbrooks

There's no denying that the battle to overcome cancer is a difficult one. As such, survivors need all the love and support they can get; even years out in remission, their strength should be celebrated.

Which is why Pat Cook decided to start hosting the "Queen for a Day" event.

"About six years ago, I had cancer, and I had the aggressive type of cancer," Cook said. "And once I got cancer, I knew God had a purpose for me, and the purpose for me was to help other people."

Following her diagnosis, Cook attended a "Look Good, Feel Better" workshop courtesy of the American Cancer Society. Unfortunately, the program stopped being offered in Blairsville, and Cook knew she had to remedy that.

"I said, 'No, we've got to have something. We've got to make it our own way,'" she said. "So, once a year, we do Queen for a Day for anybody that's had cancer, usually within the past year, but since we didn't (have the program during) COVID, we (made it for) anybody who's had cancer."

This year, after three months of preparation, all local queens were able to walk the red carpet on April 25. Survivors enjoyed a spa and makeover day in which each picked out a wig of choice, with several having fun mixing and matching styles and asking friends for input.

And since every queen deserves a bountiful feast, guests were treated to slices of cake in at least four different flavors so that even the pickiest sweet tooth was satisfied. For those preferring savory snacks, little finger sandwiches of deli meat and cheese were also served.

Diane Shillcutt has a history of cancer on both sides of her family, so she wasn't surprised when she was diagnosed 19 years ago. After undergoing eight rounds of chemotherapy and 32 rounds of radiation, she had to be hospitalized for a week with third-degree radiation burns.

"I was really messed up. But I'm here, so that's all that matters," Shillcutt said. "I couldn't have reconstruction because they burned me so bad. But you know what? It's OK - I can do everything I

want to do."

Shillcutt said she never felt like she was going to die, and the only thing that bothered her about having cancer was that she had no control over her life. But she's strong so never got weighed down by the experience and has used it to instill strength in others to continue their fight.

"I try to tell my friends who got cancer after I did, 'You know, your breasts don't define who you are. You're still that same person, and you need to realize that. It's gravy in the big scheme of things,'" Shillcutt said.

During "Queen for a Day," Shillcutt just so happened to be getting a facial from volunteer Cindy Cook, who works as an esthetician and laser practitioner under Dr. Win Pound, who specializes in reconstructive plastic surgery.

While dermatologists treat medical conditions that influence the skin's health, estheticians focus on maintaining the appearance of skin.

"We can't do surgery or anything like that, but we can treat it topically," Cindy explained. "Chemotherapy can really, really do a number on your skin, so we like to do nice little facials for them to kind of put that hydration back into the skin where they've lost it."

A former makeup artist inspired by the desire to help others, Cindy Cook has 21 years of experience doing facials, chemical peels, laser hair removal and surfacing, and removing brown spots.

"This is just a little mini-facial to get them ready for their makeup," Cindy said while gently massaging chocolate-scented moisturizer and toner into Shillcutt's cheeks and forehead with a kind of deft ease.

"I'm always about giving back, and I love making people feel pretty and feel good about themselves. I love doing these kinds of (events), and especially cancer patients - I love giving back to them. Everybody deserves to be pampered, but especially cancer patients."

About a month ago, Pat Cook approached Barbara Wheatley to ask for assistance with the event. Wheatley has been teaching at the North Georgia Technical College in the Cosmetology Department for eight years and has, overall,

53 years of hairdressing experience.

Wheatley had never done events like Queen for a Day before, but she wanted her students to get a chance to work with cancer survivors and learn how to style wigs. Five of them were "volunteered" by Wheatley to attend.

"They've studied wigs, but it's just that they don't get the experience like they would here," Wheatley said, sharing that, while there are some differences between wigs and natural hair, for the most part they are the same when it comes to styling, depending on the material.

"Now, some synthetics are already pre-styled, so you can't do anything as far as changing the style. But human hair - you can pretty much do anything you can do with your hair."

Wheatley doesn't have firsthand experience with a cancer diagnosis, but the topic still hits close to home. When her son was 4, he was diagnosed with the disease and survived, and though he passed away from a different cause, his legacy partially inspired her involvement that day.

"Everyone in this room motivates me," she said. "It's a great thing that Pat is doing for the community; it's a needed thing."

Pat Cook herself provided goody bags filled with a variety of beauty products meant to give the user just a little taste of feeling like a queen even after leaving the event. There was also a wide variety of jewelry to choose from, ranging from necklaces to earrings.

As it turns out, this was Cook's last year manning Queen for a Day. Due to rising health problems, she "just can't do it anymore," and has appointed two special people to succeed her in organizing the annual event.

Her successors are inheriting a worthy cause and will no doubt enjoy help setting up for future years thanks to people like first-time volunteer Michelle Scarbro, who was so touched by the survivors at the makeup table that she knows she is bound to return.

"It was wonderful to see these ladies be the queen for the day, and all these people that are volunteering and helping sponsor - it's a great, great, great thing they're doing. A beautiful thing."

Prom 2022...from Page 1A



Prom is always a bittersweet occasion for classmates to spend some final moments together before going their separate ways after graduation. Photo by Jeremy Foster

the fall to study for a fulfilling career in nursing.

"I have made such a good friend group here, and the school system has such

amazing opportunities for everybody and has given me such a good head start to my future, and I am just really going to miss everybody,"

Evans said.

Congratulations to the Union County High School Class of 2022.

Go Panthers!



Gov. Kemp Signs Legislation Empowering Students, Parents, and Teachers

Governor Brian P. Kemp, joined by First Lady Marty Kemp, parents and students, education leaders, members of the General Assembly, and state and local elected officials, signed legislation that empowers students and parents when it comes to the education of their children, as well as Georgia's hardworking teachers. The following bills were signed

during a ceremony at the Forsyth County Arts and Learning Center: Parents' Bill of Rights (HB 1178); HB 1084, which prevents divisive concepts and ideologies from invading the classroom and gives the Georgia High School Association authority to protect fairness in school sports; SB 226, which removes obscene materials from school libraries; SB 588,

which ensures school board meetings are transparent; HB 517, which fulfills a campaign promise to double the cap on student scholarship organization donations, including the Greater Opportunities for Access to Learning (GOAL) scholarships, to provide greater educational opportunity and choice for families. This increase in the tax credit cap will allow an extra Georgia 4,000 students per year to be served; SB 220, which creates a Commission on Civics Education to explore ways in which we can better serve students and ensure financial literacy is taught in schools; and HB 385, which allows retired teachers to return to the classroom fulltime in high-need areas.



Governor Brian P. Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp, students, and education leaders