

Grads ...continued from Page 1A

post-secondary education. All of you are capable of doing great things."

Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe praised the Senior Classes of UCHS and WGHS for setting a high standard for future graduates.

"Your academic accomplishments have been many," Steppe said. "You have set a high bar for those who will follow you. You have brought honor and respect to yourselves, your families, your school and our community. You will be missed,



Drea Morgan Kelley but the world needs people like you for the betterment of mankind," he said. "I wish each and every one of



Emma Suebeth Williams you great success in your future endeavors."

Gary Davenport, chairman of the Union

County Board of Education praised the graduates of the Class of 2013.

"Always remember as you look to the future, never stop believing in yourself," Davenport said. "Best wishes for your future."

On Saturday, May 25th, nine Mountain Area Christian Academy seniors will make that final walk at Temple Baptist Church in Morganton.

Drea Morgan Kelley is the Valedictorian for the Class of 2013. Emma Suebeth Williams is the Class of 2013 Salutatorian.

CCC...continued from Page 1A

drifted onto the wrong side of the law.

Grant later taught at Central Carolina Technical College, teaching another generation the skills he learned during the construction of Vogel State Park.

"I couldn't have gotten a better education anywhere else," Grant said, referring to his days working for the CCC. "It definitely had an impact on my life."

Organized into outdoor government camps, the CCC Boys worked in conservation and development of land resources owned by federal, state, and local governments.

They planted 3 billion trees to replace the forests that had been devastated by unlimited harvesting. They fought fires, worked in flood control, drained swamplands, and built public access and service roads in rural areas.

Almost 800 parks were created, and state parks like Vogel were built.

The CCC Boys wore uniforms, lived in tents, and earned \$30 a month in wages.

They sent \$25 of those dollars home to their parents to keep their families solvent.

"The money wasn't much, but it fed our families," he said. "And the work was good. I don't know what else I would have done with myself."

The pay wasn't much, but the money and the work had a notable effect on morale, Grant said.

"I didn't mind the work,"



Memorabilia inside the John Derden Civilian Conservation Corps Museum at Vogel State Park. Saturday's event marked the 80th anniversary of the CCC camps. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

he said. "I enjoyed it. The CCC gave us something to do, something we could be proud of, and it helped give us confidence because the work we were doing would live on and give people pleasure."

Vogel Preservationist Jessica Mou said the CCC Boys Reunion and the CCC Museum near the Group Shelter are important parts of Vogel's legacy.

"This is the 80th anniversary of the formation of the Civilian Conservation Corps," Mou said. "So, this is a very important year in the history of Vogel State Park. There will be a lot of events all over the country celebrating the CCC Boys."

"It was a very good turnout, especially considering the ages of these gentlemen," Mou said. "We had five come this year. We had two or three that couldn't make it because they were injured or ill. They're still around, the oldest is 99 years old and he broke his arm recently and couldn't make it."

Ninety-two-year-old Lewis Wilson made it.

He remembers clear cutting, fighting fires and building roads. He worked in South Carolina, Washington State and Oregon.

"It was hard work, but it was good work," Wilson said. "And I'm the only one from the CCC to be a Prisoner of War. I was held captive for 30 days in Italy during World War II. The war ended the 30th night we were there."

Herbert Brimer, 97, of Jasper was a cook at the CCC camps.

"I spent a lot of time in the kitchen," he said. "I enjoyed the work. It was real good for a young man my age, I was 19 then. That was my first experience with being in the mountains. I had never seen anything like it before. When I woke up the first morning, we was about 16 miles from Clayton."

"I walked out of that tent, looked up at those mountains, and I made a commitment to myself, that when I retire, if I ever do, I was going to move to these mountains. And that's exactly what I did, it's been great."

C.H. Brown is 86 years old and still working today, doing wood work in Lithonia.

"I enjoyed it, we did a lot of firefighting and planting trees," said Brown about his role with the CCC. "It was hard work, you'd be out planting trees all day. Just as quick as you'd get through eating supper, you'd be out fighting a fire all night long."

William Davis, 88, of Ellijay, helped build Fort Mountain State Park.

"It was very important to be a part of the CCC," he said. "It was during the Depression and we was trying to make a living. The CCC camps helped many, many people. It was the only way to have money come into their homes. It helped people make a living."

Vogel's Randy Gambrell said remembering the CCC days through the park's museum was an important way to remember the legacy of the nation's fight

against the Depression era.

"The museum is a part of the history of the park, and it's very important," Gambrell said. "It's a part of history that we want to keep going. When the CCC Boys Reunion started, there were 75 men that attended. Today, we had five or six, so that resource is slowly slipping away."

"This park is a legacy to those men," he said. "This event is a tribute to those men."