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Jennifer Cagle opened the banquet by thanking everyone in attendance and everyone who made the banquet possible.

"I want to thank the Booster Club for everything they have done throughout the season," Coach Stewart said. "Thank you to our Booster Club President Jason (Hughes), he's become one of my very good friends and I will miss him." Coach Stewart then thanked the Lady Panthers' players and Coach Cagle for their dedication and love of the game.

"Thanks to all the girls for coming to practice day-in and day-out and giving us everything they had. We both appreciate that, you make us love our jobs. And thanks to Coach Cagle for always being by my side for the past 15 years and our wonderful man-



Coach Jessica Stewart and her 2012 Union County Lady Panthers Softball Team. Photos/Todd Forrest

ager, Megan Beaver."

Despite the season not ending the way they had planned, the Lady Panthers still have plenty of reason to hold their heads high.

"We still accomplished some great things," Coach Stewart said. "We had a winning season for the seventh straight year. We were ranked No. 2 and stayed in the Top 10 all year, we played in our third straight Region Championship, which is something we set as our goal at the start of the year. We fell short by one run (of winning a third consecutive Region title) but I am still proud of them. We have three seniors who have signed to play college ball. Hannah Hughes was named Region 8-AA Player of the Year and we had four other girls recognized on the All-Region Team."

The first award handed out was the **Coach's Award** and it was given to Seeba.

"She stepped up and became a leader," Coach Stewart said. "She took charge this season. She decided that she was serious and she wanted to win. So she stepped up her game and took it to the next level."

The **Clutch Player Award** was presented to Byers.

"Prior to this season she had only pitched 25 varsity innings in her career," Coach Stewart said. "This year she threw 105 innings. I wanted the ball in her hands when the game was on the line. She gave us a chance to win every time she pitched."

Center fielder Carly Adams was awarded the **Gold Glove Award**.

"She has played several different positions during her career and never complained," Coach Stewart said. "She did whatever I asked her to do and turned into one of the best outfielders that I have ever coached."

Catcher Courtney Busbee received the **True Grit Award**.

"She's been a young leader behind the plate," Coach Stewart said. "This year she hit .344 and last year she hit .319. She was the youngest player named to the All-Region Team and I look forward to coaching her for two more years. She will break a lot of records before she is done."

The **Big Stick Award** belonged to Shawanna Brown.

"She came up big when we needed her to," Coach Stewart said. "We'll definitely miss her bat, her glove, we'll miss her in the dugout, and we'll miss her voice. We will miss everything about Shawanna."

Finally, Hannah Hughes was named **Most Valuable Player**.

"She started all 140 games in her four years. We've only had one other player do that for an entire career. She led in almost every offensive category. Not only did she lead us offensively, her defense was impressive. I'm going to miss her, but I will enjoy watching her play at North Georgia (College and State University) next year."

At the end of the event, a slide show was presented with photos from this past season. Tears would flow during one picture, then the room would break into laughter at the next. Union County will be forever thankful for the memories that the outgoing senior class have provided, while looking forward to the next group reclaiming what rightfully belongs in Blairsville - the Region 8-AA Championship.

Local students nominated for GOAL Award at NGTC

Honoring high achieving students at North Georgia Technical College is a long standing tradition. In fact, the Georgia Award for Occupational Leadership (GOAL) competition originated at the school more than 40 years ago.

The GOAL Program is designed to spotlight outstanding achievement by students in the Georgia Technical College System and to emphasize the importance of technical education in today's global workplace. Local GOAL winners are selected at each of the state's technical colleges. Through a series of competitive interviews, the top student of the system is identified.

"We really had great support from our faculty this year with 36 students being nominated," said Director of Student Affairs Dr. Fran Chastain. "We are proud of all the nominees. Each one did an outstanding job presenting their story and reasons for choosing technical education." GOAL candidates are nominated by an instructor and must carry at least a 3.0 GPA.

The first round of interviews with faculty and staff has been completed, and twelve have been selected as semifinalists. This group will be interviewed again by the Vice Presidents and Directors at the college who will select four fi-

nalists to be announced at the GOAL Breakfast on Tuesday, January 15, 2013. Those four will then be interviewed by members of the community who will choose the winner for the college.

Local 2012 GOAL candidates were Norma Garrett and Jordan Thomas in Applied Business Technology, Willadene Tyler in Accounting, Brit-tany Dyer in Criminal Justice, Laura Johnson of Hiwassee in Auto Collision, Isabella Rabideau of Morganton in Health Care Science, For more information on programs of study at North Georgia Technical College, visit www.northgatech.edu or call 706-754-7700.



Rotary In Motion

Recently the Union County Rotary Club was notified of a lady that was mobility impaired and unable to move around without assistance. To complicate matters, her home was not equipped for handicap/immobility access. A group of Rotarians came to the aid of our fellow citizen, Mrs. Helen Hanson, and constructed a handicap ramp for her. The group was led by Michael Berkman and ably assisted by Gene Windham, Cal Garcia, Lou Elder and Tom Higgins. Through the efforts of the UC Rotary Club and these dedicated Rotarians Mrs. Hanson and her caregivers can now safely leave and enter her home when needed.

Did you know that the Rotary Club in conjunction with UNICEF and the CDC assumed the responsibility of eradicating Polio through immunization throughout the world. Thanks to thousands and thousands of Rotarians around the world our goal is expected to be achieved sometime in the next 2 years. Only 3 countries remain to be vaccinated for this crippling disease.

The Union County Rotary Club meets each Wednesday at Noon at Cadence Bank. Should you be interested in joining the club to make a difference in our community, please contact Gene Windham at 706-781-3230 or visit our website at www.unioncountyrotaryclub.org. N(Nov21,24)CA