

Towns County Herald

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ELECTION RESULTS

Bradshaw wins commissioner race; Sheriff Clinton re-elected

In Hiawassee, Ross takes city council seat; alcohol referendums pass

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Towns County Herald
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Voting in the 2016 General Election is finally over following a long season of campaigning on behalf of candidates in contested county races, and the results are in: Cliff Bradshaw will be the new Towns County Sole Commissioner, and Sheriff Chris Clinton will remain the sheriff of Towns County.

There were 6,845 ballots cast in Towns County, out of 8,608 registered voters – that's a turnout of 79.52 percent.

Cliff Bradshaw, the Republican candidate for Sole Commissioner, won 65.79 percent of the vote with 4,375 votes.

"I would like to thank all of my family and friends, and all of the people who have supported me," said Commissioner-Elect Bradshaw. "I'm just very excited and looking forward to going to work for the wonderful people of this county Jan. 1."

As incoming commissioner of Towns County, Bradshaw told the *Towns County Herald* that he has a message for everyone who works for the county.

"The very first thing I'm going to do is talk to all the county employees and let them know that their job is secure," said Bradshaw. "So many of them are afraid they're going to lose their job now that the commissioner is changing, and they're scared and I understand that."

"I'm going to let them know that their job is secure as long as they do their job."

Nathan Hughes, the Democratic candidate for Sole Commissioner, received 27.98 percent of the vote with 1,861 votes.

Henry Chambers, the Independent candidate for Sole Commissioner, received 6.09 percent of the vote with 405 votes.

Moving on to results of the

other big county race, Sheriff Chris Clinton, the incumbent Republican candidate for Sheriff, won 58.59 percent of the vote with 3,910 votes.

"I just really want to thank all the people who came out and voted, and thank all the people for placing their trust in me," said Sheriff Clinton. "It's really a humbling thing when people place that level of trust in their sheriff, and we've always done our part to try to earn that."

"That's something that we're going to continue to do for the next four years, is just work very hard for the people. We look forward to it – we've got a lot of things we want to accomplish yet."

Looking ahead, Sheriff Clinton says he wants to keep up the good work for which he is well known among his constituents.

"We want to continue moving forward with our professional sheriff's office, continue working on new ways to get the community involved and keep targeting the criminals," said Sheriff Clinton. "One of the best things I feel like we've done is with the Citizens Law Enforcement Academy, and get the community involved in that way."

"We want to continue to keep that professional standard, taking the fight to the drug dealers. We've been very successful at that, and we want to continue to hopefully build that network and partnership throughout Northeast Georgia and a combination of some of the other states that we've been working with, and just protect our community."

Brandon Barrett, an Independent candidate for Sheriff, received 28.4 percent of the vote with 1,895 votes.

Linda Curtis, an Independent candidate for Sheriff, received 12.93 percent of the vote with 863 votes.

In the Special Election for

County Board of Education Post 2 to fill the unexpired term of Cliff Bradshaw, who resigned that post to run for commissioner, Stan Chastain defeated Chad Houser with 68.23 percent of the vote.

All other races for Towns County offices were uncontested, and finished as follows:

David Rogers, Republican incumbent for Judge of Probate Court, received 5,858 votes.

Cecil Dye, Republican incumbent for Clerk of Superior Court, received 5,896 votes.

Bruce Rogers, Democratic incumbent for Tax Commissioner, received 5,488 votes.

Harold Copeland, Republican for Coroner, received 5,656 votes.

In other races, Towns Counties voted as follows:

For President, Republican Donald Trump and running mate Mike Pence received 79.22 percent of the vote with 5,377 votes.

For President, Democrat Hillary Clinton and running mate Tim Kaine received 17.77 percent of the vote with 1,206 votes.

For president, Libertarian Gary Johnson and running mate Bill Weld received 2.11 percent of the vote with 143 votes.

Republican Incumbent U.S. Sen. Johnny Isakson received 78.07 percent of the Towns County vote with 4,956 votes to Democratic Candidate Jim Barksdale's 1,163 votes and Libertarian Candidate Allen Buckley's 223 votes. As of press time, Barksdale had been called the winner of this race.

For Public Service Commissioner, Republican Incumbent Tim Echols received 85.56 percent of the vote compared to Libertarian Eric Hoskins.

Incumbent Republican U.S. Rep. Doug Collins of the 9th Congressional District of Georgia ran unopposed, garnering 5,644 votes in Towns County.
Incumbent Republican State

Sen. John Wilkinson from the 50th District ran unopposed, capturing 5,593 votes in Towns County.

Matt Gurtler ran uncontested as the Republican candidate for 8th District State Representative in the Georgia General Assembly, and he received 5,589.

As for the statewide constitutional amendments, Towns County residents voted in the following manner:

Amendment 1: Towns County voted to defeat Amendment 1 with 3,735 no votes to 2,779 yes votes.

Amendment 2: Residents voted to pass Amendment 2 with 5,281 yes votes to 1,090 no votes.

Amendment 3: Towns County residents voted to pass Amendment 3 with 3,682 yes votes to 2,151 no votes.

Amendment 4: Towns County voted to pass Amendment 4 with 5,141 yes votes to 1,141 no votes.

Hiawassee ran a Special Election side by side with the General Election this year, to replace the unexpired term of resigned Hiawassee City Councilman Stephen Smith.

The winner of that seat is Rayette Ross.

Ross received 136 votes out of 254 ballots cast, while her opponent, John Holmes, received 106 votes.

The three citywide initiatives voters were asked to decide went as follows:

Put to the vote, the selling of liquor by the drink passed with a margin of 172 votes yes to 73 votes no.

When asked to decide whether or not to allow the selling of alcoholic beverages by the drink on Sundays, the initiative passed with 165 votes yes to 82 votes no.

As for Sunday retail sales of beer and wine, Hiawassee residents passed the initiative, with 169 people voting yes and 77 people voting no.