

# Choestoe...from Page 1A

Lamar Paris dedicated the building in honor of Ethelene Dyer Jones.

In 1936, the one-room schoolhouse opened its doors to the children of Choestoe.

For almost 20 years, that building, sometimes converted to a two-room schoolhouse using a partition, became the foundation of education for children up to the seventh grade in Southern Union County.

As time progressed, and the schoolhouse closed to education, the building's usage varied, and for many years was utilized at the Choestoe Campground.

As the 20th century became the 21st century, in disrepair, targeted for demolition, and almost on the verge of collapse, the Choestoe Schoolhouse was offered to the county.

"Believe it or not, we have a lot of folks that come to the county and ask if we're interested in old buildings, and you always consider it," Commissioner Paris said. "In 2003, Larry Garrett and I went out and looked at the building."

The floors were rotting, almost all the windows were broken, Paris said.

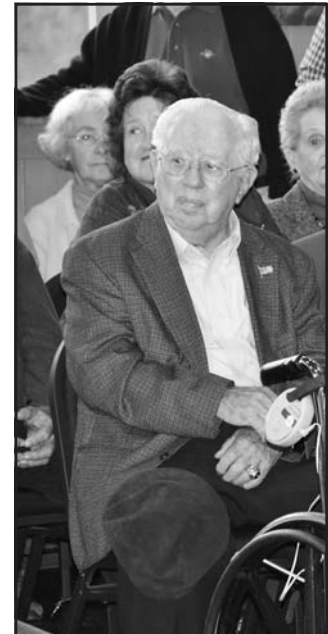
"It was rotted everywhere - it was in extreme disrepair," he said.

The Commissioner then began to ask himself what would the county do with the building if it did accept it. Could the building even be moved?

Commissioner Paris got a nudge in his decision making process when Keith Jones offered to donate a piece of property on Collins Road if the building were relocated to that property.

The wheels began to turn as Paris realized that this could be the answer to two needs in the Choestoe community - first, a Choestoe voting precinct, and second, a Choestoe Community Center.

He called David Looper, a house mover and asked for



Above, Ethelene Dyer Jones; below, Clyde Collins.

It was a grand day on Thursday in Choestoe. Photos/Lowell Nicholson

his advice. He asked Looper if the building could be moved, and second, could the county afford it.

The old schoolhouse was 46 feet wide. The first thing that would have to happen would be to widen Collins Road.

To begin the move, a beautiful historic dogwood tree would have to be moved 10 feet to make the move happen. Paris received permission to move the dogwood. Unfortunately, the move was more than the old tree could tolerate.

Other hurdles had to be cleared with homeowners on Collins Road.

"People just kept agreeing to help, everything just kept happening," Paris said.

"And, here we are today, dedicating a new Choestoe Voting Precinct and Community Center.

"After that first look at the building, I would never have thought that it would ever look like this, it's beautiful," Paris said.

Community donations included old school desks, textbooks, and photographs.

Some of the textbooks were donated to honor retired Union County Superintendent and High School Principal Clyde Collins, retired Union County High School Math Teacher Wilonell Dyer, and retired Union County High School Librarian Marie Knight.

Commissioner Paris also praised Marcie Culpepper

for her wonderful job as the project's interior designer.

Commissioner Paris paid tribute to Joe Nickerson as the project overseer, Blue Ridge EMC for helping with the project's electrical needs, Buck Dills for helping with the project providing necessary donations, including desks, Lee Knight's donation of historic textbooks, Johnny Holbrooks' dedicated efforts, and Jon Moon for providing a digital history, by filming the project.

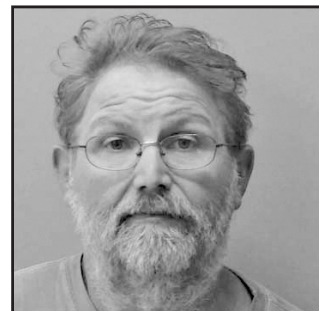
"Of course, this project would not have been possible without SPLOST dollars," Commissioner Paris said.

"It's just an example of what SPLOST means to this community," he said.



Opened in 1936 as a one-room schoolhouse, the Choestoe Community Center and Voting Precinct is now open to the public for family reunions, weddings and friendly gatherings. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

## Former Blairsville resident charged with theft in Towns



Robert Wayne Duckworth

Investigators with the Towns County Sheriff's Office assisted by an investigator with the Georgia Department of Transportation on Friday Nov. 1st, arrested Robert Wayne Duckworth, 49, of Young Har-

ris, formerly of Blairsville.

Duckworth was charged with theft by taking in reference to incidents where gas was stolen from a GDOT fuel truck, Towns County Sheriff's reports show.

The fuel truck was located at a GDOT Shop in Towns County, sheriff's reports show.

The thefts occurred between Sept. 9th, and the Oct. 29th, sheriff's reports show.

There was a total of a 153 gallons of fuel taken. Duckworth was arrested without incident at the Towns County Sheriff's Office, sheriff's reports show.

## Coffee with the Poets and Writers

Coffee with the Poets and Writers, a monthly literary event held at Blue Mountain Coffee and Grill in Murphy, NC will feature Paul Schofield, author of the Trophy sci-fi series. Wednesday, November 13, at 10:30 a.m. he will speak and share his stories.

Paul and his wife, Ellen, live in Cherokee County, NC, but he was born and raised in Montana where he says, "immersion in the natural world around me was inevitable. As I grew up, I learned the complexities of language and the joy of humor by the daily exchange of witty puns with my father. Just as Mark Twain said, 'against the assault of laughter nothing can stand'."

Paul was an avid reader and his favorite genre was science fiction by authors like Isaac Asimov and Frank Herbert and fantasy by J.R.R. Tolkien. Coming of age just in time to watch Star Trek, Star Wars and Babylon V, his love of science fiction grew. His desire to craft and share his own stories was ignited, further fueled by his interest in amateur astronomy, a life-long hobby.

Those attending are invited to join the writers and poets after the event as we pull tables together and enjoy a social hour. Coffee with the Poets and Writers is sponsored by NCWN West. Contact Network Representative, Glenda Beall, at 828-389-4441 for information.