

Early Voting...from Page 1A

contested elections for the following federal, state and local offices: President of the United States; two U.S. Senate races; two Public Service Commissioner races; the 9th Congressional District seat; District 50 State Senator; 8th District State Representative; and Towns County Tax Commissioner.

Also on the ballot are uncontested elections for five local offices, including Probate Judge, Clerk of Superior Court, Sheriff, Coroner and Commissioner, and no one is running for Blue Ridge Mountain Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor.

The General Election features three statewide ballot initiatives for all Georgians to decide, including two proposed state constitutional amendments and a referendum.

Amendment 1, if passed, would enable state legislators to use specifically imposed fees and taxes expressly for their intended purposes.

This amendment would ensure that specific fees, such as the \$1 old-tire disposal fee charged in the purchase of every new tire, actually go toward their express purpose instead of being allocated elsewhere, as is current practice under state law.

Amendment 2, if passed, would enable citizens to freely sue the state in an attempt to challenge "state or local laws that violate the Constitution of Georgia, the U.S. Constitution, or state law." Currently, would-

be plaintiffs need government permission to do this.

Statewide Referendum A "establishes a tax exemption for certain real property owned by charities," according to the ballot, which would benefit some nonprofits like the local Habitat for Humanity.

Election Day will be Tuesday, Nov. 3, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. That day, voters should report to one of the three pre-assigned Towns County voting precincts: Hiawassee at the Civic Center; Young Harris at the Lodge Hall Building, aka Stephens Lodge; and Macedonia at Macedonia Baptist Church.

Voters are not required to bring their mailed precinct cards, but they must show a valid photo ID to vote.

Registered voters who will be at least 18 years of age by Election Day are eligible to vote during early voting, though Oct. 5 was the registration deadline for voters looking to participate in the Nov. 3 election.

Absentee ballots are being automatically mailed to voters who informed the Board Office they were elderly or disabled on a previous application, though all others need to apply to get their mail-in absentee ballot for the General Election.

People may request mail-in absentee ballots by visiting <https://ballotrequest.sos.ga.gov>, calling the local Board Office at 706-896-4353 or swinging by the office at Lakeview Circle.

Following an absentee

ballot request, voters can easily track the progress of their ballot – before and after voting – by signing up at <https://georgia.ballottrax.net/voter/>.

People wanting to fill out their absentee ballots/applications and drop them off in person can do so either with the Board Office directly or at the security-monitored drop box outside the office. The current deadline to return absentee-by-mail ballots for counting is 7 p.m. on Nov. 3.

The deadline to request an absentee ballot is Oct. 30. Voters should be aware it could take days for requested ballots to arrive in the mail and potentially several more for completed ballots to be returned for counting when mailed, so it's best to request one well in advance of the deadline.

An absentee ballot/application must be submitted by the requesting voter, except for a disabled person, who may have a relative by blood or marriage return his or her absentee ballot/application.

Those who receive an absentee ballot by mail but decide to vote in person will need to have their absentee ballot canceled at time of voting, so be sure to bring it to the polls.

Election officials have said double voting is not a concern, as the system will alert poll workers if a voter has, for example, already cast an absentee-by-mail ballot but forgets and shows up at their regular voting precinct on Election Day.

Voters can access the My Voter Page at mvp.sos.ga.gov ahead of the election for information on voter registration

status, mail-in application and ballot status, poll location, registration information on file with the county office, sample ballots and more.

The Elections Board has been receiving calls by concerned voters receiving confusing phone calls as well as items in the mail, including a mailer apparently from the Georgia GOP that says, "VOTER ALERT: Public records indicate you have not yet returned your absentee ballot."

Officials say that many of the callers have already submitted their absentee ballots, despite what the mailer says, and that people should disregard third-party mailers.

"As a rule, we do not notify voters that we haven't received their ballots," Towns County Elections Board Chair Dr. Janet Oliva said. "If there's an issue, we would send them a personal letter on our letterhead with our signature – we would never send out a mass mailout of a flyer."

Furthermore, voters need only fill out one ballot application, and the best way to check absentee ballot status is by using BallotTrax, checking the My Voter Page or calling the Board Office.

A local talent returns home to Towns County

A great time was had by the crowd that gathered on Sunday, October 4th, at the Tilted Café, when Towns County's Palmer Miray returned to perform with friend Nick Isham of Los Angeles. Palmer has been heard by many since she was 5 years old performing the National Anthem at the stadium, singing at Music on the Square and at the Music Hall at the Fairgrounds. She moved to Florida 3 years ago and performed in over 300 shows in two years with the band at the Fort Harrison Hotel in Clearwater. That experience led her to being invited to perform in England twice and the Caribbean for private events.

After moving to Los Angeles this year, she began writing with singer/songwriter/producer Nick Isham. They wrote a powerful song called "Nowhere" which Palmer posted on her Instagram recently, giving everyone an empowering message during this pandemic. Nick is an accomplished performer, and is also currently doing the musical scoring for the tv show "Tiger Kingdom".

Palmer loved seeing everyone who came to support



Palmer Miray (left), her nephew Jonathan (center) and songwriter Nick Isham her during this surprise visit on some great music to come home. Stay tuned for updates from them! T/Oct14_F2/ISH

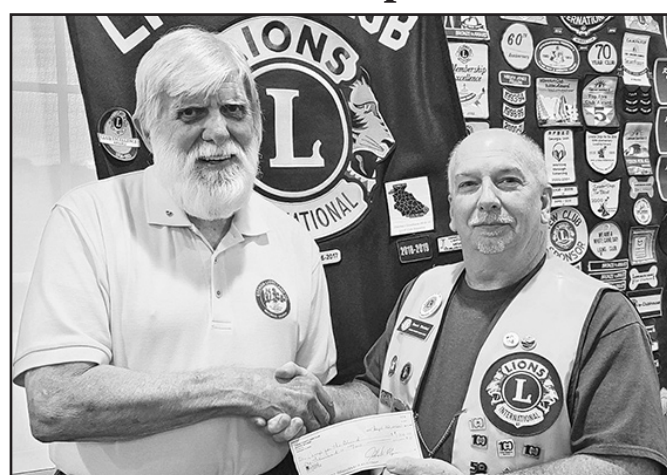
Towns County Lions learn about Camp for the Blind

Ed Ressler, an East Cobb Lions Club member since 1989, spoke at the Towns County Lions Club meeting on Sept 22nd. Ed has served in many roles since becoming a Lion for both his Club and for International District 18-1. Some of his past roles include Treasurer, President, Zone Chairman, Region Chairman, Camp for the Blind Director, Sight Conservation Director, Representative for Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, District Representative for Send a Kid to Camp and Guiding Lion to other area clubs.

He spoke to the Lions Club in official capacity as the President of the Camp for the Blind. The Lions Camp for the Blind was created 1976 and is located in Waycross, GA. The 62 acre camp hosts several summer sessions that are approximately one week long and are broken down into different age groups, to include ages 6-84. At the camp, the campers participate in activities such as swimming, horseback riding, canoeing, fishing, nature trails, wall climbing, campfires(with s'mores), arts and crafts, and music. One day in the future, they hope to add a zip line. In the winter, they offer a Christmas Camp with hayrides, cookies, caroling and more. They are also planning to expand to start a Transition Camp so individuals can learn home living skills, how to function in the community and prepare for school or employment. There are also plans in place to expand and update the facility to make it more assessable and adult friendly for the visually impaired. Adding tandem bicycles and exercise equipment would be something that they believe will appeal to the older campers.

Reesler stated that his hope is to help the campers to realize that visual impairment does not mean they cannot do the things a sighted person can but challenges them to find a way to do those things they want to do, to build self-confidence, and make friends with those share a common bond.

Although the camp is almost completely funded by the Lions, some churches and organizations have been helping as well and they are open to any donations to help further their mission, which is: to provide personal growth experiences for children,



Ed Ressler (L) accepts check from TC Lions First Vice President Ronnie Whelchel for the Camp for the Blind.

teens, and adults with visual impairments through the use of recreation, education, socialization, and rehabilitation in an outdoor setting. Monetary donations are always appreciated; however, volunteers are needed as well to

help during the camp and to help with building, improvements, and cleaning when camp is not in session.

For more information or to register for the camp, please visit www.glcbl.org.