

North Georgia News

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High school awarded STEM certification banner by state school superintendent

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Georgia Superintendent of Schools Richard Woods visited the Union County High School campus on Friday, April 26, to present UCHS with an official Science, Technology, Engineering and Math certification banner.

UCHS is only the 14th school in Georgia of 181 school districts to be awarded a STEM certification by the state over a 10-year period, said UCHS Principal C.T. Hussion.

And it's one of only four public schools in Georgia, the other 10 being magnet schools.

That's a really big deal, a huge honor, both for the school and for the students, Hussion said.

Implementation of the

STEM program initiative began five years ago, said Hussion, and the first STEM class of 21 students who began as freshmen four years ago will all graduate this May.

Hussion said STEM students are put in an accelerated curriculum where they finish their high school credits by the end of their sophomore year, then spend their junior and senior years in dual enrollment courses, advanced placement classes and internships.

As the April 26 presentation began, STEM Program Director Alecia Frizzell took the floor and gave a brief summary of how the STEM program began at the high school, recounting how she and her fellow educators began and her at surrounding schools for inspiration.

"We started traveling,"

said Frizzell. "We visited as many school systems as we could to get different ideas about STEM and how to implement it here in Union County High School and how to make it our own. We researched, we debriefed, we talked, we discussed."

Frizzell said after the year they spent researching the STEM program, they implemented it the following year with 21 freshmen who were chosen through an application process. Now, she said, they allow any student who wants to try it into the program.

"The overall goal of the STEM program is to put real-world application to our rigorous academic standards," said Frizzell. "So, we take kids and we accelerate them through their high school career

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UCHS Principal C.T. Hussion with students Amelia Dyer and Emily Frizzell accepting the Certified STEM Program banner from Georgia's Superintendent Richard Woods. Photo by Mark Smith

UCHS Seniors Smith and Owenby crowned Prom King and Queen

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Union County High School hosted its 2019 Prom at the Union County Community Center on Saturday, April 27.

Students put on their best outfits for a night of dancing and celebration that had the seniors of the school coming together for a few more fleeting moments of fun before graduation on May 24.

As the DJ worked through a high caliber songbook, students sang along and cheered as they danced all around the floor.

For students wanting to take a break from dancing, the outside area was opened up, with tables for students to sit and talk at, as well as cornhole games set up for students to play.

With the night moving forward and drawing toward its final hour, anticipation for who would be crowned Prom King



UCHS 2019 Prom King Tanner Smith dancing with Prom Queen Emily Owenby after their joint coronation on Saturday, April 27. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

and Queen began to rise.

After a set of slow songs, the music paused, and students moved away from the floor to make room for their newly proclaimed King and Queen of Prom.

The 2019 Union County High School Prom Queen went to Emily Owenby and Prom King went to Tanner Smith.

The couple made their way to the center of the room to

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Bowman to serve country, receives full ride to U.S. Coast Guard Academy

By Chad Stack
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Senior Brendan Bowman took part in a special signing ceremony at Union County High School on Thursday, April 25, in recognition of his acceptance to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

Bowman's parents Greg and Lori, his grandmother Sandy, along with members of the U.S. Coast Guard and many of the senior's friends, looked on proudly as Bowman signed his letter of intent to attend the Coast Guard Academy as a student-athlete.

High School Administrative Assistant and retired U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Art McCann introduced Coast Guard members in attendance: David John Sot of Coast Guard Academy Admissions Partner and Advisory Board; Flotilla Cmdrs. Shawn Nixon and her husband John Nixon; and Chief



UCHS senior Brendan Bowman signing on with the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in a special ceremony on Thursday, April 25. Photo by Chad Stack

Petty Officer Melissa DeVore, who is Bowman's recruiter.

Bowman is a two-sport student-athlete at Union County High, competing on the swim team and also as a runner for the Panther track team.

As an athlete, he will continue his track career for New London, Connecticut.

On the academic side, Bowman is a very accomplished

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Missing In America Project volunteers lay another lost veteran to final rest

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

Airman 1st Class Henry Charles May III of the United States Air Force, accompanied by a cadre of fellow veterans starting from Blairsville, was finally laid to rest at the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton on Wednesday, April 24.

Thanks to the Missing In America Veterans Recovery Program, otherwise known as the Missing In America Project, the remains of A1C May and thousands of other veterans have been recovered from mortuary and crematory shelves to be interred with military honor and dignity.

Georgia State Coordinator Daniel Poirier of the Missing In America Project organized the procession to accompany A1C May from Mountain View Funeral Home in Blairsville down to Canton.



Local veterans loading the burial flag and remains of a local veteran for transport to the Georgia National Cemetery on April 24. Photo by Mark Smith

At 9:30 a.m., a procession of about 75 motorcycles and several cars, an estimated 100 people in all, left the Mountain View Funeral Home at Butternut

Crossing in Blairsville and made its way to US 76 for the trek south to Canton.

"It's an honor to be able

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Carter denied bond after arriving at Union County Jail from North Carolina

By Shawn Jarrard
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Crystal Carter was denied bond last week after being extradited from Clay County, North Carolina, into the custody of the Union County Sheriff's Office, according to UCSO Lt. Daren Osborn.

Carter, of Hiawassee, is being held on an aggravated assault charge taken out by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation in reference to the September 2018 shooting of William Craig Henderson of Young Harris.

Following the shooting, Carter eluded authorities for more than three months until her April 16, 2019, arrest at the Hayesville, North Carolina, residence of a man named Joseph Anderson Tiger.

Tiger was arrested on April 18 and charged with a felony for assisting Carter when she was a fugitive from



Joe Tiger



Crystal Carter

justice.

"Clay County Deputies took Tiger into custody Thursday morning without incident as investigators executed a search warrant at his residence," said the Clay County Sheriff's Office. "Evidence of Crystal Carter's crime was located and seized from inside Tiger's home,

along with Carter's personal property.

"Law enforcement authorities from Georgia and North Carolina had responded numerous times on tips of Carter's presence at Tiger's home. Authorities had spoken to Tiger on multiple occasions and advised him of Carter's

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Area stakeholders celebrate EMC fiber optic installation at Neels Gap

By Mark Smith
North Georgia News
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The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce hosted the 2019 Fiber Optic Dedication Celebration at Mountain Crossings at Neels Gap on Wednesday, April 24.

For many years, especially in wintertime, traveling back and forth over Blood Mountain in inclement weather via Neels Gap has been a treacherous affair.

It was also a treacherous affair for Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris,

who felt it was his duty alone to drive up through Neels Gap when the weather was bad and report via his Facebook page on the road conditions along US 129 South.

Now, with 7,000 feet of new fiber optic cable installed by Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Corporation with the help of drone technology provided by Southern Company Services, travelers and commuters from around the area can rest a little easier.

And so can Commissioner Paris.

Paris said that he began working with the Georgia Department of Transportation about two and a half years ago toward the installation of a weather station and a camera at the mountaintop, but the internet connection through a distant cell tower was not reliable. The connection would drop in inclement weather, when it was most needed.

So, Paris went to EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms to explore the possibilities for a more reliable connection with fiber optic cable.

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Southern Company representatives with Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, EMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms and EMC Director of Engineering Daniel Frizzell at the GDOT Road Weather Information System at Neels Gap. Photo by Byron McCombs

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