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Judge Parks with Gov. Deal after her swearing-in ceremony on Aug. 14 in Atlanta.

Sept. 4, and she is looking forward to a long career serving the residents of Union, Towns, White and Lumpkin counties. Initially, Parks caught the law bug as a high school

student working part-time for a law office in Helen. She continued working for that law office while attending the University of Georgia, then moved on to

work for another law firm as she earned her Juris Doctor from the Mercer University School of Law.

And it was during her time with this second law office that she came to understand her calling.

"After working with that lawyer, just seeing the way he could help people with the law, that's what piqued my interest in it. From there, that's what I chose to pursue," said Parks.

She graduated from Mercer in 1993, then practiced law for a couple of years before heading back to school, this time to the University of Nottingham in England, where she attained her Master of Laws degree in International Commercial Law.

Thereafter, Parks returned to her White County roots to run a private law practice in Cleveland until 1998, when Judge Hugh Stone of the Enotah Judicial Circuit approached her about filling a judgeship in the White County Magistrate Court.

Parks accepted the Magistrate appointment at the

time, and she went on to serve in that capacity for 20 years as of this past June, having won re-election to the seat multiple times.

Now, she looks forward to her new responsibilities as a Superior Court judge.

"I'm just excited that it's a new challenge to broaden my exposure to different kinds of cases, but also to be a servant to more people of the circuit rather than just White County," said Parks.

Concerning her swearing-in ceremony down in Atlanta, Parks said the occasion was both humbling and exciting.

"We had quite a few people down there back from even my high school days, and then a lot of people I (didn't) even know, that I am going to be working with," said Parks. "It was humbling. It was one of those 'wow' days."

And when it comes to her transition from Magistrate to Superior Court, Parks said she will still be under the same judicial canons as when she was a Magistrate judge, the major difference being jurisdiction.

"We handle the sentencing

of more serious crimes that Magistrates are not allowed to handle ... more serious bond issues," said Parks.

Of course, Parks has been to a fair amount of training since initially receiving the governor's blessing, and she has shadowed several senior judges lately, though her real education began on Sept. 4 with on-the-job training.

Regarding her judicial philosophy, Parks believes that "everybody should be treated fairly and everybody should have access to justice," and no matter a person's background, the law should be applied fairly

to everyone.

"I'm just excited, I'm honored, to be put in this position, and I'm excited to be able to serve (the people of the Enotah Judicial Circuit)," said Parks. "I look forward to serving them for years to come. I'm excited I'm working with two other great judges."

Parks takes the place of Judge Murphy C. Miller, who 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.

Habitat for Humanity Towns Union Counties' Hard Hats and High Heels Gala September 8th



It's that time of year for Habitat for Humanity Towns Union Counties' Hard Hats and High Heels Gala. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 8 at 6:30 p.m. when the food, fun, and festivities begin. This 5th annual event will be held at North Georgia Technical College located at 121 Meeks Avenue in Blairsville and is expected to be the best one yet!

Glam and get ready for the first-ever Casino Night sponsored by Harrah's Casino. Along with a full-course dinner prepared by Chef Danielle Carter and the college's culinary students, moonshine tastings will be offered by our very own Granddaddy Mimms Moonshine Distillery. And if that is not enough, a fabulous assortment of prizes will be available through silent auction or game winnings. All proceeds that eve-

ning will benefit our mission of helping families gain suitable, affordable and safe housing in the two-county service area and/or helping those who are challenged in making improvements or repairs to their homes.

Come join the fun while supporting a great community organization. Your forty dollars (\$40) will provide you with a fabulous culinary experience, five thousand casino dollars, and a great evening of fun and games. Tickets may be purchased from the Habitat office in Young Harris, The Vacuum Store on Cleveland Street, Cabin Coffee of Blairsville and The Enotah Group All-state Insurance located on The Square, and North Georgia Tech, all in Blairsville.

For more information about Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties, Inc. and its programs, please contact Bryan Thomas, Executive Director at 706 379 2484.

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 Who is Tom Taylor?
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