

Eggs & Issues...continued from Page 1A

on the issue of gun control.

"I don't believe taking guns away is going to solve any problems," he said. "It's been against the law to rob banks forever, but people still rob banks."

"I will never vote to take away, or threaten our second amendment rights," he said. "The Right to Bear Arms was pledged by our forefathers and it was pledged for a reason."

"Every time we pass a law, we take people's rights away," he said. "I'm not an advocate of passing a lot of new laws and you can rest assured, I won't vote to dilute your and my second amendment rights."

"Collectively, we've got to figure out how to resolve the issues that we're facing in America without stripping Americans of their rights and liberties," Sen. Gooch said.

For those unfamiliar with Sen. Gooch, he gave them a quick rundown of his personal background.

He is a sixth generation Dahlonega native with many relatives in Blairsville and Suches.



Union County Board of Education member Julie Barton and Jim Williams of Southern Highlands Mortgage listen as Senate District 51 State Sen. Steve Gooch discusses education funding at Saturday's Eggs & Issues breakfast at the Blairsville Restaurant. Photo/Charles Duncan

"I feel like this is my extended home," he said. "My grandmother in fact lived her for many years."

The Lumpkin County native and former Lumpkin County Sole Commissioner, grew up on a chicken farm, an experience he says that taught

him the merits of hard work. Those lessons carried him into adulthood.

Sen. Gooch said he and his brothers worked three chicken houses and alongside their father, gathered eggs.

"Have any of y'all ever picked up eggs?" Sen. Gooch

asked. "Well, we had three houses and 14,000 chickens, and gathering eggs is a full-time job."

"I learned early in life what it's like to work hard," he said. "And folks, there's not many jobs tougher than working in a chicken house seven days a week."

Sen. Gooch may have found one just as hard, trying to help balance Georgia's budget.

"By law, we have to have a balanced budget," he said. "It's not like Washington, DC where they can keep adding to the deficit. When we come home after 40 days, that budget must be balanced."

Title Tax...continued from Page 1A

tax.

"If you move in from out of state you will be able to pay half when you register the car and the other half in 12 months," he said. "Customers that buy a car from a dealer and normally pay sales tax on that vehicle will wind up saving money."

The savings will come

from paying the one-time title tax instead of the sales tax, State Sen. Steve Gooch said.

"It's a win-win for everyone," Sen. Gooch said on Saturday. "The title tax is a one-time fee. From then on, when you buy a tag, you'll pay a simple \$20 fee regardless of make and model."

Knight said if you own

or bought your car before Jan. 1, 2012, those drivers will see no change and will continue to pay the Ad Valorem tax on their birthday when their tag comes up for renewal.

"All customers will still renew their tags on their birthday," Knight said. "The rate will go up in January 2014 to 6.75 percent and to 7 percent in January 2015."

"The Georgia legislature has left in provisions to raise the rate to as much as 9 percent if the revenue does not meet their expectations," Knight said. "The state expects this to bring in more money as they believe that 40 percent of all car sales are private individual sales."

"We will do our best to explain the new TAVT system to our customers as they come in and hope they understand that we are only the messenger and work for them the taxpayer," Knight said.

Sen. Gooch said that legislation is in the hopper to tweak the title tax during the current legislative session.

"We'll just have to see what comes out of committee," he said.

21st Century Middle School learn dangers with tech awareness



C.J. Worden and 21st Century students

Students in the 21st Century after-school program recently learned about the dangers of cyber bullying, Facebook, cell phones, and iPod usage. C.J. Worden presented a powerpoint on each of the topics. Students and teachers asked

questions and were glad to hear information they did not know. Some students did not realize the legal ramifications of improper use.

Thanks Mr. Worden for educating our students on these topics!