

Community eager to cast votes ahead of Election Day



Standing outside the Union County Courthouse was a popular activity last week, as people lined up to cast ballots during the first of three weeks of early in-person voting.

Photo by Jarrett Whitener

By Jarrett Whitener
North Georgia News
Staff Writer

More than 2,600 active registered voters took their place in line at the Union County Courthouse to cast a ballot during the first week of advanced in-person voting for the Nov. 3 General Election.

Election officials believe people should vote early if they can so as to avoid potentially long lines on Election Day, and resident Elizabeth Fleury-Gould agreed last week.

"If you know who you are going to vote for, you might as well do it early and get it over with," Fleury-Gould said. "They can start counting, and it tells you where your party is."

A longtime early voter, Fleury-Gould encourages people to vote generally, urging voters to head to the polls as soon as they've made up their minds.

"I always try to do early voting," Fleury-Gould said. "I usually know who I'm going to vote for and what they represent to me. I have it already in my mind when I get there, it is just waiting in line to actually vote."

"I would recommend it to anyone that knows what they want. But if they are not sure yet, just wait, because things

change all the time, and you never know when something might happen that helps you make that decision."

Like Fleury-Gould, plenty of people were veteran early voters during the four days of in-person voting last week – the courthouse was closed for a state holiday Monday – though some new to early voting showed up to give it a try.

Jackson Trilling found the process to be a relieving experience, as it removed the concern of rushing to the line on Election Day.

"I've never actually voted early before," Trilling said. "I came because I figured it would be better to go ahead and get it out of the way while I had a day off. The line was a little long but nowhere near what I heard other people saying it was. I think it cooled off for the end of the week."

Of course, the election means different things to different people, though there is a general feeling that the results on America will vary substantially depending on who wins in November.

"I would encourage people to vote early if they plan on voting," Trilling said. "Most people already know what they want, so there really

isn't a reason in waiting much longer.

"This election is important in determining the next steps for us as a country, and you can tell how much people care about it because they are here voting."

"I don't really care who people vote for, but it is a great thing to see people being compassionate about this country and actually doing something about it."

"This is what this country was founded on, and it is something we need to participate in."

Advanced in-person voting for the Nov. 3 election continues weekdays through Friday, Oct. 30. All weekday early voting is between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., and people will have the opportunity to vote this Saturday, Oct. 24, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In-person early voting is happening in the Jury Assembly Room on the bottom floor of the courthouse, even during lunchtime.

The courthouse is still under a judicial order requiring guests to wear face masks, practice social distancing and submit to temperature checks before entering the building.

Cooper ...from Page 1A

The Ninth Circuit Court issued the warrant for Cooper's arrest earlier this year on Aug. 21, specifying that his bail should be set at \$10,000, or \$5,000 for each of his two extortion charges. Before he can post bail, he will have to appear before a judge at the courthouse in Orlando.

A further condition of his release is that Cooper must have no direct contact with the "victim" in the extortion case, according to court documents, and he will be required to keep the clerk of court advised of his most current address and phone number.

Details surrounding Cooper's alleged crimes were

not available at press time.

Extortion is considered a second-degree felony in Florida punishable "by a term of imprisonment not exceeding 15 years" and a fine of up to \$10,000.

The charge of extortion is defined under Florida law in the statute section regarding "threatening letters and similar offenses."

Florida law stipulates that the crime of extortion has occurred when an individual:

"Either verbally or by a written or printed communication, maliciously threatens to accuse another of any crime or offense, or by such communication maliciously

threatens an injury to the person, property or reputation of another, or maliciously threatens to expose another to disgrace, or to expose any secret affecting another, or to impute any deformity or lack of chastity to another, with intent thereby to extort money or any pecuniary advantage whatsoever, or with intent to compel the person so threatened, or any other person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his or her will."

Cooper has been charged only and is presumed innocent until found guilty in a court of law.

Southeast Tourism Society selects Mountain Country Christmas In Lights as an 'STS Top 20 Event'



SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY

Southeast Tourism Society has named Mountain Country Christmas in Lights one of the STS Top 20 Events in the Southeast for November/December 2020.

This year's Mountain Country Christmas in Lights is every Thursday, Friday & Saturday from November 26th - December 26th (closed Christmas Eve & Christmas Day). The STS Top 20 Festival and Event Awards have highlighted programs around the Southeast since 1985.

Travel industry experts select 20 events per month, and STS publicizes them throughout the United States.

The complete list is published on two websites: Southeast Tourism Society and Travel Media Press Room.

The Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds will transform into a spectacular, magical holiday light show immersed in Christmas music, arts and crafts, food, fun, entertainment, photo opportunities, and a visit with Old Saint Nick himself! Admission to the Mountain Country Christmas in Lights event is \$6 per person and children 12 and under are free!

For 35 years, STS has been spotlighting the best festivals and events in the Southeast with our Top 20 Festival and Events program. Our goal is to highlight the efforts of devoted event organizers and provide additional media exposure and accolades for their events," said Monica Smith, president and CEO of the

Southeast Tourism Society. "The Southeast offers so many unique, year-round, opportunities for tourists and festival-goers to create memories and support the tourism industry—a vital economic generator for communities."

Events considered for the STS Top 20 recognition must be at least three years old and have attendance of at least 1,000. The online nomination link and submission deadlines are available at SoutheastTourism.org or by calling 770-542-1523.

STS, founded in 1983 and headquartered in Roswell, Ga., is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting travel and tourism within 14 states: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

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UC Historical Society's Brick Walk

To show our appreciation for the overwhelming community support for the Union County Historical Society's Brick Walk, we are extending the current price of \$50 per brick. Please call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493 or come by the old courthouse to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one.

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