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Board of Directors.

"We've got to work with the existing members of this board of directors," Phillips said. "One of my highest priorities is to look out for the 191 employees of the EMC. They do the job, they put their lives on the line, and they shouldn't be in fear for their jobs."

"I think they should be able to talk to board members and not feel their jobs are threatened," Phillips said. "I'm on the board and I should be one of the ones that they should call. You don't know what is going on unless someone tells you. This ordeal with Terry Taylor could have been resolved years ago if people didn't feel like their jobs were in jeopardy."

As for Logan, he defeated Trout with 69.5 percent of the vote compared to Trout's 27 percent.

"I guess I'll have to dust off my suit and tie now," Logan said regarding his election to the Board of Directors. "I think the biggest thing that comes from this election is transparency."

"Once things become more transparent to the membership, a lot of this stuff will take care of itself," Logan said. "A lot of the issues have already started being addressed. There are some more things that need to be addressed."

The change in directors followed news of a scandal that former longtime EMC President Terry Taylor was severely in arrears on his EMC commercial account. Taylor also had a history of not paying his residential account. The most recent debt was more than \$48,000, and all of these details were available in a report compiled by EMC Attorney Steven Minor.

Meanwhile, on Thursday, Jan. 1, David Dyer becomes Chief Dyer, replacing Chief Charles Worden, who stepped back because of health issues.

"Please don't envy me, I've got some huge shoes to fill," Chief Dyer said. "Charles Worden is the master, he wrote the book on Emergency Management. He's done a lot for this county, not only as fire chief, but also on the emergency management side. He's overseen every fire, storm and disaster that happened in Union County over the past 24 years."

"I've learned what I know from Charles Worden, and I wouldn't be in this business without him," Chief Dyer said. "He's the best of the best. To fill those shoes is a big challenge."

"I've learned a lot from Charles over the years, and I'm still learning from him," Chief Dyer said. "Like Charles, I've lived in Union County all my life, it's my home. I've had a lot of opportunities to leave here, but I've always wanted to stay in Union County."

"To be the new fire chief is exciting, I feel like I can make a difference," Chief Dyer said.

In the rescue department, Tony Schmidt and Brannon Passmore had never met each other before Wednesday, May 29th, 2013.

As time moves forward, they'll never forget one another, and now, their heroics are well documented.

Schmidt, 52, of Hayesville, NC, and Passmore, 27, of Blairsville, were honored



for their life-saving heroics in the Nottely River, off Georgia 515, with the 2014 Carnegie Medal.

The medal is given throughout the United States and Canada to those who risk their lives to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others. Three of the 21 heroes lost their lives in the performance of their lifesaving acts. Schmidt and Passmore join the 9,718 heroes that have earned awards made since the Pittsburgh-based fund's inception in 1904. Throughout the 110 years since industrialist-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie established the fund, \$36.4 million has been given in one-time grants, scholarship aid, death benefits and continuing assistance.

Schmidt and Passmore rescued a motorist trapped inside his vehicle underneath the murky waters of the Nottely River off Georgia 515.

In law enforcement, the Blairsville Police Department was named Agency of the Year for the second consecutive year, and the 2013 Rookie of the Year, Dustin Walker, continued to emerge as a topnotch law enforcement officer.

Walker was named MADD's DUI Officer of the Year for 2014, but, as Chief Johnny Carroll and Union County Sheriff Mack Mason already know, Walker is a throwback to the old days of police work.

Walker scored one of his department's biggest drug busts in late October, and in December, nabbed a suspect who allegedly robbed the new Dollar General Store at gunpoint.

In the drug bust, Walker seized almost 7 ounces of marijuana, approximately 200 grams of methamphetamine, assorted drug-related objects and what is believed to be 5 pounds of ginseng. Other seized items included a Smith & Wesson 9 mm handgun, several pocketknives, and almost \$1,700 in cash.

On Dec. 17, the mild-mannered, low-key Officer Walker was helping area young people do their Christmas shopping at Walmart during the 15th Annual BPD Shop With A Cop.

In July, Union County Sheriff's Office detectives Lt. Chad Deyton and Sgt. Tyler Miller scored one of the largest methamphetamine busts in department history.

The detectives arrested 53-year-old Union County resident Gary Dean Payne in connection with an extensive undercover investigation.

Payne was arrested July 25, and Deyton and Miller seized more than 1 pound of methamphetamine. Payne pled guilty last week to several

charges and was sentenced to 35 years, and must serve the first 15, for charges that include trafficking methamphetamine and distribution of methamphetamine.

In recreation, the Union County 4-H Shotgun Team made history. Team members, Blane Brown, Matt Percy Austin Dyer, Hayden Smith, Brady Tanner, Buck Martin and Kolbe Nix now share a legacy.

Those Union County 4-H Shotgun Team members captured the runner up, or Second Place title, in the 2014 Georgia 4-H State Shotgun Match. The Panthers finished second to Lee County in the Modified Trap Shoot held in May. Baker County finished third, Bulloch County finished fourth and Emanuel County finished fifth.

In the 17-year existence of the Union County 4-H Shotgun Team, no Union County shooting team has ever achieved such a lofty finish than at the 2014 State Shotgun Meet, Coach Gene Margelli said.

Earlier in the year, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris closed a deal to purchase 9,502 acres off Georgia 515 West for Union County Schools' 4-H Shotgun Team, and eventually a public shooting range, the first of its kind in North Georgia.

The year also was about a dog named Lacey. The young Bloodhound rescued a Morganton man after he had passed out in the snow in January. She would also lead Fannin County authorities to three car theft suspects, and in August, Lacey tracked down a Fannin County fugitive following an altercation on McClure Road.

Sheriff Mason praised Lacey and announced that his department received a \$5,000 anonymous donation to benefit the department's K-9 program.

"We're humbled to receive such a generous donation, and we'll make sure the money is well spent," Sheriff Mason said.

Restaurants also played a pivotal role in Blairsville.

Italian Life Caffé is locating in the King's 5 & 10 building on the Downtown Square.

Michael and Lisa Collins are the owners. If the names sound familiar, you're on the right track. It's Chef Michael, of Michael's Chocolate Caffé in Hiawassee.

Italian Life Caffé is expected to be a full service boutique restaurant with a creative menu and generous portions.

Like Michael's, Italian Life will specialize in

house blended loose leaf tea, ilylly espresso coffee drinks, and those wonderful desserts.

Cabin Coffee announced its intentions of renovating the historic Chevron building at 44A Town Square in Downtown Blairsville. Cabin Coffee intends to maintain the historic character of the building and will add an outside seating area.

Cabin Coffee will initially employ eight to 10 people and roast coffee beans on site. The menu will include specialty coffee and coffee blend products, other blended drinks, fresh baked goods, soups, sandwiches and other food items.

The Blairsville location marks the 11th franchise for Cabin Coffee Co. in the United States. The company also has locations in Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Blairsville will be Cabin Coffee Co.'s first location in Georgia.

In other restaurant news, Chick-fil-A is expected to be open in June or July 2015. Work has begun on the site location. The eatery will be adjacent to Fatz on Georgia 515.

Signs for Chick-fil-A were approved at the regular meeting of the Blairsville City Council on Tuesday, Sept. 2.

Also, Blairsville is the expected site of a Bojangles' Famous Chicken franchise. No timetable has been set for that announcement.

