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and Brooke Hamby will be delivering the Salutatory Address in Friday's ceremony.

The two young women are longtime friends, and they joined in a hug at the announcement of their accomplishments during the recognition program.

Along with her valedictory honors for having achieved the highest grade point average in her class, Danek is also the 2016 STAR Student for Union County High School, having scored the highest in her class on the SAT.

"It was a lot of hard work, and just making sure I stuck with it," said Danek, looking back over the years leading up to graduation. "I had a lot of help from teachers, and my parents were always encouraging."

Hamby, too, said that she had plenty of help along the way, acknowledging with humility that sometimes the cliché is true, that it does take a village.

"Most of all support from my family, friends, coaches and teachers," said Hamby, describing for whom she was most thankful. "They all really just encouraged me and supported me and taught me that anything is possible if I just work hard and believe in myself."

When it comes to the speeches each will give on the night of graduation, the two hope to deliver messages that will resonate with their entire class, though they plan to keep things lighthearted.

On top of the announcement of Danek and Hamby as



The 165 UCHS seniors anxiously await graduation ceremonies at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium on Friday. Front row, UCHS Valedictorian and STAR Student Anna Danek. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

valedictorian and salutatorian, seniors from all walks of the Class of 2016 received recognition for the hard work they have put in over the years.

Students received awards and cords, certificates and stoles on Thursday, May 19, honored for everything from being blood donors to completing CTAE Pathways, from being in 4-H to being on the Mock Trial Team.

Three seniors received recognition for their decisions to volunteer in the United States Armed Forces following graduation: Josh Daniel with the U.S. Navy, Cassandra Carlton with the U.S. Navy and Brady Lawn with the U.S. Coast Guard.

In case of rain on Friday, May 27, graduation will be held in the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center, and students will be alerted by 2 p.m. the day of graduation

should this contingency plan need to be enacted.

Also should it rain, the Union County High School Gym will house overflow guests with a live streaming of the ceremony.

Anyone can attend the commencement exercises in the stadium, though in the event of rain, each graduating senior will be limited to five tickets to give out to friends and family members to be used to enter the fine arts center.

In the event of fine weather, a fireworks show will follow the ceremony on the football field, and guests will be asked to remain seated, as the lights will be shut off after graduation to allow for better viewing of the fireworks and the playing of a senior video on an inflatable screen set up on the field.

UCSO takes more drugs off the street

Gary Lee Hogsed, 66, Betty Eugenia Hogsed, 61, and Betty's son William Wesley Gibson, 44, all of Union County, were arrested for the manufacture of marijuana on Wednesday, May 18, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Prior to the arrests, the Union County Sheriff's Office had received information that guns were possibly being fired at the residence of the Hogsed and Gibson, accord-

ing to the sheriff's office.

"We assisted the Georgia Department of Community Supervision on a field check, which resulted in the findings of two rifles and four marijuana plants," said UCSO Capt. Chad Deyton with the Narcotics Division.

All three individuals were arrested on charges of manufacturing marijuana, according to the sheriff's office.

Gary Hogsed and Gibson were charged with two

counts each of possession of a firearm by a felon, according to Capt. Deyton, and Gary Hogsed was also charged with violating parole, while Gibson was charged with violating probation.

"If you're going to do this, you're not going to do it in our community," said Union County Sheriff Mack Mason. "We're going to do what it takes to keep the community safe."

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