

Championship...from Page 1A



The Union County Cross Country Boys Team on the winners' podium Saturday after taking Second Place in the state tournament. Photo by Todd Forrest

difficult of the two.
 "Nobody expected me to win my first (championship)," she said. "This year, everyone knew that I was going for two in a row, so there was a lot of expectations riding on me."
 Meanwhile, the Union County boys were unable to repeat as State Champions, coming in Second Place in

a tight battle among the Top Three.
 Oglethorpe County held off Union County by four points and Third Place Bleckley County by seven to claim the Class AA State title.
 Leading the way for the Panthers was junior Luke Gambrell, who placed fourth with a time of 17:35.

Sophomore Hunter Hartzog came in 11th with a time of 17:55, but it wasn't enough to topple Oglethorpe.
 For more on Union County's day at the Class AA State Championships, plus interviews with Sanchez and Head Coach Paige Dyer, check out this week's Sports Section.

Cookout...from Page 1A

they're a Woodmen member and have something with us, if they get killed in the line of duty, we give their family an extra \$25,000.

"We just wanted to make sure they were aware of that." Swanson and Shumaker did sell policies to several first responders over the two-day luncheon, but everyone got a steak lunch regardless of who did and didn't buy life insurance coverage.

"We appreciate everything first responders do," Swanson said. "We understand it's a hard job, and we want to show our appreciation."

For his part, Sheriff Mack Mason said he was thankful to Swanson, Shumaker and others in the community willing to express their gratitude for the hard work of Union County's first responder men and women.

"Considering the way some parts of the nation are against law enforcement in this day and time, Union County citizens are not like that," Mason said. "I attribute that to us having



WoodmenLife cooked 100 steaks for first responders using this mobile gas grill at the Union County Sheriff's Office on Oct. 29 and Oct. 30.

a good staff and coverage to do our jobs. When people have a need, we rise to the challenge.

"It's very comforting to have businesses and citizens behind us. If you've got a low crime rate, the citizens can go about their day to day activities, and I've always said that our biggest asset is the people of this county backing us."

"When they see something, they let us know,

they have confidence in us to call us, that we'll address the situation at hand. And I appreciate them doing that very much."

Added Mason, "We appreciate our businesses as well. We try our best to protect them and their assets. They support us, and the citizens of the county support us, and I'm just very thankful for that."

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