

UCHS Theatre...from Page 1A



Dozens of Fine Arts students participated in the "Back to the '80s" two-act musical production over the weekend. Photo by Jarrett Whitener

great environment. "It's been crazy preparing for this show. It's been a long process of getting everything. Basically, the two groups of dancers were doing two

different dances at the same time, so the main cast had to try to be at both places at the same time.

"Learning all the dances was insane. We ran the songs probably 100 times each, so everyone put in a lot of work to make this happen."

All told, the production involved plenty of community support and donations, enabling the Theatre Department to put the set together and bring the story to life.

"I want to thank my family; Regina Hawkins that helps with everything we do; Shane Giles, who's helped me build sets for like eight years; Daniel Skinner, who's helped a lot; Cole Payne," Director Adams said. "John Moore and

Home Depot help a tremendous amount.

"First Baptist Church donating things; Towns County Schools for letting us borrow the lockers; my first and third block theatre classes, who helped do the set; and Superior Paints, who has been donating paints for six or seven years. We are thankful for all those people for helping us make this possible."

The next Fine Arts show will be on Thursday, Dec. 12, and Friday, Dec. 13, and will be a combined Christmas show between the band, chorus and theatre. The show will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will feature a \$5 admission price. A pre-show dinner will be on offer for a \$5 donation.

Historical Society...from Page 1A

you. A volunteer is a person who believes people can make a difference and is willing to prove it.

"As a volunteer, you bring skills, experience, dedication, vision, leadership, friendship and inspiration. You choose to donate the valuable gift of your time, so today, I would like to say thank you. The Historical Society is grateful for the time you give and the difference you make and have made in our society."

Always a much-anticipated part of the luncheon is the presentation of the Volunteer of the Year Award, which this year went to Presley and Jeannie Rich, "who have given many hours of their time to the Historical Society," Carpenter said.

Together, the two have helped build parade floats, published and mailed quarterly newsletters, and volunteered in many other critical ways.

"Presley has recently become a part-time employee that puts in many more hours than he gets paid for," Carpenter said. "Jeannie is a dedicated volunteer, folding newsletters, answering phones and helping wherever she's needed.

"They are both a great asset to our organization. Congratulations, Jeannie and Presley."

Also in the luncheon, Carpenter presented a Certificate of Appreciation to another special volunteer couple who have helped the Historical Society for many years.

"Paul and Helena Grossman spend many hours



Helena and Paul Grossman receiving a Certificate of Appreciation in the Historical Society Volunteer Luncheon on Nov. 12. Photo by Mark Smith

each year organizing and laying out vendor spaces for our Heritage Festival," Carpenter said. "They mark spots for the tents and make sure vendors get spots they request each year. We appreciate your dedication to the Historical Society."

Carpenter continued with the recognitions by lauding the office staff at the Old Union County Courthouse, who, though not volunteers, competently maintain the day-to-day operations of the society.

As discussed in the monthly board meeting that took place earlier that day, plans are well underway for the Christmas Parade and Christmas on the Square, with the Christmas tree expected to be up on the square by

Thanksgiving.

Towns County High School Principal and Blue Ridge Mountain EMC Director Roy Perren will perform at the Dec. 13 Friday Night Christmas Concert.

"Roy does an excellent concert," Carpenter said. "He does some Elvis impersonations, but then he does a serious Christmas concert, and he is great."

Carpenter said restoration projects at the Old Courthouse were nearing completion.

"We can see the end," Carpenter said. "Our last project – and that's been the hardest one – is the shakes on the (Civil War-era) Payne Cabin. Hopefully we'll have them on by the end of the year."

Historical Society board

members voted unanimously to accept the incumbent officers for another year. They are Judy Carpenter, President; Bill Collins, Vice President; Betty Noe, Secretary; and Betty Jane Schuler, Treasurer.

Upcoming events include the Friday, Dec. 6, Concert at the Courthouse featuring the North Georgia Chamber Symphony Orchestra at 7 p.m., and the Christmas Parade on the Square on Dec. 7 at 6 p.m., to be preceded by Santa pictures from 3-6 p.m.

The Historical Society Annual Christmas Dinner for the membership will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 6 p.m. inside the Community Center. The cost is \$20 per person, and RSVPs will be sent out.

Arson...from Page 1A

time Monday.

Safety Fire Commissioner John F. King described the apartment building as a 20-year-old, 7,500 square-foot structure with two floors and four apartments on each floor.

"One unit suffered severe fire damage while the adjacent units suffered minor smoke damage. No injuries were sustained in the fire," King said.

A \$10,000 reward is being offered by the Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner's Office of Atlanta for information that leads to the arrest and conviction of whoever set the fire.

People with knowledge about the fire are being asked to call the Fire Investigations Unit at 800-282-5804. Calls are taken 24 hours a day, and callers may remain anonymous.

As firefighters worked to secure the scene that Thursday, several residents approached them to say the fire should be investigated.

All fires are investigated as a matter of course, but the nature of the concerns raised by residents regarding this particular fire spurred Fire Chief David Dyer to contact a state fire marshal for additional resources.

State fire investigators brought a specialized arson K-9 to the scene, which assisted them in determining that an arsonist was to blame for the blaze.

Due to dangerous levels of carbon monoxide present inside the building following the fire, more than a dozen residents had to leave their homes to allow the deadly gas to dissipate.

The American Red Cross provided the residents shelter for the evening, and they were allowed to return to their apartments the next day, with the

exception of the people residing in the apartment involving an active investigation scene.

Union County Fire Stations 1, 2, 3 and 4 responded to the fire, and the Fire Department continues to assist the state with the investigation.

"I was very proud of our guys, because that's a high-stress situation," Chief Dyer said. "There's a lot of folks there, there's a lot of property there – those things can go really quickly.

"Our guys went in there and knocked the fire down just like that, stopped it where it was. They searched those apartments to make sure nobody else was in there, then maintained the integrity of the scene to await the fire marshal. It worked out

great."

Furthermore, Dyer said he appreciated those folks who shared their initial concerns about the fire, as well as anyone who decides to come forward with information helpful to the investigation.

"It's a big, risky fire," Dyer said. "Any apartment fire is a risky fire because of the units and the people that are there. There's a lot of lives in danger.

"If this is determined to be arson – which, the fire marshal's office is calling it intentional – that put a lot of lives in danger, including firefighters. That's very concerning for us, we do not like that at all.

"So, we appreciate anybody that can provide any information on how we can determine what this really was and to stop it from ever happening again."



Foster Program

Seeking individuals for rescue dogs to foster for possible adoption. Payment of \$125 will be paid to individual that takes dog into their home (fenced yard a requirement). This payment goes toward paid training for the dog with individual taking him once a week for four weeks.

For more information call 678-630-0452. NT(Nov2021)CA