

Lamar Paris seeks re-election as Sole Commissioner



Lamar Paris

The 2012 election for Commissioner of Union County is not about party politics. It is about continuing to move Union County forward by keeping a commissioner with a proven 12-year track record.

During my administration, I began with the vision of guiding Union County into being one of the best rural counties in Georgia, and together, with our community support, we have reached that goal. We have been very successful with creating and maintaining a very high quality of life, while maintaining one of the lowest property tax rates in the entire state of Georgia.

I am asking for your vote in the November 2012 election so we can continue making Union County even better. I am honored to be your commissioner and am looking forward to serving you for another four years.

After graduating from the University of Georgia with a business degree, I ran a successful business here for 25 years, while being heavily involved volunteering in our community. Many of you know that I am very proud of our recreation program and Meeks Park. Prior to becoming your commissioner, I coached and managed the youth foot-

ball program for many years without any outside funding. As the Recreation Board chairman for eight years, I spearheaded the expansion of the golf course from 9 to 18 holes and the purchase and construction of Meeks Park. While supervising both projects on a daily basis for over a year and a half for no compensation or pay, I did have the support of many hard working supporters, board members and volunteers assisting in all these efforts. During my years in private business, I was always dedicated to making Union County a better place to live, just as my parents before me, never dreaming that some day I would be able to do so much more for our county as your commissioner.

I have had the privilege and honor of being elected by all the commissioners in the entire state to serve as the President of the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia (2010). I received three special state appointments, one from Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue and two from Governor Nathan Deal. I have also been appointed to many other positions and boards during my administration and appreciate the confidence all have shown in my ability as a leader in this county and state.

Thanks to you, the voters, overwhelmingly approving our SPLOST sales tax, our county has been able to move forward in these tough economic times. Numerous projects have helped keep our local people working, provided services for our residents, attracted visitors and tourists, established new businesses, and brought hundreds of new jobs to our county.

Among our many projects are the Union County

Community Center, Union County Courthouse, five new fire engines for the Union County Fire Department, Union County Arena, rehabbing the Civic Center, expanding Meeks Park with new walking trails and bridges, Union County Farmers Market, Union County Public Library, Union County Health Department, the new canning plant under construction now, and many more.

I work closely with our Union County Development Authority, and together we have brought jobs and businesses to the county, expanded services, and continually work for expanded economic development. Three industries just announced expansions in our county and we were successful in assisting in locating retail businesses here and that still continues today.

I have been able to utilize state funding sources, including grants, and SPLOST to improve our roads. We continue to have one of the best road systems in the area. Our new address numbering system makes for faster emergency response times, quicker deliveries to homes and businesses, and makes it easier to find an address.

Major hallmarks of my administration include our low property tax rate, balanced budgets, exceptional audits, and the highest level of fiscal responsibility. I am very proud that this past year we were able to reduce our budget to a level lower than our 2007 budget while expenses have continued to increase. Over these 12 years, I have adhered to my conservative fiscal upbringing, while being one of the few counties in the state who did not have to furlough county employees. Our dedicated employees have made all these

accomplishments possible and you have the best emergency services available to you as any rural county in the state.

The openness of the Office of Commissioner in Union County and our ability to serve our citizens with an open door policy are rare in local government. I have been offering a Q & A column in the North Georgia News for 10 years answering your questions each and every week. Working closely with state officials and officials of surrounding counties, has resulted in great benefits and cost savings for our citizens.

I again ask for your vote in the November election. Between now and then, I will attempt to see as many of you as possible. Many have asked how they can help during this election. There are numerous ways, donating money and time to the campaign, putting up signs, bumper stickers and mainly talking to your relatives and friends about voting for me in the upcoming November election. Do we want to change what is working just for the sake of change? I believe the answer is No.

Contact me by mail at: Paris for Commissioner, P.O. Box 3040, Blairsville, GA 30514; e-mail me personally at lamarp100@windstream.net; or call (706) 745-5485. If you have county related e-mails not related to the campaign, feel free to e-mail me at union-county@uniongov.com or call (706) 439-6000. If you want me to come talk to you or your group, please let me know.

My web site is www.VoteParis.com and will have a lot of additional information about me, my administration, and remind you of the many positive changes that Union County has experienced over the past decade. NJun13,Political 1ac

Brookshire declares for Union County Coroner



Benny Brookshire

I am Benny Brookshire

and I'm running for Union County Coroner. I have served as the Deputy Coroner for more than ten years.

I am married to the former Brenda Foster and we have one son, Brelan. Brelan is the fifth generation on our family farm.

I am a graduate of Woody Gap School. After graduation I worked at Vickers Funeral Home in Gainesville. I moved to Decatur and attended Dekalb Tech and worked at Lennox Heating and Air Conditioning for nine years. I served in the U.S. Army Reserve for six

years.

In 1972 Brenda and I returned to Suches, where we live on the family farm. When the Health Care Center was opened in Suches, Brenda and I went to North Georgia Tech and received our E.M.T. license. I was a member of the Station 5 Fire Department and a first responder for a number of years.

I have worked, not only as a farmer, but I drove a school bus for Union County Schools for ten years. I own a firewood and welding business in Suches. I am a member and

a deacon at Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church in Suches.

I believe that I will be a good coroner for Union County. I have always strived to deal with each individual family in a compassionate and caring way. I have always tried to make the families feel comfortable and know that I am available if they have any questions.

I would appreciate your vote in the General Election in November. I pledge to be compassionate and available for you and your family in your time of need. NJun13,Political 1ac

Shortfall

continued from Page 1A

Another two certified positions were eliminated. Eleven classified positions – support staff – were eliminated.

The school system's substitute teaching budget was slashed in half.

Approximately 90 percent of the school system's budget is attributed to salaries and benefits.

In Woody Gap, the salaries amount to more than \$1 million. There, the school board eliminated two teaching positions, cut four certified positions, won't replace

the school's counselor and will reorganize the school's cafeteria to cut costs.

As for the personnel cuts, Superintendent Steppe said the cuts were not personnel, just business.

"Trust me, I don't enjoy cutting teaching positions or staff positions," he said. "It was one of the many measures we're having to take to balance the budget."

Superintendent Steppe said that the systemwide personnel cuts are final, but that he's not expecting any more to happen. He's going

to recommend that the school system's use of furloughs be reduced below the eight days teachers have faced in the last couple of years.

Steppe said tough times are still ahead for the school system given the continued state of the economy.

"There's still some tough decisions that remain," he said. "This has been coming for a while. But, somewhere, you have to stop the bleeding."

"You have to stop spending more than you bring in," he said.

Station 4 Open House

We would like to invite you to Union County Fire Sta-

Gilreath

continued from Page 1A
business through advertising in your hometown newspaper.

Adam graduated from Woody Gap High School and went on to obtain his Associates Degree from North Georgia Technical College.

Adam is married to Aleisha Clark Gilreath, and is the father of two children, Ansley who is 3 years old and Cooper who is 9 months old. Adam is active in our community and is a volunteer firefighter for Station 5 in Suches.

Adam can be reached at 706-745-6343, on his cell at 706-781-5482. You may also email him at news@nganews.com.

tion 4's Open House and Citizen Appreciation Day on Saturday, June 23, 2012, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Open House will be located at 93 Moccasin Road. There will be displays and demonstrations of skills and equipment including the cutting up of a car with

the "Jaws of Life" and a simulated structure fire showing how firefighters operate. Come see the recently acquired Rescue 4! There will be hamburgers and hotdogs for lunch and games for the kids. Bring the entire family and come see YOUR fire station.