

# SPLOST

...from Page 1A

Community Center for \$5.5 million, and County administrative facilities upgrades, improvements, equipment, and vehicles for \$1 million.

Paris said approximately \$100,000 will be used for library upgrades, improvements, and equipment.

Approximately \$1 million will be used for Public Safety facilities, vehicles, and equipment, and \$6 million will be used toward roads, streets, and bridges.

Approximately \$200,000 will be used for Solid Waste upgrades, improvements, and equipment, Paris said.

"We will begin renova-

tions at the Transfer Station next year, and then we hope to finish the renovations of the Transfer Station in the next SPLOST," he said.

Parks and Recreation upgrades, slated for \$3.4 million, are expected to include a splash pool adjacent to the current Meeks Park pool, and possibly, the construction of an Amphitheater, Paris said.

"We hope to be able to construct a splash pool adjacent to the current Meeks Park Pool, refurbish some softball fields, and last, but certainly not least, we would like to construct an Amphitheater.

"We are very excited about the use an amphitheater

would get from the community, churches, festivals, musicians, and many other groups," he said.

The City of Blairsville will receive approximately \$1.5 million of the \$19 million in SPLOST IV proceeds.

City projects include administrative buildings and equipment for \$200,000; Public Safety equipment and vehicles for \$200,000; Public Works vehicles, equipment, roads, and sidewalks for \$500,000; and Water and Sewer System improvements for \$600,000.

If the referendum had been defeated, Paris said the county's hands would have

been tied.

"There wouldn't have been anything that we could do," he said. "Fortunately, our voters realized that. The necessity for many of these services and facilities will not go away.

"The easiest way to pay for them is through continuing the SPLOST, with visitors and residents alike helping to make the improvements possible," Paris said. "Without the continuation of SPLOST, the burden would be on taxpayers by the necessity to increase the property tax rate to be able to meet the needs of our county.

"The voters were well educated about this," he said.

# Emma

...from Page 1A

For a defending State Champion, Garrison wasn't getting much respect entering the race and some experts were picking senior Caroline Reed from Wesleyan as the favorite. Reed was considered the more experienced racer and the fact that Garrison hadn't faced the same level of competition that Reed had seen this fall.

Garrison quickly silenced the doubters as she was able to separate herself from the pack during the first mile and held a 15-second lead at the 1-mile mark, leaving many spectators shocked at how easily Garrison was able to distance herself from the competition.

She was able to stretch her lead over Reed to more than 30 seconds at the 2-mile mark,

and similar to last year, the second place runner was completely gassed trying to keep up with Garrison's pace. With less than 800 meters to go, Reed ran out of steam, allowing Lovett freshman Serena Tripodi to move into second, but still 150 meters back of Garrison.

"I didn't notice that I had pulled away," Garrison said. "The last 800 meters were really hard and I was really afraid that the second girl was going to speed up and start kicking it because I had nothing more to give."

However, Garrison claimed that repeating as State Champion was more mentally draining than physical, and Union Head Coach Jackie Hughes concurred.

"Emma was under a lot

of pressure this year," Coach Hughes said. "As the defending state champion, she had a target on her back. She was the girl to beat in every race. That can definitely wear on you after awhile. I thought Emma handled that pressure very well. She was a little nervous before the race, but not overly so. Right before it started she seemed to settle in and her attitude was calm and determined. I was nervous for her, because I knew how much pressure she had been under."

Garrison's State Championship led the Lady Panthers to an 11th place finish. And without a senior on the squad, Coach Hughes looks for continued success in 2014.

"The biggest thing I ask them to do in the off season

is to keep running," Coach Hughes said. "This is the best time to build an endurance base by adding to their mileage and then mixing in some speed work every now and then. Doing that in the off season allows them to keep in running condition and helps prevent injuries when practice resumes in August."



Above, accompanied by her teammates, Emma Garrison takes a deep breath prior to her second championship run at Carrollton High School. Below, Garrison has separated from the pack at the midway point of the Class AA Cross Country Championships. Photos/Todd Forrest

## Former UCHS student performs

Patric Reutter, a 2005 alumnus of Union County High School, will play the part of Akbar in Central Washington University's Central Theatre Ensemble production of Nanawatai. Reutter is a junior at CWU pursuing a bachelor's of fine arts-performance degree in the Theatre Arts department. He formerly attended Meridian Community College. His parents are Deborah Reutter and Steve Tant.

Nanawatai follows the struggle of a Soviet tank crew commanded by a tyrannical officer during the 1980s invasion of Afghanistan. The crew is separated from its unit and pursued through the mountains by a band of Mujahadeen. The play, which was the basis of the cult film classic, *The Beast*, explores the how ingrained cultural norms are betrayed by the brutal realities of war.