

Marquee...from Page 1A

a program like 12 for Life that could be replicated and implemented throughout the State.

Mitch Griggs, Executive Director of the Union County Development Authority, introduced the program and accepted the designation on behalf of Union County.

"This is a really big deal," Griggs said. "I knew that this would be a worthwhile effort because of Mike Beatty's involvement and I'm appreciative of the Authority's Board of Directors' support of this effort. This is a classic win-win-win situation.

Challenged youth, who are almost certain to become dropout statistics, are given the opportunity to work and become productive citizens as long as they fulfill their high school and postgraduate education responsibilities.

In return, our area businesses get motivated workers who become future full time employees.

Interestingly, the Southwire experience has shown that GPP workers are at least as, and in many cases more, productive than many companies' regular workforce.

Finally, the community benefits directly from the public agency partnerships formed with GPP. As a Marquee Community, Union County will receive additional considerations from numerous State and Federal grant, loan and technical assistance programs that will help the community implement our plans to improve the County."

According to GPP statistics, one in three high school students in Georgia will not graduate – often due to factors outside of their control, such as poverty or inad-

equate housing. Currently 1.3 million Georgians over the age of 18 don't have high school diplomas and are not adequately prepared for the workplace.

But Southwire and the 12 for Life program have provided a workplace model for replication throughout the state through GPP that is changing those numbers.

Thanks to the eight-year success rate of 12 for Life, nearly 900 at-risk students have graduated from high school with employability skills.

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edly could smell the aroma of freshly grilled hotdogs and

hamburgers. Moments later, the dog's owner came to the event looking for her four-legged companion, and she wasn't disappointed, although, the Chihuahua was.

Later in the day, a gray and white kitten found its way to the annual cookout. The kitty was a hit with the young ones.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris stopped by for a hamburger in between a number of local events. He wasn't disappointed.

"Another great day in Union County with beautiful weather," Paris said. "We always appreciate our volunteer firefighters. Station 10 continues to do a great job covering the area within the city of Blairsville.

"We're always glad to have the volunteers and the extra equipment here working with the city of Blairsville,"



Paris said. "We appreciate all that the volunteers do. They take time out on a beautiful Saturday that they could be spending with family, and instead they're here serving up hotdogs and hamburgers to their biggest fans. We appreciate the general support that they receive from the com-

munity."

Mark your calendar for June 20. That's when Station 3 on Waldroup Road, just past Jim's Smokin' Que will hold its Open House from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Don't worry about eating before you come, the volunteers will take care of you.

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enough way to really make sure that we're taking care of the citizens and the property of the city. This way, in this charter, once it's adopted, will give the council more leeway to make more ordinances for the benefit of the city."

Residents can get a copy of the new charter from the Union County Courthouse, in the office of the Clerk of Superior Court, or at Blairsville City Hall.

"The old charter was just so out of date that in it, it had our elections being held in September, information like that in it," said Mayor Conley. "One of the things it helped us to get up to date for the police department, on everything that they have to do pertaining to what current law is from the state.

"It gives the city more ability to have more power to be able to have more services for the city if the city chooses to do so and is financially in shape to do so, a whole lot more services than what we do now," continued Mayor

Conley.

The new charter paves a way for the city to establish a garbage service in the future, for example, or its own animal control, as far as the potential for providing new services to the city.

Hulsey, Oliver & Mahar, LLP have submitted the proposed charter to State Rep. Stephen Allison.

"After the second reading, which is expected to occur in July, a second resolution will be adopted, directing that the proposed city charter be submitted to the Office of Legislative Counsel for review and comment," the law firm said in a letter to Rep. Allison. "Once that has been completed, the mayor and council will vote to have the new charter be submitted to the General Assembly for passage in the 2016 Legislative Session."

The second reading of the proposed City Charter will occur in the next regular meeting of the mayor and city council, on Tuesday, July 7, at

City Hall.

Also in the meeting, Blairsville's Downtown Development Authority Program Manager Darren Harper updated the mayor and council on the Haralson Project.

"Today we held our pre-bid meeting for the Haralson Project," said Harper in a statement. "Based on attendance, we expect to get at least two bids. All but a few minor issues with the project have been resolved, and we expect construction to start no later than Aug. 1, 2015.

"The project will be completed within 120 days. We anticipate minimal disruption to traffic, and are making sure that parking is unaffected during the road building phase."

In the next meeting, city council is expected to approve at least two contracts in regards to waste disposal at city facilities, as well as adopt the new city charter and address minor changes to local alcohol ordinances.

Awake...from Page 1A

Blue Ridge, and the third in Murphy, NC, where she and area residents pray at the Nantahala Regional Library.

In the Blairsville anniversary meeting on Thursday, June 4, Long announced that the movement has reached yet another community, and will be taking place for the first time in Ellijay at the Gilmer County Recreation Center on June 25, the fourth Thursday of every month thereafter at 11:59 a.m.

"You always ask the Lord's will going into a city, and to lead you to the correct people who He wants to orchestrate the meetings," said Long. "Mayor (Jim) Conley said yes when I came to him first, and he's the one the Lord sent me to in this city.

"That's what I do, I go into the mayor's office, the sheriff, the chief of police, and talk to them first," continued Long. "I go to the officials of the city and get their blessing to open that up in the cities, and then I go to the counties as well, and to the pastors, the local ministerial associations, for example."

Looking back over the past two years, Long had no doubt that she would still be leading the prayer meetings in Blairsville, as well as the others, to this day.

"Because God's given us a vision to do a 150-mile radius," said Long. "That covers quite a few counties and states – it covers seven states. But you begin at home. Like Jesus said, go to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the outermost parts."

Now that each Thursday is taken up, Long is looking into options for hosting prayer meetings in other cities and counties.

"I'm still praying about that, whether we should double up or whether we should

create another day, but Thursday, it seems to be like, the National Day of Prayer has always been on the first Thursday," said Long. "And I didn't even think about that when we started this one, but that's the way it's been, and so if it piggybacks, that's fine. What we'll do is find people to help facilitate these prayer meetings that we've got going."

Thursday's anniversary meeting was opened with a welcome and invocation from Mayor Conley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, then a prayer for the military by Pastor Marty Duncan.

Dale Shaffer led the Body of Christ unity prayer,

and Melonie Rosales offered the payer over education and schools in America.

Jim Buckman prayed for the nation's leaders, while Diane Shaffer prayed for the current crusade in Union and Fannin counties.

Anniece Buckman prayed over youth in America, and Pastor Asa Dockery prayed on repentance and Christian revival in America and the churches of the land.

Pastor David Shearow prayed for local and state governments, and Mitzi Brumley prayed over the "Persecuted Church."

Long led the closing prayer, and the standing-room-only group sang "How Great Thou Art."