

Brackett seeks another term as Probate Judge



Dwain Brackett

To the citizens of Union County, my name is Dwain Brackett and I have qualified for re-election as your Probate Judge. I realize that I have not met everyone in our county so allow me to share my background. I was raised here and

graduated from Union County High School. Later, like so many, I went to Atlanta and there I started my career in government service with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation in 1983. I later transferred to the Georgia Department of Revenue and in the late 80's I transferred to the Georgia Public Service Commission in order to get back home to the mountains. After years of working over the entire state I decided to seek public service in my home town. I took office as Probate Judge on January 1, 1997.

The first four year term I also served as Chief Magistrate Judge. In addition, I served as election superintendent until the creation of the Board of Elections in 2001.

During my 16 years in office I have always exceeded the annual hours of in-service training. I also send my staff to various training classes. In addition we have hosted regional clerks training for the last three years in Union County for probate clerks from all across North Georgia. I have been appointed by the Probate Judges in this district to serve as District Director for the 10-county region and have done so since 2005. I am the representative for this district on the Probate Judge's Training Council, also having served since 2005.

As such I have a seat on the Executive Committee of the Probate Judge's Council. I serve on the Probate Judge's traffic committee and the leg-

islative committee and I am a past member of the National College of Probate Judges. Often times we do not meet until tragedy or misfortune has struck. Please know that I will continue to serve you with the compassion, fairness, and professionalism that you have come to expect. In many counties throughout Georgia the Probate Judges have chosen to distance themselves from the very people they serve, but it has and will always be my belief that we should have access to those that serve and represent us. It has been my pleasure and honor to have served as your Probate Judge for 16 years and I earnestly seek your support in the July 31st election.

I sincerely thank you for your continued support.

Weinstein seeks Probate Judge's Office seat



Barry Weinstein

I am pleased to announce my candidacy for Union County Probate Judge. I did not actively seek to run for Probate Judge, but was urged by numerous concerned citizens to run for the position of Judge of the Probate Court. After much soul-searching and talking to many Union Countians these past several months, I have decided to take on the challenge with much excitement and enthusiasm. I hope to gain your confidence, support and of course, your vote on July 31.

Who is Barry Weinstein and what does he have to offer the community as your Probate Judge? The law has been my passion. Ever since I was a young boy growing up in Miami, the law has fascinated me. I would read any book I could get my hands on about the great trial attorneys and jurists of our time and I would spend my spare time in courts in Miami observing trials. I knew at an early age that I wanted to be a lawyer, and in time, a judge. At a

young age, my father would find me at bedtime under the covers with a flashlight reading. Except for the flashlight under the covers, this love of books and the law has not changed. I knew early on my path in life, and in 1978 I obtained my law degree and began practicing law in Miami. The law has provided me with the opportunity to serve others and I continue to do so today. I am an avid reader and, when I am not working or hiking, one can find me at the Union County Library or sitting on the bench at the "Old Courthouse" reading.

I have had a varied professional background. I have been practicing law for 33 years. I am presently licensed to practice law in Virginia and Florida and I plan in the very near future to obtain my law license in Georgia. I believe it is important to have the best qualified and experienced person as your Probate Judge. My experience and legal background would benefit the Probate Court and the people of Union County.

I am a seasoned lawyer that has extensive experience in trial and appellate litigation. I have litigated both criminal and civil cases and I am quite comfortable in a courtroom. I have been engaged in both private practice and in the public sector. I have managerial and administrative experience not only in private practice,

but also in the public sector. This experience will benefit the Probate Court and the people of Union County.

Besides being a lawyer, I am an educator. I have taught law at the University of Richmond School of Law; I have also taught law at Temple University School of Law in Philadelphia, and had the opportunity to teach courses in criminal justice and criminology at Davis & Elkins College in West Virginia.

The Probate Court is one of several courts in our judicial system in Georgia. The court's primary jurisdiction is in matters involving decedent's estates, guardianship and mental health cases. There are other functions—administrative and judicial—that are performed by the Probate Court from issuance of birth and death certificates to firearms permits. I hope to have the opportunity to talk to as many people I can about the court and my role as your Probate Judge.

It is important that courts or other public entities meet the needs of the community in our fast, changing world. New ideas and fresh faces are essentials in public service. I bring both to you and the Probate Court. I will bring new ideas to how the Probate Court should and can operate more effectively and efficiently

with utmost consideration of the good people of Union County. In the coming days, I hope to discuss with you my ideas of the needed changes in the Probate Court. Change is good!

I am an avid hiker and I have been hiking these majestic mountains since 1982. I became enchanted with North Georgia and the quietude this area had to offer. I knew one day I would move here and I would call Union County my home. I moved to Union County full-time in 1995 from Richmond, Virginia where I was practicing law. Except for a sabbatical to teach college in West Virginia in 2006-2008, I have known no other home except in Union County. I have lived and worked in many cities and towns from Miami to Denver, but there is no place that compares to North Georgia. I am blessed to live here.

I am ready on day one to take on the responsibilities of Judge of the Union County Probate Court. I am ready, willing and quite able to serve the people of Union County as their Probate Judge. The time is now! Please contact me by email at weinsteinbarry@yahoo.com or call me at (706) 897-3201. I look forward in meeting and talking with you. Vote for Barry Weinstein on Tuesday, July 31.

Freedom...continued from page 1A

Blairsville.

It was a day to remember the fallen, those who paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our Nation's Freedom.

Blairsville's own highly decorated soldier Charlie Hunter served as the parade's Grand Marshal. Hunter also was recognized for his service to our country at the Memorial Day Services at War Memorial Park off School Street.

Union County Sheriff Scott Stephens led the parade as it meandered from school headquarters to Cleveland Street where Union County Sheriff's Capt. Dallas Batson coordinated the parade's first turn.

From there, the parade, which included Boy Scouts, church groups, Habitat for Humanity, Cruise-In Cars, War Veterans, local government officials, Mike Kelly's antique Fire Truck, and saddle club riders headed toward Earnest Street.

The parade turned at Earnest Street and headed to Georgia 515. From there, the procession moved ahead and toward War Memorial Park. It was here that hundreds were already waiting for the annual Memorial Day Services.

U.S. Army Veteran Alvin Dyer, who played on Union County's first high school football team and eventually became quarterback, directed the day's services.

Dyer recognized Hunter, he also asked folks to remember that Leon Davenport, who couldn't be at Saturday's event, is the county's most decorated war hero.

He paid tribute to the Honor Guard.

"They do a great job, and they go to a lot of functions," he said. "But they've also lain to rest a lot of heroes. This year, they have lain to rest 47 Veterans with the honor and dignity that they deserve."

He recognized the Union County High School Band for coming out to provide the event's music. He paid tribute to the Boys Scouts of America for raising the flags for the ceremony. Also, he made mention of St. Andrews Pipe and Drum, who played *Amazing Grace* for the ceremony.

Dyer then turned to the event's keynote speaker, Retired U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major Arthur Joseph McCann III.

McCann, who substitute teaches in our local schools, spoke about the brave men and women who have and still serve

to keep our nation free.

McCann, whose tour of duty has included time in Kuwait, Panama, Iraq and Afghanistan, remembered the people he served with who didn't make it back home.

"Remember the men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice," McCann said. "Freedom is not free. Throughout history, our military has paid the price to protect freedom. They served to live, not to die."

"Throughout time, our

veterans have lived and seen history," McCann said.

He spoke about a 19-year-old Ranger who knew the cost of freedom and paid the ultimate price in 1989 in Panama.

"I have many stories to tell, no one I knew is famous, they're just men and women who fought and died to preserve freedom," McCann said. "Those who did not return will not be forgotten. They are our heroes; being guardians of freedom is our way of life."



One of Blairsville's own veterans, Sgt. Gordon Spears.