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sheriff's investigators and asked for an attorney, sheriff's reports show.

Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe said that Courson is no longer employed within the Union County School System.

Steppe declined comment on whether Courson was fired or resigned his teaching position, citing confidential details related to personnel matters.

The charges against Courson are related to a May 20, 2011 incident involving a 17-year-old female student.

Union County Sheriff's Office arrest warrants allege that the female performed oral sex on Courson in a classroom

bathroom at Union County High School.

Courson was a paraprop overseeing handicapped children at the school, sheriff's reports show.

Courson also is charged with two counts of sexual exploitation of children. The victim allegedly sent four photographs to Courson, including two naked photographs of herself from her cell phone.

Those photographs allegedly were sent in September 2011, sheriff's reports show.

The child pornography charges were filed in late November by Union County sheriff's investigator Lt. Mark Cecci after the Georgia Bu-

reau of Investigations' forensic computer team allegedly retrieved four images of the victim from Courson's computers, sheriff's reports show.

Sheriff's investigators seized five electronic devices capable of storing electronic data, sheriff's reports show.

Those items include Courson's school-issued computer, two iPads, a personal computer and Courson's cell phone, sheriff's reports show.

Courson was charged with sexual assault of a person under one's professional care in July, sheriff's reports show.

"It's basically the same charge as a prison guard hav-

ing sex with an inmate in custody," said Union County Sheriff's spokesman C.J. Worden.

The case against Courson is based heavily on electronic data seized from the devices, sheriff's reports show.

That data allegedly includes intimate and explicit instant messages between Courson and his then 17-year-old victim, sheriff's reports show.

It's also based on interviews with the victim and another Union County High School female student who was allegedly approached by Courson related to a similar sexual nature, sheriff's reports show.

Rotary...continued from Page 1A

Club helped to fund.

"The money is to help teachers buy supplies for their classrooms," Denise Windham said. "The rest of the money that didn't go to the teachers went to the school for them to buy ink and paper to operate with for the next six months."

"We are so grateful to the Rotary Club," UCES Principal Patricia Cook said. "I don't know what we would do without them."

Previously the Rotary Club supplied \$30,000 for one of the four computer labs at Union County Elementary.

The Union County Ro-

tary Club gave \$3,500, the district put in \$7,000, the St. Thomas, Virgin Islands Club put in a little over \$3,500, their district chipped in \$3,500, then the Rotary Foundation applied for a grant and acquired the rest of the money needed.

"Because it was an international grant, it had to be an international club, so the Rotary Club of St. Thomas had to put in more than us, so they put in \$3,500, plus some," said 2010-11 Rotary District Governor Gene Windham.

According to Denise Windham, the students raised the \$3,500 that the Union County Rotary Club put up.

"They raised the money and our district matched it," Denise Windham said. "Now we're working to raise funds to put in a computer lab at an underprivileged school in St. Thomas. We are sending them \$3,500 and just doing the same thing in reverse."

Also in attendance was David Stovall, the past District Governor and past Rotary Foundation Regional Coordinator.

Following lunch in the Elementary School cafeteria, where the students, teachers and their guests dined on chicken alfredo, steak and gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, fruit medley and a roll, the club met in the gymnasium for a short gathering and check presentations.

Stovall then stepped forward to present the Union County Rotary Club with a banner for joining the Paul Harris Fellow Club.

Rotary clubs in which all dues-paying members are Paul Harris Fellows can be certified as a 100 percent Paul Harris Fellow Club and are eligible to receive a one-time special recognition banner from The Rotary Foundation.

"It's especially rewarding for me today to be in Blairsville and present this banner to this club," Stovall said. "There are 34,529 clubs in the Rotary around the world and that is a lot of clubs. A lot of people give to the Rotary Foundation around the world and we raise a lot of money, not just for the foundation but

for special projects, like Polio Plus, and we're down to only a few countries left that are still polio-endemic. In the more than 34,000 clubs, only 2,114 clubs last year were 100 percent sustaining, Paul Harris Fellows members. That means you have given \$100 per member. I want to congratulate you and please keep it up."

After 25 years, the Rotary and its partners are still continuing the fight against Polio and are on the brink of eradicating the disease.

Gene Windham told a moving a story about a young girl who's grandfather had battled polio.

"I remember a girl saying that 'I didn't know what was wrong with my grandpa until today. They said he had polio but I didn't understand what it was. I will raise all the money that I can because I don't want another kid to ever have to go through that.' Because of our partnerships we've been able to vaccinate more than 25,000 kids for polio," Gene Windham said.

Toys...continued from Page 1A

ages 1-12, said Sheriff's Office spokesman C.J. Worden.

"The Union County Sheriff's Office sponsors the Give-a-Gift Program," Worden said. "We are actively seeking donations of toys or money. We can assist with picking up donations from you if we need to. We respectfully request that no donations be made of any type of toy weapon."

The Vogel event was a shot in the arm for a program that is lagging a bit behind in 2012.

The program began in 2001, Worden said, and served more than 200 children in 2011 with support from the community.

"We recognize that the economy is still in rough shape," Worden said. "The need for this program is greater than ever because of that factor."

On this day, event goers heard Christmas carols, enjoyed the fellowship of others and were treated to hot chocolate, hot cider, and of course, Christmas cookies.

Also on hand was Ole Saint Nick and his elves. The Jolly Ole Elf was listening to the Christmas wishes of all the boys and girls that made it to the event.

After an evening of song and fellowship, the event goers, many of which were from local churches, witnessed the lighting of the Great Tree.

The tree, incidentally, is surrounded by almost life-size deer ornaments, as if the Christmas tree were a part of the natural setting in the state park.



Photos by Lowell Nicholson

Not too late to get your flu shot

The CDC reported this week that flu activity has increased in many Southern states including Georgia and predicted flu activity could be higher this flu season than in recent years. The good news is it's not too late to get your flu shot. Your local health department encourages all residents who have delayed getting vaccinated to get their seasonal flu shot now.

The cost for the flu shot is \$25. Medicare, Medicaid, Peach-Care, and State Health Benefits Plan (United Health Care and Cigna) are accepted. Please bring your insurance card with you when coming to the health department for your flu shot.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine every year. While everyone should get the flu vaccine, it is especially important for certain people, who are at more risk from flu-related complications to get immunized. These groups include: pregnant women, children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old, people 50 years of age and older, people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions, people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care

facilities.

People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including: health care workers, household contacts of persons at high risk

for complications from the flu.

Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated). NT(Dec12A)SH