

FFA...from Page 1A



L-R: FFA officer Jake McClure stands with his father, Jimmy, and brother, Bo, at the Equipment Sale portion of the Spring Blue & Gold Auction. Jimmy and Bo McClure, both FFA Alumni, contributed many hours to getting this spring's auction up and running

bidders bought nearly 350 of 450 consigned items, fetching around \$117,000 for the equipment sale. That sale included a tremendous variety of farm equipment, including but not limited to: tractors of every shape, size, make and model, trailers, plows, tillers, antique farm equipment, interior doors, wheels, tires, dump trucks, hay rakes and much more.

The FFA program will receive about a 10 percent commission on final sales, though costs of putting the auctions on and supplying a free lunch to patrons on Saturday will be accounted for in the final totals.

Blue & Gold acts as a major fundraiser for FFA students, as well as a practical learning experience.

"Volume wise and crowd wise, I think this sale exceeded any of them," said John Clark Pettit, FFA advisor and teacher of agriculture at the high school. "It's just gotten bigger and better in the amount of stuff and quality of stuff that's on the sale."

Pettit said a great number of people came together – as they always do – to ensure that this student-run nonprofit venture was successful.

He thanked parents, members of the FFA Alumni, the community, as well as Farmers Market Manager Mickey Cummings and his staff, and Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, for granting them the use of the Farmers Market for their Blue & Gold events.

Also supporting the students of FFA was Nelson Tractor Company, Inc., which held its Drive Green event, featuring live demos and test drives of John Deere and Kubota tractors, an attraction popular with adults and young kids alike.

Between 40 and 50 FFA students helped to orchestrate this season's Blue & Gold

Auction during both the animal sale and equipment auction, and each and every one considered the experience a valuable learning tool.

UCHS senior Caine Brewer is the treasurer of Union County FFA, and though he will be graduating soon, he said he will always treasure the time he's spent with FFA.

"It's pretty awesome to see how much our organization has grown," said Brewer. "It's been such an influence on me and so many people that I know. We started something (with the Blue & Gold Auction), and it's just blown expectations. I love it. You can't beat it, it's awesome."

Market Manager Mickey Cummings agreed with Brewer, and he was just as excited Saturday as he was during the first ever Blue & Gold Auction to have the Ag Day events at the Union County Farmers Market.

"It looks like it's about twice as big as it was last year, with the amount of equipment," said Cummings. "And it's all to benefit our local FFA chapter, and the vocational agriculture program that's up at the high school. It's a great event, it brings people together."

Commissioner Paris stopped in a couple of times on Saturday to see how the auction

was progressing, and he was impressed with the amount of goods the FFA had been able to make available through sellers as far away as Chatsworth.

"Any time I come out here and see the public enjoying the use of the Farmers Market, it really makes me proud," said Commissioner Paris. "We've put something out here that serves not only Farmers Market weekend, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but it serves the whole community, whether it be Relay For Life – there are so many organizations that are using this now, and it's just turned out to be a perfect venue for all kinds of things."

The Farmers Market and the FFA are two major recipients of community support in Union County, and that support just goes to show that farming and agriculture culture are not only alive and well in the county – they're thriving.

Auctioneer Justin Duncan, who has worked with the Union County FFA before, conducted the auction for an impressive 8 hours, though the auction was supposed to be over in three hours.

Pettit said that next auction, the FFA may run two auctioneers – one for small equipment, Duncan for the large equipment.

Fire...continued from Page 1A

start at one area of the heart and travel through the heart in an organized way. The electrical impulses cause each heart cell to contract in turn, thus resulting in an organized pumping of blood."

Heart attacks can cause this organized manner to become erratic, where the normal heart rhythm is disrupted, necessitating a shock to sort of clear the bad rhythm out and allow for the normal rhythm to take hold again.

The purchase of the AED – a Physio Control LifePak – was not an item previously budgeted by the fire department.

Chief Dyer saw a real need for an upgraded model, however, and appealed to Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, explaining to him that the best AED they had was about 15 years old, and did not even contain the most up-to-date software recommended by the new American Heart Association Guidelines.

"This machine does two things – it has the automatic external defibrillator section of it, which will shock somebody who is in cardiac arrest, and that's the main purpose of it," said Chief Dyer. "But this machine also has a new feature that we can hook up a three-lead, just like they can at the hospital, to look at your heart rhythm if you're not in cardiac arrest."

Having the capabilities of performing a three-lead electrocardiogram on the spot can help determine if someone with chest pains is actually in the beginning stages of a heart attack, and if the fire department is first on the scene, as is sometimes the case, knowing this information at such an early stage could prove critical in making the

proper determination in a timely manner.

Chief Dyer said that the EMTs of Union General Hospital have better ECG capabilities, but a three-lead is enough to get a patient on the right track toward where they need to be.

"And of course, the AED part, it can still shock somebody who is in cardiac arrest," said Chief Dyer. "There are two things that have been proven by science that help save people in cardiac arrest – that's early CPR, even bystander compressions, and these AEDs. So we're wanting

to upgrade the AEDs, and we've got one of the best ones here."

Commissioner Paris was more than happy to do something that he considered making the county a safer place to live.

"We're glad to be able to help provide the funds for that needed and additional safety feature that they'll have to make our public safer, because they do a great job going out to accidents, fires, sickness – going out with the ambulance service," said Commissioner Paris. "A lot of people don't realize that our fire department assists the ambulance service in a lot of calls."

Union/Towns Tea Party meeting

The Union/Towns County Tea Party now meets the 4th Tuesday of each month, 7 PM at the Haralson Civic Center.

Qualifying...from Page 1A

Republican, retired from the State House after four terms. That race is likely headed for a runoff.

Five candidates qualified for that seat – all were Republicans.

From Suches, David Barton, from Blairsville, Jesse Jorgenson, from Tiger (no photograph available), Joshua Littrell, Kent Woerner, and Matt Gurtler.

Jorgenson withdrew

from the race on Monday, citing wanting to spend more time with his 7-year-old son.

In the District 51 State Senate race, Incumbent Steve Gooch, a Dahlonega Republican, qualified for reelection. Sen. Gooch faces John Williamson of Ellijay in the May 24 Republican Primary.

In the race for the 9th Congressional District seat, Incumbent U.S. Rep. Doug

Collins, the Gainesville Republican has Republican opposition.

From Gainesville, Paul Broun, from Cumming, Mike Scupin, from Suches, Bernie Fontaine, and from Cleveland, Roger Fitzpatrick.

Republican U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson, has opposition from both parties.

Republicans Derrick Grayson, and Mary Kay Bacallao; Democrats Cheryl Copeland, James Knox, and Jim Barksdale.

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