

EMC...from Page 1A

"Winning an election is one thing, but doing what needs to be done is something else. That will be the most difficult part."

The task at hand is to put into practice what the membership has voiced to

those they supported in the director races, Cummings said.

"We as a board have to go into this remembering why we were elected," Cummings said. "We were elected for a number of reasons. Being as transparent as possible, an-



EMC Board of Directors Past President Lenny Parks bestows a plaque of appreciation to the Ensley Family.

swering people's questions, and addressing financial concerns.

"There is a lot of work that needs to be done and I'm on a real steep learning curve," Cummings said. "I've been told it takes a while to get the hang of things. So, I'll be working hard to get up to speed and make a contribution."

Interim EMC General Manager Dan Brewer said it's

unclear how long the healing process will take. He said it was imperative to restore stability prior to beginning the search for a new general manager.

"Where do we go from here, and how in the world do we get there?" Brewer asked. "I believe that the turmoil that surrounds the EMC has created an environment where our employees can't focus on doing their jobs."

"They are wondering

if they will have jobs tomorrow," he said. "Or, if the latest rumor has any truth in it. I am convinced that it is imperative that we move quickly to provide stability to the EMC."

"You've got a great group of employees," Brewer told the membership. "They have a high level of skill and dedication. It is impossible for them to perform their jobs with the amount of turmoil surrounding the EMC."

Brewer said that if the

EMC Board of Directors does a national search for a new general manager, the search will take six months from beginning to end.

"It is also imperative to restore the stability before we begin the search," Brewer said. "It is very unlikely that a highly qualified candidate would step into the CEO position with the kind of instability that exists here at Blue Ridge Mountain EMC."

"It is time to put an unpleasant part of our history behind us and move the organization forward as quickly as possible," Brewer said. "I'm hopeful that the conclusion of this annual meeting will be the turning point to head in the right direction."

Prior to the business portion of the annual meeting at Anderson Music Hall, retiring President Bill Prather introduced past President Lenny Parks, who presented a plaque of appreciation to the family of the late EMC Board Member Bob Ensley.

The Georgia Fiddler Randall Collins and the Cartecay River Band provided entertainment for the membership prior to the business portion of the annual meeting.

The Arts...from Page 1A

A&E, the architecture firm that designed the building, as well as the CEO of Bowen & Watson, the construction management company that built the center.

And for the rest of the evening, students transitioned between the varying acts flawlessly, managing the events expertly onstage, backstage and in the light and sound booth.

The big red curtain acted as a silent participant in the show, parting and drawing up at different times, while other times obscuring set changes from the audience as students worked efficiently in the background.

UCHS Drama students, having only been at it for the few short weeks since school began, entertained their audience with a performance of "Summer Nights," a scene from the musical *Grease*.

The Woody Gap Band of Steel mesmerized everyone in the crowd, playing Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'," followed by Bob Marley's "Three Little Birds" on their highly unique steel drums.

Faculty and students from Union County Schools and Young Harris College performed "Fanfare for the Common Man" in their Community Brass Ensemble, and the UCHS Chorus students sang "Love is an Open Door" from the wildly popular Disney film *Frozen*.

The UCHS Pride of the Mountains Marching Band surprised everyone by marching down the aisles to surround audience members, performing a truly surround sound version of their half-time show *The Incredibles*.

Students from the drama program took to the stage once more, this time for a straight-acting segment called *Caution: Politricks*, giving rise to much laughter from the audience.

Toward the end of the evening, UCHS teachers Chris Adams of drama, Alicia Covington of chorus and Will Stafford of the band joined forces on stage to perform "Georgia on My Mind," and the UCHS Ensemble Chorus closed the show with every patriot's favorite, "God Bless the USA."

Prior to the performances, a ribbon-cutting ceremony held by the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce heralded the opening of the building, after which students of the brand new Union County High School Drama program led guided tours through the facility.

Parents and community stakeholders marveled at the scope of the twice SPLOST-approved building.

"When they had the meeting to discuss what they were going to spend the SPLOST money on, I spoke at that meeting," said Dick Sowers, whose grandson David Cruz is a member of both the high school band and chorus. "They had said they were going to build this in the previous SPLOST, and then everything went downhill."

"So, they didn't do it, and I said, don't do this to the voters again. They needed to do something for the arts. They've done a fantastic job around here with the sports teams and everything, and I love it. This was needed."

Not only will students benefit, but the entire commu-



nity as well, since the center will play host to community events outside of school-sponsored performances.

"I really love what they've done with it from a design standpoint, coming together, making use of every element. It really catches your eye," said local developer Chris Wadle, owner of Blairsville business Lamin-x. "I was in band growing up, and my wife was in band, so the fact that we can actually have an outlet to play in and showcase those talents is awesome, and bring in people from other

communities to our facility, because what facility is like this in North Georgia besides this?"

On Saturday, Sept. 19, at 7:30 p.m., EG Kight and her Blue South Band will perform the inaugural community concert in the fine arts center, with general admission tickets costing \$20.

And the UCHS Chorus Disney Concert will take place at the center on Oct. 6 at 6:30 p.m., with more concerts and drama performances to follow in October.