

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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November 7, 2012

The voters have spoken, there is a new sheriff in town

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Mack Mason predicted a changing of the guard in the Union County Sheriff's Office following the July Primary.

Almost 6,000 votes on Election Night proved he was right. Mason, a Blairsville Republican, is now Sheriff-Elect Mason after he defeated Democratic Incumbent Scott Stephens Tuesday night. Mason collected 5,781 votes, or 52.71 percent, to Sheriff Stephens' 5,186 votes, or 47.29 percent.

A total of 595 votes separated the two sheriff candidates.

"I appreciate everything everybody did for me. I appreciate my supporters and everybody that turned out to vote," Mason said. "I'm just so thankful and humbled that the voters in Union County have given me an opportunity to serve this county. I'm going to do it to the very best of my abilities."

Mason said the voters of Union County have spoken loud and clear.

"I'm very humbled with the support they have shown for me," he said. "I pledge to do my very best to give the citizens of Union County the best quality law enforcement that we can give them. I pledge to treat everybody fair and honest and be a full-time sheriff."

Stephens was humble in defeat. He thanked his supporters, his family and the people of Union County for allowing him to serve as their sheriff for 12 years.

"To the Citizens of Union County, I say thank you for the opportunity to serve you for the past 12 years as your Sheriff. I will forever appreciate all that you have done for me," Stephens said.

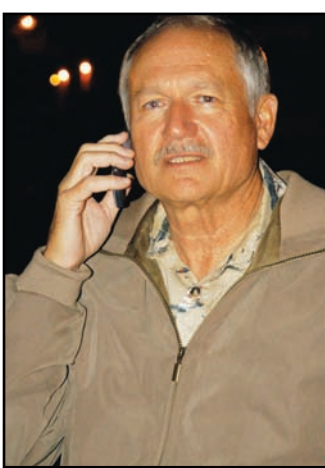
Tax Commissioner-Elect Lee Knight was feeling nervous Tuesday night. He shouldn't have as he won by 2,129 votes over his Democratic opponent Larry Truelove.

Knight thanked his supporters and his family. He tipped his hat to his opponent for running a clean race. Knight claimed 59.82 percent of the vote to become Union County's next tax commissioner. "I've had a lot of help getting here," Knight said. "I appreciate all the people that have supported me. It's been one of the hardest things I've ever done. I put more effort into this than anything I have ever done in my life."

Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris breathed a sigh of relief following the last counted precinct. No, his race wasn't close, but he didn't relax until the last vote was counted at the Union County Courthouse.

Paris returned to office with a solid victory over Republican challenger Charles Rich. Actually, the race wasn't even close as Paris won the race by exactly 2,000 votes. Paris didn't lose a precinct and finished with 59.18 percent of the 86 percent voter turnout. "I am both honored and humbled by the confidence that has been placed in me to continue as your Commissioner," he said.

District 1 BOE Incumbent Gary Davenport wiped his brow after the absentee votes from the



Decision 2012 is history. Here are some of the winners from Election Night at the Union County Courthouse. Photos/Todd Forrest

Blairsville precinct came in Tuesday night. Davenport, a Blairsville Democrat, defeated his opponent, political newcomer and Republican Patricia Bertuna by 104 votes in a tightly contested race.

Davenport saluted his supporters, his family and everyone that voted for him. He finished with 50.49 percent of the local vote.

"Whew, it was the closest race of the night no doubt," Davenport said. "I was really surprised that there were about 11,000 people voting. It was back and forth all night. Looking at the District 3 board race, I was very fortunate. I'd like to thank everybody that supported me and voted for me," he said.

Davenport saluted outgoing District 3 BOE member Carlton Collins for his years of service to his community. He also said he looked forward to working with a new Board of Education member, Cindy Byers.

"She'll fit like a glove, she'll work well with our board," Davenport said. "I look forward to working with Cindy and the folks that are coming back to our board."

Byers was at home washing supper dishes when she finally decided to come to the Union County Courthouse to see why her cell phone was ringing off the hook. It was good news for Byers as she defeated Democratic Incumbent District 3 BOE member Carlton Collins by a large margin - 2,028 votes.

Collins conceded the race early on and wished Byers the best.

Byers thanked her many

supporters and her family for helping her survive the campaign season. "I'm truly humbled," Byers said. "I just want to do a good job. I want to do what's best for the school and for the kids. This is about our kids and it's important that they see us do things with respect, with dignity, and acting like adults. Again, it's very humbling. I'm excited."

Byers tipped her hat to Collins.

"If I couldn't win without trashing my opponent, I didn't want to win," she said. "I was blessed in this election. Carlton is a good man. If he won, the school board would still be in good hands because we have Godly people in those seats. This whole election has been humbling to me because Carlton is such a fine person."

Collins praised Byers as he conceded the race. "The good people of Union County have spoken, they've chosen Cindy Byers, and I wish Ms. Byers nothing but the best," Collins said. "I want to thank the people of Union County for giving me the opportunity to serve them."

Incumbent Coroner Benny Erwin and Incumbent State House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison, both Republicans, both collected more than 70 percent of the local vote to return to their respective offices.

U.S. Rep.-Elect Doug Collins was the landslide winner for the 9th District Congressional Seat, Mitt Romney took the Georgia vote in the race for the White House, Stan Wise and Chuck Eaton return to the Public Service Commission.

A footnote on the Romney

Unofficial Union County Election Results General Election November 6, 2012 • Votes By Precinct*

Candidate	Blairsville	Coosa	Choestoe	Jones Creek	Owittown	Ivy Log	Suches	Trackrock	Dooley	Gumlog	Pat Colwell	Absentee and Advance Voting Included in Precinct Totals	TOTALS	Percentage
President of the United States														
Mitt Romney	1097	1150	651	878	720	940	307	530	615	980	903	n/a	8,771	79.22%
Barrack Obama (i)	316	236	127	213	193	199	80	132	182	219	240	n/a	2,137	19.30%
Gary Johnson	22	20	8	15	11	11	14	9	20	16	18	n/a	164	1.48%
Public Service Commissioner														
Chuck Eaton (i)	897	944	566	731	601	775	254	454	544	768	802	n/a	7,336	73.30%
Stephen Oppeneimer	334	260	127	228	186	217	89	128	167	234	224	n/a	2,194	21.92%
Brad Ploeger	47	57	40	31	38	56	27	28	48	57	48	n/a	478	4.78%
Public Service Commissioner														
Stan Wise (i)	995	1003	587	799	636	846	263	484	582	866	843	n/a	7,904	82.32%
David Staples	231	204	107	156	141	173	90	100	151	176	168	n/a	1,697	17.68%
Us Representative in 113th Congress from the 9th District of Georgia														
Doug Collins	999	1039	606	773	651	855	275	497	574	885	851	n/a	8,005	76.45%
Jody Cooley	359	284	150	265	210	239	107	145	201	246	260	n/a	2,466	23.55%
State Senator from 51st District														
Steve Gooch (i)	1208	1198	679	914	754	978	348	565	683	1010	974	n/a	9,311	100%
State Representative in the General Assembly from 8th District														
Stephen Allison (i)	942	1018	592	768	624	828	271	482	581	859	830	n/a	7,795	73.34%
Jana Hill	446	334	165	293	259	276	111	160	207	287	295	n/a	2,833	26.66%
Clerk of Superior Court														
Judy L. Odom (i)	1171	1152	629	910	750	917	312	554	623	962	959	n/a	8,939	100%
Sheriff														
Mack Mason	700	839	403	613	415	614	180	312	460	621	624	n/a	5,781	52.71%
Scott D. Stephens (i)	731	558	370	485	501	524	223	344	356	575	519	n/a	5,186	47.29%
Tax Commissioner														
Lee Knight	773	747	522	615	521	744	249	405	494	710	703	n/a	6,483	59.82%
Larry Truelove	643	640	242	481	381	372	145	248	300	469	433	n/a	4,354	40.18%
Coroner														
Benny Erwin (i)	965	987	583	738	619	825	117	458	582	842	815	n/a	7,531	70.81%
Benny Brookshire	421	377	168	330	259	278	283	180	195	307	307	n/a	3,105	29.19%
Sole County Commissioner														
Charles F. Rich	498	605	320	482	342	481	129	232	383	490	487	n/a	4,449	40.82%
Lamar F. Paris (i)	927	785	453	612	574	638	267	426	415	690	662	n/a	6,449	59.18%
County Board of Education District 1														
Patricia Bertuna	587	640	415	503	410	578	202	325	454	543	573	n/a	5,230	49.51%
Gary Davenport (i)	794	704	330	561	469	516	178	316	323	607	536	n/a	5,334	50.49%
County Board of Education District 3														
Cynthia "Cindy" Byers	716	775	457	629	507	692	226	376	523	683	679	n/a	6,263	59.66%
Carlton Turner Collins (i)	657	554	291	420	375	399	143	259	254	450	433	n/a	4,235	40.34%
House Resolution No. 1162														
YES	622	606	353	473	397	526	191	296	418	558	493	n/a	4,933	46.30%
NO	762	736	406	588	490	584	193	350	373	608	631	n/a	5,721	53.70%
Senate Resolution No. 84														
YES	748	668	431	571	507	618	221	364	432	638	588	n/a	5,786	57.03%
NO	576	595	307	433	335	453	149	257	327	442	485	n/a	4,359	42.97%

win in Georgia. All major broadcast news networks proclaimed that President Barack Obama was returning to the White House by claiming the necessary counts for an Electoral College win.

Union County Superior Court Clerk Judy Odom claimed

8,939 votes to earn the distinction of the largest local vote getter for this election season.

More than 6,800 voters cast early ballots in this election.

Local voters said 'no' to the Charter School Amendment. However, Amendment I looked like it

was cruising to victory Tuesday night, collecting 57 percent of the statewide vote.

Locals said yes to Amendment II on the ballot by a vote of 57 percent. Statewide, it was winning with 63 percent of the vote.

Todd Forrest contributed

Davenport: 'If these walls could talk, they'd have hundreds of stories to tell'

By Todd Forrest
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

The black background paint spells it out for visitors who peruse the Veterans' Walls at the Blairsville Restaurant.

Thirty names are on the wall, the black paint signifies that these men didn't return home from war.

It's all part of the more than 330 photographs of Union County's finest, men and women who proudly served to preserve America's freedom.

The Veterans' Walls at the Blairsville Restaurant is the brainstorm of four veter-

ans, Phil Nichols, Eric England, Pat Phillips and James Jones.

The four got to talking after a trip to Illinois, where he saw a few veterans on the wall of a small-town restaurant.

He brought the idea home and with the help of the ownership at the BR - Sharon Stephens and Sam Collins - the Veterans' Walls began to take shape.

The Walls have been three years in the making.

The quote "all gave some, but some gave all," that hangs on the wall in the BR says it all.

The BR, a hometown community gathering place



Leon Davenport, center, talks with other veterans last week at The Veterans' Walls at the Blairsville Restaurant. Photo/Todd Forrest

since the 1930s is now home to the Veterans' Walls, created in the rear dining room.

The Walls are covered with pictures of many of those from Union County who have served in our Armed Forces.

Last week, many of our local heroes and their families gathered at the BR to celebrate those locals who have served so valiantly for our nation.

It was also a moment for veterans to reflect and tell stories about their experiences or to bring to light other veterans who have never had their stories told.

"There is not one person hanging on these walls or a person in here today that doesn't have a story behind one of these pictures," veteran Leon Davenport said.

The BR's Veterans' Walls are intended to ensure Union County's veterans are deeply appreciated for the sacrifices they have made to keep our country free.

Nichols opened the ceremony by asking Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley to lead a moment of prayer for the group.

Roy Hamby then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

"This may be a small ceremony, but anytime you can pledge allegiance to our flag that is a great thing," Nichols said.

At that time, Nichols allowed each veteran in attendance to stand up and in-

See Veterans, Page 6A

Vol. 103 No. 45
2 Sections, 26 Pages
Weather
Wed: Showers Hi 52 Lo 35
Thur: Sunny Hi 54 Lo 32
Friday Sunny Hi 63 Lo 35

Inside
Arrests 11A
Church 8A
Classified 3B
Opinion 4A
Legal 5B
Obits 10A
Sports 12A

Misty Mountain Model Railroad

Featured on GPB
Sun. Nov. 11 & Sat. Nov. 17
See page 7A

Union County Canning Plant

Open Nov. 12 & 13 • 6:30am-12noon
Closed after these dates for winter.
See page 11A

UCHS Football
Fri., Nov. 2 • 7:30pm
@ Jefferson

UCHS Basketball
Monday, Nov. 12 • 6pm
vs. Chestatee (Scrimmage)

UCMS Wrestling
Nov. 7 • 4:30pm @ Towns Co.