

# BRMEMC...from Page 1

BRMEMC was an area in which he looked to improve upon following his election.

"When I came to talk to you guys back in August, I told you that one of the things I thought was important concerning the EMC was transparent communication and listening to members," Cummings said. "Regarding communication, when I was elected to the EMC, I was appointed to chair the Policy Committee. In the Policy Committee, we've talked about things we could do to improve our transparency and allow us to listen to our members. What we'll be doing is setting up a venue where people can come

and give us their ideas, or if they want to gripe, we'll listen to them and then go back to the board meetings and try to make the BRMEMC better for all of us.

"I promise that our lawyer won't be there answering questions, it will be the Board Members fielding questions. That's what we were elected to do, and so that's what's going to happen."

Cummings, who manages the Union County Farmers Market, also announced during the meeting that Union County will begin holding a Public Speaking Competition at the Farmers

Market in October, modeled after the Mountain Movers and Shakers' own annual speech contest.

"We're going to invite students from the surrounding counties," said Cummings. "Every county that the Farmers Market draws from will be invited. That will include Towns, Union, Fannin, White and Lumpkin counties, along with Clay and Cherokee counties (in North Carolina)."

For the first year, Cummings requests that speech content be about the importance of small farms in the local area.

"About 99.6 percent of the farms in our county are all small farms," said Cummings. "Locally owned, family-type farms."

# K-9...from Page 1

"It's just amazing the way they open up in that class," Officer Carter said. "The turnaround that we see with the detainees and the dogs is incredible. It's just a great feeling."

Last Tuesday morning, the CPDC held its most recent graduation ceremony with the families of the eight graduating detainees in attendance. At the conclusion of the program, everyone was invited to step outside for the grand finale, where the detainees and their K-9 pals were given the opportunity to show off what they had learned over the previous 10 weeks.

In attendance at the graduation was Dr. Buster Evans, the Georgia Department of Corrections Assistant Commissioner of Education. As assistant commissioner, Evans leads education initiatives within the GDC.

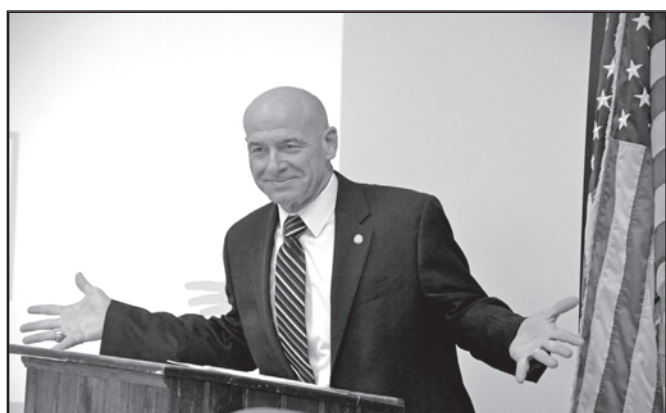
"This is a great day for our eight graduates of this program, who we are so proud of," Dr. Evans said, addressing the graduates. "This is a great day for your families, because they get to see what you have learned and some of the things that are going to help you be successful. As we celebrate these eight men who are getting a technical certificate, we're celebrating the fact that not only do they know a little bit more about the care of dogs - I'm convinced that they know more about themselves. I believe they know more about interacting with other people. I believe they have a renewed appreciation for themselves, and for other human beings."

"This is a great day for Colwell Detention Center because you get to see, and your community gets to see, a little bit more about what makes Colwell PDC a special place. Colwell PDC is probably our best PDC facility in the state. I've already had the wonderful privilege of seeing what I think is so special about it, and that's the team of Georgia Department of Corrections professionals who work here day-in and day-out, sharing their passion, their caring, and their enthusiasm for each other, as well as those who are living here for a period of time."

According to literature made available by the Rescued Program, detainees are taught three rules upon arrival at Colwell PDC: respect, self-control and discipline.

"A fourth has been added to those participating in the program - integrity - always doing what is right even when no one else is looking," according to the literature. "Rescued provides a hands-on approach to these rules of life, utilizing the dogs as the catalysts. The detainees are taught viable job skills that will enable them to gain employment upon re-entry into their communities, thus giving them a chance of being 'Rescued' from the revolving door of incarceration. It's a win-win for all - everyone benefits."

At the end of each 10-week training program, dogs are returned to both the Humane Society Mountain Shelter and Castoff Pet Rescue, where they are placed for adoption.



GDC Asst. Commissioner of Education Dr. Buster Evans



CPDC detainee working his dog



CPDC detainee showing off what his dog has learned



CPDC detainee David Protsman speaks to those gathered



Rescued Officer Phillip Carter shares his experiences with the gathered crowd

# Ford...from Page 1



Ford delivers her acceptance speech after having been named Business of the Quarter by the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce

table sponsor at one of the Star Student events, and always participates in the Buy Local program and also is one of our Ambassadors."

Business of the Quarter recipients are nominated by other members, and Malone read from a list of ways Ford has been described, all of which led to her being honored: "well respected, customer focused, gives away a lot of freebies - we all like that - a kind-hearted soul, and 17 years as an advanced color consultant."

"In addition to all of this, this past Christmas, what a huge success with the Adopt-A-Grandparent program," said Malone. "More than 280 senior citizens got a Christmas gift, and that's just a wonderful, wonderful outreach program."

She is also involved with the Union County chapter of the First Foundation for Childhood Literacy, and enjoys

an active role on the Union/Towns Employer Committee.

"I'm honored and overwhelmed that my business was chosen for Business of the Quarter, and to be the first of 2016 - thank you, and Happy New Year, everyone," said Ford. "To be a part of this amazing chamber and community was a perfect fit for my business and my team and myself. Again, I'm honored and overwhelmed to have worked with most of you."

Ford thanked everyone in the room for helping her along in her business in one fashion or another, and stressed the importance of those relationships within the community at large.

"Either a family member, a friend, a business associate, a community leader or a customer, in my J-O-B, it's all about relationships," said Ford. "Relationships are created by a give and take process, and to me and my Mary Kay business, customer service is No. 1. I'm honored to be a part of a company that understands and operates in giving of oneself."

Ford identified customer service as being her heart, and the Adopt-A-Grandparent for Christmas outreach her soul.

"Kristy Wallace and I are cofounders of Adopt-A-Grandparent for Christmas, along with our Joy Team here in our mountains," said Ford. "I personally have been blessed with hundreds of loyal customers, and loyalty is hard to find these days - I'm thankful for my loyal customers in our Tri-State area alone.

And because of that, it has catapulted my business in a different way, the giving and receiving kind of way.

"My team and I wanted to find a way to give back to our community, and it had to be something lacking that needed TLC. The Adopt-A-Grandparent Community Outreach Program is designed to visit and gift the nursing home residents with a sponsored gift from any individual and local businesses from our community. We have the absolute honor of going room to room dressed in costume, while delivering our gifts to the residents."

The Joy Team is composed of Ford and Wallace, as well as Alicia Rogers, Brigitte Edghill and Erika Star, and Ford asked that others share in her outreach.

"My business is not just a business," said Ford. "It's a ministry in so many different ways. Either lifting a person's confidence in themselves by sharing a complimentary facial or a color makeover; watching them leave my class with a spring in their step and knowing who they are; fellowship, learning and creating lifelong friendships with people like you; or reaching out with this community outreach program, my J-O-B is my ministry."

Those who attended were treated to good eats from The Sawmill Place, and from Ford's Mary Kay business, free on-site Satin Hands and Satin Lips treatments if they wanted them, and a take-home complimentary Facial in a Bag.



Chamber members socialize at the First Quarter 2016 Business After Hours at the Union County Community Center.

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