

# Dyer...from Page 1A

29 of which she spent teaching Algebra and Math in the Union County School System before retiring on June 30, 1982.

"Wilsonell is the oldest living member of the Choestoe Baptist Church, where she was the treasurer for many years," Paris said. "Therefore be it resolved that I, Commissioner Lamar Paris, hereby proclaim Oct. 11, 2020, as 'Wilsonell Dyer Day' in said county and express to her the admiration of the people of Union County on reaching the esteemed age of 101."

In putting the proclamation together, Paris called on his friend David Bradley to confirm some information, and Rachel Brown Brackett provided two yearbooks for the photos of Wilsonell Dyer that appear with this article.

Also in the meeting, Paris welcomed four Rotary Club of Union County members for a proclamation declaring Oct. 24, 2020, as "World Polio Day" in Union. He presented the proclamation to Rotary members Mitch Griggs, Ed Sternberg, Cathy O'Gara and John Day.

Day is the local foundation head for PolioPlus, which originated in 1985 as Rotary's global effort to eradicate polio.

"Rotary has been working on this for 35 years, and 99.9% of cases have dropped over that period of time," Day said. "We've got 1/10th of 1% left



Wilsonell Dyer, 1965

to go, and that's in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"So, if we could get it wiped out there, we'll have to maintain in future years giving the vaccine to all the people in the world to make sure it doesn't come back, but we're making great progress."

There are more than 200 known virus species that cause infections in humans, and among them, only two viral diseases - smallpox and rinderpest - have been eradicated from natural occurrence thanks to

the tremendous success of the vaccines against them.

Fortunately, poliomyelitis is one of the few viral diseases currently capable of being completely eradicated, as evidenced by the fact that there hasn't been a single case of naturally occurring polio in the United States since 1979.

That's because fully vaccinated individuals are totally protected from transmission of the paralysis-causing and potentially deadly disease due to the overwhelming efficacy

of the polio vaccine.

Sadly, socioeconomic factors have conspired to allow the disease to continue impacting primarily young children in a small area of the globe - enter Rotary International and the efforts of more than 35,000 local Rotary Clubs across the planet.

"Our goal of ridding the world of this disease is closer than ever," per Rotary.org. "As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, we've reduced polio cases by 99.9% since our first project to vaccinate children in the Philippines in 1979.

"Rotary members have contributed more than \$2.1 billion and countless volunteer hours to protect nearly 3 billion children in 122 countries from this paralyzing disease. Rotary's advocacy efforts have played a role in decisions by governments to contribute more than \$10 billion to the effort.

"Today, polio remains endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan. But it's crucial to continue working to keep other countries polio-free. If all eradication efforts stopped today, within 10 years, polio could paralyze as many as 200,000 children each year."

As part of the local proclamation, Paris encourages "all citizens to join me and Rotary International in the fight for a polio-free world."

Continuing that Thursday, Paris re-upped the lease agreement between Ninth

District Opportunity and the county for the office space inside the Haralson Memorial Civic Center "in the amount of \$230 per month totaling \$2,760 for the term of the lease" through Sept. 30, 2021.

Ninth District helps residents with heating and cooling assistance throughout the year and oversees administration of the Union County Food Pantry.

In other business, the commissioner accepted two Accountability Court Grants from the state totaling \$42,222 for Mental Health Court, to go toward surveillance of participants and a part-time case manager.

Paris closed two bank accounts related to capital project expenditures that were no longer in use following construction on the Union County Sports Center, aka the Double Gym, which will also house the Rec Department offices.

Construction wise, the roughly \$3.8 million Sports Center should be completed this week, and Paris said he hopes the building will be open sometime in November following setup and other inside finishing touches, though he'll be taking COVID-19 into account.

Last month, the commissioner welcomed Marlene Hadden to speak in the September meeting, during which she delivered remarks imploring Paris to assist the Lake Nottely Improvement Association and Friends of Lake Nottely in being proactive about preserving water quality here.

For his part, Paris surprised Hadden by presenting her with a proclamation designating Oct. 1, 2020, as "Environmental Awareness Day," noting that "Union County Government and its citizens must join together to protect and maintain the water quality of (local) bodies of water."



Commissioner Paris welcomed Rotary Club members Ed Sternberg, Mitch Griggs, John Day and Cathy O'Gara last week for his "World Polio Day" proclamation. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

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