

Graduation...from Page 1A

\$1.8 million in scholarship money.

Justin Short performed a solo acoustic version of John Mayer's "Stop This Train" for his fellow seniors, and for her Salutatory Address, Brooke Hamby centered her message on the positive influences within the lives of her fellow graduates, and how they should continue to embrace their goals moving forward.

"Whether our passion is finding a cure for cancer, trying the next case of the century, enriching the minds of young people, proudly defending our country, traveling the world, becoming the next Jennifer Lawrence, the next Vincent van Gogh, the next Gianni Versace, the next Peyton Manning, or even becoming the next president of the United States – we should pursue it with everything we have," said Hamby, challenging her classmates to always reach for more.

In her address, 2016 STAR Student and Valedictorian Anna Danek urged the Class of 2016 to step outside of its comfort zone following graduation.

"Today, we leave behind our daily routines and what is secure," said Danek. "As our senior year comes to an end, we are beginning to question ourselves and our decisions.



UCHS Principal Jonathan Hill presents Valedictorian and STAR Student Anna Danek with her diploma on Friday night at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

Have we chosen the right career? The right college? The right major? Are we prepared for the real world? Will we actually gain 15 pounds our college freshman year?

"But besides that, most of us have come to the realization that we don't know, yet again. We are afraid of leaving our comfort zones because we are afraid of failure. We are afraid of making the wrong choices. However, my one piece of advice to each

you is to be confident outside of your comfort zone, even despite your doubts."

Toward the end of the ceremony and after the conferring of degrees by UCHS Principal John Hill, Superintendent Steppe asked the Class of 2016 to stand.

"By the power vested in me by the state of Georgia and the Union County Board of Education, I declare you 2016 graduates of Union County High School," said

Steppe. "Congratulations and God bless."

Cheers erupted from graduates and loved ones alike, and after the Class Challenge from Alyssa Arnold, the singing of the Alma Mater and the commencement closing by Autumn Johnson, the seniors took to the end of the field to watch an inspirational class video, and the evening ended in a fireworks spectacular.

Good luck and farewell Class of 2016.



A capacity crowd at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium await the UCHS Class of 2016 on Friday night. The crowd was not to be disappointed in the least. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

BB...from Page 1A

ing a Turkey Shoot this Saturday, June 4, starting at 10 a.m. at Stover Shooting Field, which is located seven miles down 129 South on the left.

BB Team Head Coach Mike Bottinelli said that the team has had a stellar shooting season, placing well in several big matches, including District and State level 4-H competitions.

Union County's BB Team qualified for the Daisy National Championship after an outstanding performance at the Georgia Games on April 23.

Bottinelli and the rest of the coaching crew, made up of Chris McGee and Goodwin Bryan, are excited for the opportunity their 4-H'ers will have traveling to Arkansas and competing – win or lose – at such a high level.

"It's for the kids, for the experience that they're going to get and their travels, meeting kids from all over the country and the interaction that they're going to have with 500 or 600 kids that are shooting, as well as their parents and whoever else may make the trip with them," said Bottinelli. "So as far as the kids' sakes, it's going to be an awesome experience for them."

All three coaches have kids participating in the 4-H BB Team, and while they are hoping to add to their numbers by next season, the children are excited and ready to finish the season strong at the Daisy national shoot.

Caleb Bottinelli, Evan Bryan, Joshua Ledford, Katelyn Ledford, Tanner McGee and Jeremy Stover round out the BB team's shooting sextet, and they have honed their skills practicing with each other and in their free time.

"I practice at the house mostly every day," said Stover, who finished First Place in the Standing Position against hundreds of competitors at this year's 4-H State BB Match. "I'll practice be-

fore I go to school in the morning and when I have extra time, and when I get home in the evenings."

Like his teammates, Stover has a true passion for shooting, and he hopes to shoot on both the Shotgun and BB teams next year.

"4-H wants you to have fun," said Stover, adding that he's made friends during his four years in the program. "You learn at the same time that

you're having fun."

One of the goals of any 4-H shooting program is to teach students the values of the acronym S.A.F.E., which stands for Shooting Awareness, Fun and Education.

And these six 4-H'ers will apply the principles of S.A.F.E. when they head to Rogers, Arkansas, to compete with other children from all over the country.