

Prayer...from Page 1A

a background in education before joining the ranks of representatives at the State Capitol.

On Thursday morning, he taught the history of the National Day of Prayer, how it was founded and which president supported the holiday.

"The National Day of Prayer has been challenged in court, unsuccessfully, which makes me very happy," said Sen. Wilkinson. "There has been a National Day of Prayer throughout history off and on. But, actually, there is a law that says we must have a day of prayer."

"That law was adopted by a joint resolution of Congress in 1952. Especially those of you who are veterans will remember that in 1952, we were in the Korean War.

"Billy Graham actually had the idea for the first National Day of Prayer, Congress passed the joint resolution and President (Harry) Truman signed it in 1952.

"Then, in 1988, President (Ronald) Reagan signed an executive order making the first Thursday in May of each year the National Day of Prayer."

After Sen. Wilkinson spoke and shared a prayer with the crowd, pastors and evangelists from the community shared songs, testimonies and prayer for various facets of the community, nation and world.

Bradley Thomas, associate pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church, prayed for revival in America and for



More than a hundred area residents attended the May 4 National Day of Prayer at the Towns County Recreation and Conference Center. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Christian leaders across the nation.

Donnie Jarrard, school resource officer with the Towns County Sheriff's Office, and pastor of Enotah Baptist Church, led prayer for all law enforcement and public safety workers.

Steve Taylor, pastor of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church, prayed for both the local and state governments, praying that leaders would look to God for wisdom and guidance when making decisions for the citizens of Towns County and Georgia.

Evangelist Jim McKeral prayed for national government leaders, while Glen Eller, pastor of Mount Pleasant Church of God, prayed over all members of the military, both those who have served and those currently serving.

Don O'Malley, pastor

of Christ the King Anglican Church, led prayer for education and schools across America while missionary and Evangelist Tim Coleman prayed for those who have been persecuted for their Christian faith.

Pastor Chris Rumpf, of First Free Will Baptist Church of Hayesville, North Carolina, the last speaker of the morning, said a prayer over unborn children, asking the Lord to bring the sanctity of marriage and family back into America. Danny Byers, associate pastor of McConnell Memorial Baptist Church, led a final benediction, ending the two hours of prayer.

"Lord God, you are the one true God," said Byers. "We are thankful that we can come here today to exalt your glorious name."

June Elections board to decide fate of precinct consolidation

By Lily Avery
Towns County Herald
Staff Writer

The Towns County Board of Election voted 3-2 in the April board meeting to close the Macedonia voting precinct and consolidate it with the Hiwassee voting precinct.

To move forward with the consolidation of the two precincts, the board will need to follow state protocol by advertising the proposed consolidation for 10 business days to allow the public to respond accordingly before a final vote can occur to seal the deal.

"This is not going to be like before where people can walk in and say whether they oppose it or not," said Tonya Nichols, Elections Supervisor. "This is an opportunity for the public to sit down and put what they think in writing and for us to keep those correspondences on file of anybody that actually sat down and wrote something out."

"This is standard state procedure. It must be (advertised) in the legal organ of the county for 10 days and there must be a date clarified for when this (consolidation) will go into effect."

After the 10 business days have come and gone, the Board of Elections will not receive any communications regarding the consolidation of the precincts. The board will hold the final vote for the consolidation at its monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 14.

In addition to drafting a legal notice of the plans for consolidation, the board also had to determine the nature of the consolidation. The board had two options, the first being to simply change the voting location of the precinct from Macedonia to Hiwassee while maintaining the individual voting booths for each precinct.

The second option that could be chosen was to completely consolidate all voters from Macedonia, allowing both Hiwassee and Macedonia voters to cast ballots in one line as one singular precinct.



Towns County Board of Elections and Registration members Loretta Youngblood, left, with Barbara Shook and Janet Oliva in a board meeting on Wednesday, May 3. Photo/Lily Avery



Janet Oliva, elections board chair. Photo/Lily Avery

"I think the issue is, the Macedonia voters may not want to change their voter location," said Board Chair Janet Oliva. "If we change it to Hiwassee, it's changed regardless of voter location versus precinct change. So, the change is the change."

"The objection, from what we've received from the public, is the change of the voter location and if we try this other plan of having two precincts voting in one location, I don't think it's going to be satisfactory for those who are against it."

While there were several other factors that played into the board's decision to consolidate the Macedonia and Hiwassee precinct, lack of consistent and committed workers was the primary reason.

Many board members

felt that, if the consolidation only meant a change of voting locations, the problem would not be solved and the need for a consolidation would not be worth the community backlash.

"We could cut down the number of workers by maybe one or two, but not by many," said Nichols. "But, you're still going to have to have a manager for each, two more poll workers and a provisional person for each precinct. So, you're still looking at, at least five, maybe six, people."

After much discussion, the board decided to wait until after the advertised 10 business days to receive input from the public before moving forward. The board will determine how the consolidation will be handled at the June 14 meeting.

Young Harris...from Page 1A



Young Harris City Clerk Shirley Jarrard and Mayor Andrea Gibby in the regular May 3 city meeting. Photo/Lily Avery

of the amendment, the council held a public hearing on April 4, to allow residents to voice opinions on the matter. Now, after the approval of the second reading, the amendment will go into effect immediately.

"This will add the property across the street from the college into the overlay district," said Harkins. "This also adds language to keep the setback in place, without the height restriction, to allow for construction."

The overlay district is currently divided into two sections, Zone A and Zone B. Zone A has consisted of the YHC core campus and Zone B has been the property located at the intersection of Murphy Street and Main Street.

Now, both districts will be under the same height requirement, allowing for what is now Zone B, where YHC intends to build, to no longer be under a height restriction that was previously the cause of the denied construction.

"I think this amendment is well done and well thought out," said Councilman John Kelley. "It allows for a much better understanding of the overlay district and what the requirements are."

The college has not released final construction plans for the proposed building nor has a date been set for when construction will begin.

In other city council news, residents of Young Harris and beyond should get their sea legs ready as the city is gearing

up for its second annual North Georgia Highlands Seafood Festival in Young Harris Mayor's Park.

The festival will take place during the first weekend in June, from Friday, June 2, until Sunday, June 4, and will feature dozens of seafood vendors, musicians and artisans from all across the Southeast.

"We still need volunteers for the event," said Mayor Andrea Gibby. "But we're really excited for this year's festival. It's going to be even better than last year, so everyone should come out and enjoy some good food and music."

Tickets for the event are \$5 for adults and children under 12 years old get in free. Those interested can purchase a ticket online or at the gate.

Governor signs new heart legislation in Gainesville



Gov. Nathan Deal, center, joined by Northeast Georgia Health System leadership, District 50 State Sen. John Wilkinson, (R-Toccoa), and other regional legislators, signs Senate Bill 102. Photo courtesy Northeast Georgia Medical Center.

NEWS SPECIAL
The Towns County Herald

GAINESVILLE – When you or someone you know has a heart attack in Georgia, treatment will soon be more efficient thanks to new legislation.

Gov. Nathan Deal, joined by members of the Georgia General Assembly, signed Senate Bill 102 at Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) on Tuesday, May 2. The new law provides for the establishment of emergency cardiac care centers in Georgia and a three-level designation system for those centers – making Georgia one of only a few states in the nation to have these types of coordinated systems in place.

"Northeast Georgia Medical Center is recognized as a leader in heart care for our state, so it only makes sense that NGMC has been a driving force in establishing designations for emergency cardiac care centers," said Gov. Deal.

The emergency cardiac care centers and levels of designation will coordinate treatment among first responders, hospital emergency departments, cardiologists, heart surgeons and other care teams to help ensure patients are stabilized and transported to a hospital that can provide the level of care they need.

"This is all about making sure patients receive the care, at the right place, at the

right time," says Jeffrey Marshall, MD, medical director of Cardiac Catheterization Labs at NGMC. "We have helped coordinate a similar streamlined approach to rapid heart attack treatment in our region for a decade, which has received national awards for excellent outcomes, so we know applying this type of response to emergency cardiac cases across the state will save countless lives."

The law provides for three levels of designations for cardiac care centers, with high-level criteria that will be further defined by the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH):

- Level 1 hospitals perform open heart surgery and interventional cardiac catheterizations.
- Level 2 hospitals perform interventional cardiac catheterizations.
- Level 3 hospitals

stabilize patients until they are transported to a Level 1 or Level 2 center.

The law also creates a new Office of Cardiac Care within the DPH which will develop specific guidelines for oversight, implementation and operations for the designation system.

Senate Bill 102 was researched, introduced and carried through the Georgia General Assembly by Sen. Butch Miller, Sen. Renee Unterman and Rep. Lee Hawkins. Deborah Bailey, executive director of Governmental Affairs for Northeast Georgia Health Systems, was also recognized for her work championing the bill.

NGMC is rated Georgia's No. 1 Heart Hospital for the 12th consecutive year according to CareChex, an independent healthcare quality rating service. Learn more at www.nghs.com/heart.

Annual 'Tomato Day' a way for United Community Bank to give back to community



Nothing says customer appreciation like free lunches and tomato plants, courtesy United Community Bank of Towns County last Friday, May 5. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

Blairsville VA Clinic update

It has come to our attention that some misinformation has been circulated regarding the Blairsville VA clinic. The Blairsville Clinic is not closing. The rumors may stem

from a construction project planned to widen Georgia 515/US 76 to four lanes between Blairsville and Young Harris. Please pass this information onto our Veterans!

Bagpipe instruction

The Appalachian Saint Andrew's Pipes and Drums Bagpipe Band is offering free instruction to all who want to learn how to play the Great Highland Bagpipe or to learn Regimental Drumming.

The band meets each Saturday from 9:30 a.m. until 12 noon in the Parish Hall of St. Clare's Episcopal Church for instruction and practice.

For further information, call 770-833-5411 or 1-828-557-3812.