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presented the students with their awards and talked about each student they have worked with throughout this school year.

“We work mostly with your students to try to keep up with what they are doing, where they are going, how far they are into the process of graduating, and we have tonight, instead of senior superlatives, we have our superlatives,” said Young.

These unique superlative awards were put together to recognize students for their individuality and served as a way to award the students with a fun title.

The awards featured creative names, such as the Houdini Award, which went to Savannah Bain for disappearing the quickest after dinner, and the Energizer Bunny Award, which went to Jessi Bracken for her readiness to work and get work done.

Following the superlative awards, students were awarded based on their academic achievements in categories such as math, science, history, English, and CTAE courses.

Student Ethan Nolte received the Mountain Peaks Award, which is given to the

student who best exemplifies the values and spirit that the school wishes to encourage.

“This award is given in recognition of representing the spirit of Mountain Ed and serving as a role model for others, and I’m proud to present this award to Ethan Nolte,” Perren said.

Some of the students of the school participated in dual enrollment courses and opportunities to help them get an advantage and advance in college courses while they worked for their diplomas.

“Tonight, we want to recognize the students that dual enrolled, which means that they have taken high school classes and college classes that serve as a credit for both college and high school,” said Counselor Emily Cobb. “We have four students that I want to recognize, and between the four them, there were ... 12 dual enrollment courses that were successfully completed, and they will receive a dual enrollment honor cord at graduation.”

The four students that completed the courses were Taylor Jones, Victoria Hilbish, Victoria Singleton and Calli



Senior Ethan Nolte receiving the Mountain Peaks Award from MEC Union Site Administrator Roy Perren.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

Burgwardt.

Students who are leaving Mountain Ed are happy that they made the choice to attend the school and pursue their diploma in an environment they were more comfortable in.

“I wish I would have known about the school when I was a freshman, because it is such an amazing school,” said graduating senior Jessi Bracken. “It has been better

than the regular brick and mortar that I have gone to, and the teacher-student ratio is amazing.”

Commencement exercises for the Mountain Education Charter High School Class of 2019 will take place on the Dahlonega campus of the University of North Georgia on Saturday, May 25, at 1 p.m.

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condition to meet the emergency needs of the people in the precinct, and in Union County in general.

It also gives the people a chance to meet the volunteers, sit down and have a burger or a hot dog with them, and see how their contributions are making a difference.

Volunteer firefighters, support personnel, their spouses and auxiliary members come from surrounding precincts as well to help out with cooking and clean-up and whatever else needs done.

Station 10 Lt. Daniel Byrd and his wife Lesa did a great job of cooking and serving the guests.

This Open House featured lots of things for children to find out about. They got to play with a fire hose and learn how it works; get inside the apparatus and see all the bells and whistles; shoot off a fire extinguisher; and meet Sparky and Smokey the Bear.

And they also got to watch an Air Life helicopter land, meet the flight crew and go inside the aircraft.

For the adults, there was food, sodas and drawings for lots of donated prizes. And there was the opportunity to meet Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, County Manager Larry Garrett and Union County Fire Chief/E-911 Director David Dyer.

Back in 2014, Station 4 had a total staff of about six or seven people. Today, Station 4 boasts a staff of 19 volunteers, four of whom have come aboard since 2018.

Stations 4, 7 and 8 have also acquired some newer apparatus in the last couple of years, replacing a vintage 1980

Engine with a 2004 Engine that was purchased entirely with fund drive donations from the community.

Station 8 now has a 2000 Engine that replaced a vintage late '70s Brush truck, and Station 7 now has a 2001 Engine that replaced a vintage 1980 Brush truck.

These apparatuses were purchased with a combination of fund drive donations and SPLOST dollars, but, by far, mostly with donations.

Lt. David Ueltzen, who runs the show at Station 7, said his goals for this year are to continue paying down the fire truck and rescue truck loans, replace some worn out chain saws and other equipment, and equip new members with turnout gear, wildfire gear and radios.

Ueltzen also wants to start a fund to equip the new Station 13, which will be located at the entrance to Hidden Harbor on US 129 North and will be part of the Station 4 precinct.

The Union County Fire Department is always looking for more volunteers, and Station 4 is no different.

“If you want to volunteer, there are many, many ways you can volunteer,” said Ueltzen. “But you’ve got to start off by getting an application at UCFD Headquarters, Station 1, in Blairsville.

Contrary to popular belief, volunteers aren’t all firefighters. They are also support personnel that can help out at fire or other emergency, doing things like traffic control, getting a piece of equipment for a firefighter or emergency responder, or even handing out bottles of water.

Volunteering can be very rewarding. It’s a great feeling to be able to help out a stranger, or maybe a neighbor, and feel like those actions make a difference.

Editor’s Note: North Georgia News staff writer Mark Smith, who authored this article, is himself a volunteer firefighter out of Station 4.



Kids having educational fun with a fire extinguisher at Station 4.

Photo by Mark Smith



Sparky is a gentle dog who loves kids and fire safety.

Photo by Mark Smith



The Air Life flight crew giving tours of their medical chopper at Station 4 on May 18.

Photo by Mark Smith

Notice of Union County School System Special Education Records

In compliance with the Georgia Record Act, the Union County Board of Education records retention schedule, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations on the destruction of data collected, maintained, or used in the provision of a free and appropriate public education of students with disabilities in the Union County Schools, the Special Education department announces its intention to destroy special education records after June 17, 2019.

Records of students who were enrolled in a special education program in the Union County School System who were born before June 1, 1997 and were 22 years of age by June 1, 2018, or graduated

with a regular high school diploma, are no longer needed for educational purposes.

The student may need these records for Social Security or other reasons. If you, as a former special education student, wish to obtain these records prior to destruction, you should contact the Special Education Records Department, Union County Board of Education, 124 Hughes Street, Blairsville, GA 30512.

Positive identification will be required before records can be released to the individual.

For more information, contact the Special Education Records Department at (706) 745-2322 between the hours of 8 AM and 4 PM, Monday through Friday. (May22,24)CA