

County Meeting...from Page 1A

this expense for a long time, but we finally had to. We had already discussed this in a proposal at the last county meeting, and we are now accepting this contract in the amount of \$157,425.

"We re-did the whole Civic Center for \$250,000, other than the roof, a few years ago, but just to do the roof is \$157,000. A notice of award was presented at the May 19 county meeting, and this is just accepting the contract from the company."

The commissioner also approved an agreement between the county and Baker Interactive Services, DBA Baker Audio, for the purposes of 24 hours a day, 365 days per year support for the 911 Dispatch communication systems, at a cost of \$15,249.16 per year.

"We're looking at several different future changes in the 911 center," said the commissioner. "I hope we're pretty close to bringing in texting so that people will be able to access it by texting. Then, we're looking at some mapping and other changes, possibly having to do some computer upgrades, too, but we're in the process of looking at all that."

During his Commis-

Boat Parade...from Page 1A

Nottely Marina has been in business since 1992, and when marina owner Carleen Doucette decided to start a decorated boat parade, many didn't think it would take off like it did.

"The first year, I was told nobody would show up," said Doucette, during the 2015 parade. "So, I'm in the first boat, going all the way to the dam that year, and here comes two sheriff's boats, yelling, 'Carleen, Carleen, you've got 75 boats behind you.' I had blown them away, and we never know who is coming."

According to Doucette, there's only so much that can be done with the colors red, white and blue, so when it comes to decorating a boat, the theme is more along the lines of "anything goes," as long as people get creative.

"It is celebrating the

sioner's Comments portion of the meeting, Commissioner Paris gave a quick overview of some other county business.

"This is an extremely busy time of year for all county officials, a lot of projects going on," said Commissioner Paris. "We just completed installing the flagpoles at the Leon Davenport Veterans Center, which will represent all the Armed Services."

"The Vietnam Veterans association purchased the flagpoles, and the county agreed to install them. They will be lined and the flags hung in a couple of weeks - you can ride by and you can see the poles, they really do look nice."

He also thanked the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce for its ribbon-cutting ceremony last month for the new Splash Park in the Meeks Park Pool area. The park officially opened on June 4, the same day as the swimming pool, but on Monday, May 23, nearly 150 local kindergarten students showed up for the ribbon cutting.

"It has been swamped since we opened it two weeks ago, just any day you go up there," said Commissioner Paris.

Fourth of July, it is showing, hey, we're all in this together, we're all here to have a good time and celebrate the holiday weekend - but maybe not necessarily just do a patriotic theme," said Moriah Doucette, one of the many Doucettes in the family-run marina. "Tie in anything you want to it. It's really just about having a good time for that holiday."

Last year, themes ran the gamut from traditional Red, White & Blue to a Disney's "Frozen" themed boat, and even the Blairsville Chick-fil-A, which was about a month away from opening, entered the annual parade.

And people have already been coming out to the marina to measure their boats in order to prepare them to be decorated, all in the hopes of winning one of the coveted trophies given out the day of the parade.

"They come out, they measure it bow to stern, the width, everything, to see what they can put on their boat - if they want to do an air cannon, if they want to make a mast to put in the middle of the boat," said Moriah Doucette. "They gauge and get measurements for what they can add to their boat."

"Last year they did this with one of our rental boats and actually won the boat parade. And they had it decorated so well that we didn't know until after we'd already chosen them that it was our boat, because they decorated it so well."

Making sure everything runs smoothly during the parade are representatives with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 23, as well as the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

And the entire event is free to attend, for both participants and spectators.

"We ask that everybody who comes to see the parade, that they stay on land, to keep the weight off the dock and make sure that we know that only our boat owners are on the dock," said Doucette. "Anywhere they can find a place to sit a chair on land, they're more than welcome to, and to watch the boat parade."

"We have two new gazebos on the property this year that they're more than welcome to use, but I have a feeling those will fill up fast, so they might want to get here early that morning and go ahead and stake their spot. We also have plenty of shoreline along the point that anybody is more than welcome to sit on."

With the annual boat parade, Nottely Marina - offering beer, bait and boats throughout the summer - gives the community a patriotic tradition to celebrate right out on the water.

For those with an appetite for fireworks, Nottely Marina will also be conducting a public fireworks display around 10 p.m. that Saturday, July 2.

Nottely Marina is located just up Murphy Highway/U.S. 129-N, on the left if headed toward North Carolina.

Suches...from Page 1A

The Suches Fire Department Independence Day fireworks has grown from a casual gathering of the department in one member's backyard with a few bottle rockets to an event which is recognized as one of the best in the area and which draws large numbers of community residents and visitors from miles away.

It is a fine example of how small town America celebrates its independence and never fails to be a meaningful and enjoyable evening for all who attend.

The event is funded by special contributions from sponsors - individuals and businesses - from the Suches community and the county so the operating money of the department can continue to be directed to protecting and serving the community.

When the list of contributors is finalized, it will be posted at the event and those attending are asked to patronize business sponsors and

thank those individuals who participate.

The Suches Fire Department invites everyone in the area to join them in their celebration of our country's Independence on July 4th at the Woody Gap School in Suches.

The two fire stations in Suches are a part of the countywide fire department, which consists of the paid headquarters station in Blairsville and a dozen, volunteer stations in five districts throughout the county.

The career and volunteer firefighters and first responders throughout this system are dedicated to the protection of life and property of Union County residents and visitors alike.

If you are interested in sharing this rewarding service, contact the department at (706) 439-6095 and you will be put in touch with representatives of the district and station that serve where you live.

Voting...from Page 1A

eral people voting, but it's usually a smaller turnout," said Union County Deputy Registrar Diana Nichols.

Mail-out ballots for the Republican Primary Runoff are available at the office.

It should be noted that those who voted the Democratic ticket in the May 24 election will not be able to vote in the Republican Primary Runoff.

However, voters who did not vote in the May 24 Primary can still vote in this runoff, though they must have been registered in time to have voted in the May 24 Primary in order to vote in the July 26 Runoff.

Also, those who voted Non-Partisan in the May 24 Primary can vote in this runoff as well.

Independent and Political Body Candidate qualifying began on Monday, June 27.

Residents looking to qualify as an Independent or a Political Body Candidate for local office must turn in their Notice of Candidacy to the Union County Board of Elections before Friday, July 1, at noon, in order to have his or her name considered for placement on the General Election Ballot.

Part of the qualifying process for Independent and Political Body Candidates is a petition process requiring each candidate

to have procured petitions containing signatures of at least 5 percent of the voting population.

That 5 percent is reflective of the number of registered voters during the last election in which the elected office was filled, which was in 2012.

Based on those 2012 totals, the number of signatures required for an Independent or Political Body Candidate to make a successful petition to be added to the General Election Ballot in November is right around 655.

Tuesday, July 12, is the deadline to have the appropriate petitions turned in to the Board of Elections.

It is recommended that those seeking signatures obtain more than actually required, as oftentimes many signatures are considered invalid when being checked by the Union County Board of Registrars for voter registration verification.

"There are always some that are not registered, there are some that are illegible, you can't figure out who they are," said Union County Deputy Registrar Diana Nichols. "There are different reasons, but you always find some that - some of them, the signatures don't match what we have on the cards, and if they don't match, we don't count them."