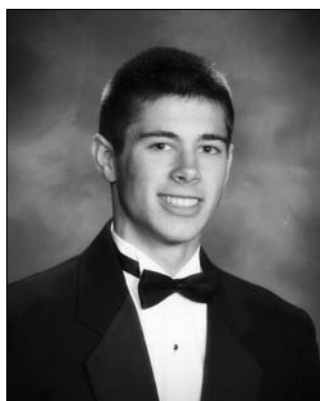


Graduation...continued from Page 1A



Donald Jeffrey Ward

lor had nothing but high praise for her 2012 graduating class.

"You are an amazing

group of students who seem to always pave your own path in your own way," Taylor said. "I hope each individual path you follow takes you to some post-secondary education. All of you are capable of doing great things."

Also on Saturday at 11 a.m. at Temple Baptist Church in Morganton, Mountain Area Christian Academy will hold commencement exercises for its Class of 2012. Jonathan Beck is the Class of 2012 Valedictorian.

On May 31, 34 Union



Hannah Arbour

County graduates will walk the aisle at the Fannin County Performing Arts Center when the Mountain

Education Center holds its commencement exercises. Steffan Lucarelli is the Class of 2012 Valedictorian for MEC.

Gary Davenport, chairman of the Union County Board of Education praised the graduates of the Class of 2012.

"Always remember as you look to the future," he said. "Never stop believing in yourself. Best wishes for your future."

In the event of rain, the graduation ceremony will be held on Saturday at 10 a.m.

Griggs...continued from Page 1A

ing reasonable search and seizures, allowing her to be searched anytime during her 10 years on probation, Union County court records show.

Joy Griggs was represented by attorney Andrew Dowdy of Cornelia, Union County court records show.

The case against Joy Griggs began to unfold in 2010 when county auditors discovered that there were improprieties in the financial statements of the Tax Commissioner's Office.

Upon further review of the statements, it was determined that Joy Griggs had issued 55 checks to herself, or herself and her husband totaling more than \$65,000. Then Enotah Circuit District Attorney Stan Gunter reached an

agreement with Joy Griggs to repay the money and be fired from her post as Deputy Tax Commissioner of Union County.

She was fired and did repay the money after securing those funds from a family friend.

Langley, then an assistant district attorney, publicly stated that simply being fired and repayment of taxpayer dollars did not end the matter because it was a theft, a crime of stealing, not just an individual's money for which the victim might decline to prosecute, but stealing the public's money.

He argued that the matter should be criminally prosecuted.

Langley was elected as

the circuit's District Attorney in November 2010. When he became the official circuit prosecutor in January 2011, he launched an investigation and later presented the case against Joy Griggs to a Union County Grand Jury and secured an indictment.

On May 15th, Joy Griggs pled guilty to Count 1 of that indictment, theft by taking and was sentenced to 10 years on probation and 320 days imprisonment. According to Langley, under the terms of the sentence she must serve the entire 320 days without eligibility for "good behavior" or parole.

In addition she pled guilty to Count 57, Violation of Oath of Public Office, for

committing these thefts while serving as a deputy clerk in the Tax Commissioner's Office.

The remaining counts against her detail each individual check forgery and are therefore included in the general theft admission; those additional counts are dismissed as having been covered in the more general Count 1.

Langley said part of the reasoning behind Joy Griggs' sentence was that a longer prison sentence would subject her to a review by the parole board and as a first time non-violent property crime offender, she likely would parole out quickly and therefore a significantly longer sentence might not result in anymore jail time.

Relay...continued from Page 1A

"This was all about a community coming together and believing in a cause," she said.

"Cancer seemingly has touched us all. That's what makes this community vigilant in its attempt to help find a cure," she said.

The Relay opened on Friday evening with a prayer by Beth Patterson and a song by Palmer Mireille. Then the survivors and teams started walking.

There was the Survivor's Lap, the Team Parade, a bead station, games, Kid's Corner, train rides, bounce houses, inflatable slide, face painting, hair do's, preschool penny drive, bean bag toss, line dancing with Kim Armstrong, the Carlton Shaw Memorial Bare Legs Contest, Midnight Madness, entertainment, food, and lots more including a wake up breakfast on Saturday morning.

A highlight of the event



Even the Huddle House Kids turned out for a wet Relay For Life event. The crowd was incredible, event coorganizer Sue Upchurch said. Churches, businesses and families formed teams to help find a cure. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

was the Luminary where loved ones were remembered with a candlelight ceremony.

Relay For Life is the largest fundraiser in Union County and goes on year round with activities such as Daffodil Days, car washes, and raffles taking in money and donations.

Mia Crowe, Crystal Dockery, Alta Foster, Anna Goswick, Janet Hartman, Stacy Head, Vee Laffoon, Allyson McGraw, Betty Moshier, Paula Pendleton, Judy Rich, Barbara Richardson, and Upchurch do a great job putting it all together.

Relay For Life is about a community that takes up the fight.

According to the Relay For Life Committee, "The American Cancer Society is sincerely grateful for the efforts of all members of this community. Thanks to team members, supporters, team captains, sponsors, and corporate sponsors. Because of you, lives are saved and lives are changed."

Survivors are the heart

Judgeships

Continued from page 1A

soak in," Stancil said. "It's an honor to have been named to a short list of anything appointed by the Governor."

Stancil, a native of Lumpkin County and graduate of Lumpkin County High School, said that he met with Gov. Deal on Monday to discuss the judgeship.

"I've had a lot of folks in Towns and Lumpkin counties that are excited about this," he said. "I've had a lot of calls of support from local attorneys. I can't read the Governor's mind, but I think he's giving the mountain candidates a lot of consideration."

"Whatever works out in either scenario will be fine," Stancil said. "I'm happy where I am, but I'd be honored to serve."

Governor Deal will spend the next two weeks interviewing the finalists.

He could make a quick decision; he could wait until July to make the final call.

Barrett retired from the bench in March following an incident in Lumpkin County Superior Court where he brandished his handgun to make a point during a hearing. Alderman resigned following an investigation by the Judicial Qualifications Commission.