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School Art Class was happy to oblige and Marsh's enthusiastic virtuosos from 4th Block went to work.

The end result was 30 new paintings hanging in the cafeteria.

These local masterpieces, painted on drop clothes purchased by Waller, beholds a painting on each side of the cloth, inspired by a famous artist.

"Ms. Waller approached me about it and was so gracious and kind to purchase the materials for us," Marsh said. "The students were given two artists and each side

is inspired by those artists. My students researched their artists and took that artists style and designed a panther paw their artist would actually paint. They took a famous piece of artwork from that artist and did the painting and put the Panther paw in color and the background in gray scale so you could see the Panther paw."

The project began in September and continued throughout the semester before the finishing touches were added in December.

While school was on

Christmas break, each masterpiece was hung from the ceiling of the cafeteria.

"I felt like we needed to incorporate the students artwork and all the kids really appreciated it," Waller said. "In the past they've done other projects and this is no different, just on a smaller scale."

Alexis Bruno, Emma Crosby, Anna Danek, Emily Dietrich, Sara Dietrich, Emma Garrison, Brooke Hamby, Emma Henderson, Julia Ingalls, Amanda Kraus, Nicholas McDougal, Hannah Quigley, Sage Royston, Dal-

ton Taylor, and Seth Wheeler currently have four months of hard work hanging in the school's cafeteria.

An old proverb says that "life is short, but art is forever," and thankfully art remains a vital program at Union County High School and hopefully Marsh's class and her skilled group of craftsmen will remain a muse for Union County students for many years to come.

Also, here's hoping that the inner artist in all of us continues to thrive and flourish deep inside each one of us.

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"We want to recognize the Honorable J.W. Payne for his 44 years of service as Union County Tax Commissioner," Thomas told the crowd. "We thank you for serving the citizens of Union County with dedication and integrity and most of all, we want to thank you for your continued commitment and service to the Democratic Party of Union County."

Some of J.W.'s dedicated and most loyal friends attended the event. They included former longtime State Rep. Carlton Colwell, former longtime State Rep. Charles Jenkins, Bill Parker, Doug Gooch, Susie Phillips, Julie Barton, Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris and

many others.

"I thank all of you from the bottom of my heart," J.W. said. "I thank you for the friendship that I've had with each one of you. I've got to give the Good Lord the credit for my success, my wife Bobbi."

J.W. joked throughout the evening about the other political party. Well, at least we believe he was joking.

"I've been out today looking for any good Republicans," J.W. said. "I'll tell you, there's not many of them out there."

"The folks that grew up here in this county didn't see Democrats or Republicans, they voted the person, relied on

their character. We knew who we were voting for, we didn't just go and click 'R' or 'D' because it was beside someone's name.

"We've got to get back to that way of thinking," he said. "It's what's wrong with this country today."

J.W. stayed until the last person had gone. One of the few remaining was Thomas as he helped clean up following the event.

J.W. noticed that all the collection buckets were empty, that no one had left behind a dime. He asked Thomas about it, and he explained that the party members had suspended the evening's business duties to

celebrate J.W.'s retirement.

J.W. told Thomas that the evening wasn't over until the business was done.

He reached inside his wallet and pulled out two \$20 bills. He dropped them in the bucket.

"Now we can go home," J.W. said. "I've got a date with a grouse tomorrow."

Always the Democrat J.W. and you always will be.

Sir, we salute you and your ideals and the wonderful family that you raised right here in Union County.

Thanks for the memories J.W. and may your bird dogs enjoy your retirement as much as you will.

Making things happen for rural America

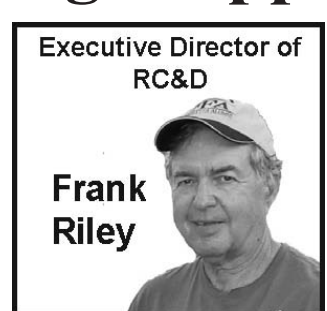
The Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D has two ongoing projects that fulfill our mission of "assisting local people in planning and carrying out activities that conserve natural resources, support economic development, enhance the environment, and improve the standard of living for all citizens."

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division, commonly referred to as the EPD, is given the responsibility to protect and restore Georgia's environment for all of us to enjoy.

The EPD takes the lead in ensuring clean air, water and land and along with partners such as the RC&D. Together, they pursue a sustainable environment that provides a foundation for a vibrant economy and healthy communities.

They accomplish these goals by enforcing environmental rules and regulations and by providing grants to fund preventative and restoration projects along our streams and waterways.

Under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awards grants to the state EPD to fund eligible projects which support the implementation of the Georgia Nonpoint Source Management Program.



Executive Director of RC&D

Frank Riley

The EPD grants these funds for the prevention, control, and/or abatement of water pollution to landowners through organizations such as the RC&D who implement and administer these funds.

There must be a 40 percent local match of the funds with 60 percent provided by the EPD grant.

The local match may be in the form of cash or in-kind services applied to the specific project.

Currently the RC&D has two of these grants in process, one in the Mud Creek/Little Mud Creek watershed in Habersham, Hall, and Banks Counties and the other in the Cold Water Creek watershed in Hart and Elbert counties.

The main goal of these grants is to help landowners improve water quality or repair environmental issues on their property that can impact neighbors downstream and harm the environment.

Elements of the funded projects may include; instal-

lation of fencing to keep livestock out of streams that can cause stream bank erosion, stream sedimentation, fecal coli form, E Coli, and reduced oxygen levels in the water; Solar panels to provide "green" power for lights and to pump water for livestock; Rain barrel systems to catch rainwater for watering livestock; Heavy use livestock feeding facilities; Pasture and hay land planting; Stream crossings that minimize stream bank erosion and sedimentation; and other projects that improve or preserve our natural resources.

Another 319 project demonstrates the positive effects of tree revegetations on eroding stream banks.

A tree revegetation is a method that uses whole trees cabled tightly together in giant bundles.

These bundles are then secured to the eroded stream bank in a shingling effect, just like the shingles on a roof, through a system of anchoring cables.

Tree revegetations have been shown to greatly slow the stream current along an eroding bank, decrease erosion and allow sediment to be deposited in the tree branches of the revegetation.

The deposited sediment forms an excellent seedbed in which the seeds of riparian trees such as sycamores and maple, as well as other plants,

can sprout and grow.

The resulting growth spreads roots throughout the revetment and into the existing stream bank. In addition to slowing stream bank erosion, tree revegetations also provide excellent habitat for birds, fish, and other forms of wildlife.

The RC&D also has one more 319(h) grant in the works for the Town Creek Watershed of White County.

Applications for participating landowners for this grant will be open soon.

Frank M. Riley, Jr, CF is Executive Director of the Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council.

For more information on Chestatee/Chattahoochee RC&D Council, visit our web site www.chestchattred.org - Phone 706- 894-1591 e-mail susan.ccrd@gmail.com

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mas season and is actively involved in Union County Family Connection.

"What really makes the Jaycees stand out is what they give back and this group gives back in a big way," Williams said. "They do Christmas events each year for needy kids and they give wrapped gifts for the kids and Santa is there. Sometimes we forget how important these events are for the people who show up. Whether its one time in their life that they might need it or unfortunately if its an extended period of time. It's a gift from their heart to our community"

Blairsville Jaycees President Kim Bridges accepted the Business of the Quarter with humility, thankfulness and vowed that the Jaycees will always have Union County's best interests at the forefront of each decision they make.

"We all appreciate everybody in the community and really want to try and get everybody involved so its not just a Jaycees festival, but a community festival," Bridges said. "We really want to get the businesses involved and make it a countywide thing. We really appreciate your support and bearing with us when

we do stuff and having to deal with traffic, just the whole nine yards. But everything is for a good cause and we appreciate everybody."

The event was catered by Amazing Grace catering and sponsored by Foodland Supermarket.

And as a part of the Chamber's shop local campaign, Williams urged locals to pay the local grocers a visit.

"Foodland is a truly authentic experience," she said. "I was there not long ago and it blows my mind how they have the guys bring your groceries out. It's warm and fuzzy and just feels good."

Jane Brackett sworn in for NGTC Board of Directors

At the December Board of Directors meeting, Jane Brackett was officially sworn into office by Judge Chan Caudell.

Representing Fannin

County on the Board, Ms. Brackett is originally from Copperhill, TN. She moved to nearby rural Fannin County, GA in 1978, where she and her husband, Tom, raised two

sons.

Jane holds a Bachelor of Arts in Math from Vanderbilt University and a Master of Science in Statistics from the University of Tennessee. Following two years as an elementary school teacher, she worked for 29 years in information systems at an industrial chemicals plant in Copperhill, TN. Her positions ranged from computer programmer to IT manager. She has worked as a self-employed IT consultant since 2011.

Now retired, she and her husband enjoy many hobbies and her volunteer activities are focused on education as she serves on several scholarship committees, a literacy group, a women's health education council, and youth enrichment programs.

"We are excited to have Jane as our representative for the Fannin area," said NGTC President Dr. Gail Thaxton. "Her experience in IT as well as in the classroom will prove to be invaluable as we work to move the college forward during the coming years."

The NGTC Board of Directors meets the third Wednesday of every month and is responsible for overseeing the strategic direction of the college. NG16Z14CA