

## Soccer...from Page 1A

for the Lady Panthers, as they sought to reach their first Final

Four ever after having lost two previous attempts since 2015.

Two of the biggest surprise entrants to the quarterfinals of the Class AA playoffs – the Panthers and Jeff Davis County, both 4-seeds – will go head to head on Wednesday, May 8, at 6 p.m. in Blairsville.

Union County advanced to its first Elite 8 after upsetting fifth-ranked Lamar County in overtime and 10th-ranked Gordon Central, both on the road.

The Panthers' upcoming opponent, Jeff Davis County, opened the playoffs by stunning the Region 3-AA champ Dodge

County in overtime, followed by a 3-0 blanking of 1-AA runner-up Berrien County in

round two.

For additional information on Union County's

second round victories and more on the upcoming matches, see this week's Sports Section.

## Ladder 1...from Page 1A

Fire lettering and logos put on.

Once the truck was checked out, the department contacted two Atlanta ladder truck firefighters who are certified trainers, contracting with them to come to Blairsville and train firefighters here using the county's new truck.

To commemorate the ladder truck's official entry into the fleet, nearly every Union County firefighter, both volunteer and full-time, attended a special "push-in" at Fire Station No. 1 on May 1.

A "push-in" is a tradition in which firefighters join together to push a new truck into the garage.

Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and County Manager Larry Garrett were on hand to witness the event, along with several Union General EMS personnel who also serve as part-time firefighters.

"Back in the early days, in the 1800s and early 1900s, before they had fire engines, (firewagons) were all drawn with horses," said Paris. "So, when they got a new firewagon, their process of getting it ready for service was to push it into the stall. That's the tradition."

Union County has gotten along without a ladder truck for a long time, but it's something the county needed.

"Now that we have it, it's something we can't do without going forward," Paris said.

Dyer said the ladder truck will give firefighters several new advantages that they didn't have before, such as the ability to access second and third-story roofs for rescue purposes.

The ladder will also allow them to apply an elevated stream of up to 1,500 gallons of water per minute into a fire from above, and it will help them to better attack fires in taller



Cars used for training exercises behind Fire Station No. 1. Photo by Mark Smith



The new Station 1 fire training facility. Photo by Mark Smith

structures.

Another application will be water rescues, where the ladder may be extended out over a river or body of water.

In other news, Phase II of the new fire training facility behind Station No. 1 is nearly complete.

The training facility is constructed of several steel oceangoing containers sitting side-by-side, with two containers welded in place on top of the others to make a two-story, double-wide structure.

The last of Phase II will involve a third container on top of the structure to make a third

story. Then, after a break, Phase III will involve the construction of a tower for firefighters to practice working with standpipes and repelling for rescues, among other evolutions.

The new training facility replaces the old wood frame building that sat across from the new offices and emergency operations center. It was the original fire station and emergency operations center that later became the training facility when the new building was completed.

The old building was demolished on Wednesday, April 24.

## Courthouse...from Page 1A

Blairsville-Union County as an Appalachian Trail Community in 2011, and beyond.

The Old Courthouse project is the culmination of more than five years of hard work and dedication by volunteers wishing to expand knowledge of and appreciation for the Appalachian Trail in this community.

Included in the endeavor are two portable displays to use at festivals and presentations at schools, three permanent displays – one each at Neel Gap, the John B. Derden CCC Museum at Vogel State Park, and now the Old Courthouse – and booklets providing more in-depth historical information.

The project was made possible through funds awarded in 2015 and 2017 via the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Tag Grant, which is a grant supported statewide by a portion of the tag fees collected from purchases of specialty license plates.

Also integral to the effort were public donations collected by Mountain Crossings at Walasi-Yi, plus a number of good faith community partnerships forged with the purpose of educating visitors and locals alike on the importance and legacy of the trail.

Those partnerships included participation by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy; Georgia Appalachian Trail Club; U.S. Forest Service Blue Ridge Ranger District; Union County Historical Society; Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce; Mountain Crossings; the CCC Museum at Vogel; Rich's Cabinet Shop; Mountain Graphics; and West Printing.

Many individuals also played vital roles in seeing the historical project through to completion, including Dayton and Martha Miller, Bud Akins, Joe Boone, Tobie Chandler, Nancy Dicks, Carlie Gentry, David Grear, Geri O'Brien, Nancy Shofner, Ray Taylor, Becky Vaughters, Katherine Vogel and Judy Carpenter.

Of special note, O'Brien's dad, Benton Efir, served as a cook at the CCC camp at Vogel and helped to build the Blood Mountain Shelter.

The new permanent display is available for viewing during the Old Courthouse Museum's regular operating hours every Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"This display is a wonderful addition to the Union County Historical Society Museum," said Society President Judy Carpenter. "It contains so much information on the Appalachian Trail, the CCC history and about Union County."

"Thanks to Bud Akins, Dayton and Martha Miller, Geri O'Brien, and Rich's Cabinet



Dayton Miller of the Blairsville-Union County Appalachian Trail Community showing off the new custom-made kiosk at the Old Courthouse. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

Shop, who worked so hard to make this display possible. Please stop by and look at this display and see our great museum."

Museumgoers can pick up a copy of "The History of the Appalachian Trail in North Georgia" booklet for a \$5 donation, though teachers and folks planning to use it in an educational setting can get

one for free.

In related news, the Friends of Vogel State Park will be hosting a CCC History Day and Open House on Saturday, May 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., where volunteers will be demonstrating "what the CCC boys would have done in the 1930s."

A \$5 parking fee will apply at the Vogel event.

## North Georgia Chamber Symphony Spring Concert schedule

North Georgia Chamber Symphony Spring Concerts: Friday, May 17th, Blairsville, Historic Courthouse on the Square, 7 PM. Saturday, May 18th, Dahlonega United Methodist Church, 7:30 PM. Sunday, May 19th, Gainesville, Grace Episcopal Church, 4 PM.

Program: Panamanian Folk Song - El Arborito, arranged by Daniel Allen.

Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for violin, viola and orchestra, in E flat Major. Our guest conductor for this piece will be Martin David Jones,

and our good friend Laura Tomlin will play the solo violin. Director Laurin Smith will play the solo viola on this lovely 3 movement piece.

Grieg's Holberg Suite, includes a prelude, two dance movements, a religious air and an exciting lively French dance with violin and viola solos.

American Folk Song Suite (Shenandoah, Sourwood Mountain, Black is the Color of my True Love's Hair, Turkey in the Straw.)

Lady Gaga Fugue, a modern piece with a baroque twist. NT(May1A)JSH