

# North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County

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Legal Organ of Union County

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## BRMEMC announces board of director candidates

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Blue Ridge Mountain EMC has finalized the list of candidates who will appear on the ballot in the upcoming election of three new members to the BRMEMC Board of Directors.

Seven member candidates have been nominated and qualified to run for three director seats up for election this year, one each in Union, Towns and Fannin counties.

John Batts, Larry Flegle, Richard Hyer and Jack Lance Jr. will be vying for the Union County board seat.

Incumbent Roy Perren and Jason Waldroup have qualified as candidates to run for the Towns County seat that's up for grabs.

Gayland Trull is the sole candidate running for the Fannin County seat on the board of directors.

Every year, three of the nine board seats become available for election by the membership. Each director's term lasts three years, and the board is composed as follows:

Three seats are held by representatives of Union County. Those seats are currently occupied by Board President Mickey Cummings, Danny Henson and Gene Mason.

Cummings' seat is up for election this year, and he has decided not to run again.

Towns County enjoys two seats of representation on the board, and those are currently held by Board Secretary Perren and Bert Rogers.

Fannin County has one board seat, which will be vacated by Larry Williams at the end of the Sept. 8 annual meeting to be filled by Trull.

The remaining board seats not up for election this year are held by Cory Payne and Jeff Ledford of Clay County, North Carolina; and Ray Cook of Cherokee County, North Carolina.

Members of the Nominating Committee met on June 26 to make their final nominations of candidates, and petition nominations were due by July 16.

Last week, the Credentials and Elections Committee met



John Batts



Larry Flegle



Richard Hyer



Jack Lance, Jr.

on July 24 to finalize the slate of all director candidates, and the EMC has since announced those candidates.

Election packets complete with election notices, ballots and voting instructions will be mailed to members the week of Aug. 6, and mail-in ballots must be received back by Sept. 6.

Online voting will open the week of Aug. 6 and will close on Sept. 6 ahead of the annual meeting.

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Roy Perren



Jason Waldroup



Gayland Trull

## Students head back to school on Friday, Aug. 3



Union County Schools Faculty and Staff, L-R: C.T. Hussion, Chad Deyton, Carol Knight, John Hill, Lisa Vaughn, Dr. Paula Davenport, Gwen Stafford, Tiffany Setzer, Millie Owenby, Karen Bundy and Jerry Bavero.

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
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Come Friday, Aug. 3, many Union County students will likely be asking themselves,

where did the summer go?

That's right, school is back in session beginning on Friday, though parents and students are encouraged to attend "Meet Your Teacher"

at the various schools on Thursday, Aug. 2, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Looking ahead to the 2018-2019 school year, Woody

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## Governor Deal appoints Parks to Enotah Judicial Circuit

By Shawn Jarrard  
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Chief Judge Joy R. Parks of the White County Magistrate Court is joining the Enotah Judicial Circuit as a Superior Court judge.

She will serve alongside Chief Judge N. Stanley Gunter and Judge Raymond George on the Superior Court of the Enotah Judicial Circuit, which covers Union, Towns, White and Lumpkin counties.

Gov. Nathan Deal announced her appointment on July 18.

"The Honorable Joy R. Parks will fill the vacancy in the Enotah Judicial Circuit created by the resignation of the Honorable Murphy C. Miller," according to Gov. Deal. "Parks is the Chief Magistrate Judge of the White County Magistrate Court and owns her own firm.

"She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia and a law degree from the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University. Parks and her husband, Robert, have one child and reside in Cleveland."

Miller is the former Superior Court chief judge who stepped down from the bench effective July 1, at which point Gunter assumed the title of Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court Chief Judge.

"Judge Parks will be well-served by her 25 years of experience in the legal profession, including her service as Magistrate Court judge and in the private practice of law," said Kenneth B. Hodges III, president of the State Bar of Georgia. "She is also a valued member of the Board of Governors of the State Bar of Georgia."



Judge Joy Parks

"With her acceptance of this appointment, Judge Parks demonstrates her ongoing commitment to serving the public and the justice system. We wish her well in this new capacity of judicial leadership."

## Union County SPLOST V to appear on November 6 ballot

By Shawn Jarrard  
North Georgia News  
editor@nganews.com

The Union County 2021 SPLOST referendum is headed for a vote earlier than expected and will appear on the 2018 General Election Ballot this November.

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris made the announcement in his July 24 regular monthly meeting.

SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) is a 1 percent sales tax applied countywide to finance voter-approved capital outlay projects.

Currently, the county is collecting sales taxes under SPLOST IV, which still has roughly three years of



Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris in his July 24 regular meeting. Photo by Shawn Jarrard

collections before expiring at the end of March 2021.

The sales tax in Union County is 7 percent, or 7 cents

on the dollar, and SPLOST IV is on track to collect \$24 million in revenues over six

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## Blairsville City Council partners with DDA on improvements

By Mark Smith  
North Georgia News  
Staff Writer

The Blairsville City Council and the Blairsville Downtown Development Authority Board met at city hall on July 24 to hold a joint called meeting focusing on future city developments.

Blairsville is a growing community with new developments popping up all around the downtown area, and with the influx of new businesses and new residents, the needs of the city are changing.

Both the city council and the DDA want to develop a long-range plan that will maximize the value and utility of every inch of available space inside city limits, all while



Blairsville Downtown Development Authority Board Members W.C. Nelson and Paul Thompson in the joint DDA/Blairsville City Council called meeting on July 24. Photo by Mark Smith

maintaining and improving the city's aesthetics.

The agenda that evening

included the downtown parking lot and park space construction.

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## Steve Rowe to serve as new chamber president/CEO

By Shawn Jarrard  
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editor@nganews.com

Steve Rowe is the new president and CEO of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce.

The announcement comes on the heels of much behind-the-scenes work by the Chamber Board of Directors to find a replacement for Al Harper, who resigned as chamber president in June.

Rowe previously served as the longtime treasurer of the chamber board, and he is the third person hired to lead the chamber since former president Cindy Williams left in 2016.

Williams served in the position for nearly a decade. Regina Allison helmed the chamber for almost two years after that. And Harper departed after six months, the first month and a half of which he served in



Steve Rowe

See Chamber, Page 2A

## July Term 2018 Union County Grand Jury Indictments

The following individuals were indicted during the July Term 2018 of the Union County Grand Jury.

**Cory Michael Upchurch**, aggravated child molestation; child molestation; sodomy; enticing a child for indecent purposes; statutory rape; two counts contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

**Cory Charles Collins**, failure to register as a sex

offender.

**Matthew William Cook**, distribution of heroin; possession of a Schedule I Controlled Substance (heroin); possession of marijuana with intent to distribute; possession of drug-related objects.

**Jeremy Jordan Garcia**, distribution of heroin; possession of a Schedule I Controlled Substance (heroin); six counts sale of marijuana; five counts illegal use of a

communication facility; possession of marijuana with intent to distribute; possession of drug-related objects.

**Micah James Garrison**, possession of a Schedule I Controlled Substance (heroin); possession of marijuana with intent to distribute; possession of drug-related objects.

**Dakota Luther Stamey**, possession of a Schedule I Controlled Substance (heroin); See Grand Jury, Page 2A

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**Nottley Spillway Bridge Closure**  
August 6th - 10th  
One lane traffic from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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