

Chairman Bruce's Newsletter

11-7-07

The voters of Fannin County have spoken and they have decided that they do not want by-the-drink alcohol sold in the county. I hope that, as we move forward, the county can overcome the bitterness and divisiveness that has come to the surface over the last few months. We are not natives and newcomers. We are Fannin County. We must work together for the promotion and progress of our communities. I hope also that the debates that have happened have enabled people to take a good look at themselves and to ponder the questions; "Am I being a good neighbor?", "Am I building up or am I tearing down?"

As we all consider these questions let us remember that nothing good is served by holding onto anger or resentment. It will not make someone more moral. It will not create jobs and it will not reduce your taxes. Working together as friends will do those things. I believe all of the commissioners have done what they told the citizens they would do. Commissioner Morris and I agreed that allowing a referendum and a public vote was the proper way to handle this. Commissioner Ledford lived up to his word by calling for pouring licenses by ordinance. What we need now to do is for us all to show each other and the rest of North Georgia what we are for rather than what we are against. Let's think in terms of what we want to be rather than what we don't want to become and focus our energies on properly identifying our problems and finding solutions to them.

This last Monday night I had the opportunity to attend the first part of the graduation ceremony for this year's Vision Quest team. This is a selected group of high school students who study leadership and entrepreneurship with local professionals. This is the second year for this program and it continues to be a big success. This program, primarily developed by Rob Kaser and Kristin Gunia, has received state and national recognition and attention.

As Representative David Ralston said during his speech at the ceremony, these students truly are our leaders for tomorrow and this program helps prepare them to understand the challenges that face businesses in our community. I told them, in one of their first meetings, that while many continue to look for large companies to bring jobs into Fannin County, I look to them for the drive and business spirit that will provide the opportunities to help keep their fellow classmates in Fannin and not have to move off to find jobs. This program continues to benefit our community and I encourage each of you to learn more about it.

Later on Monday evening, I was able to catch the last part of our first land use public forum. I am encouraged by what I heard in that there will likely be some real and tangible ways to address their concerns in the near future. I urge those of you on the east side of the county to join the discussion next Monday, the 12th, at the Morganton Baptist Church fellowship hall at 7:00.

You can also find a form to submit your concerns online at our county website, www.fannincountyga.org. Chris Yohn, our technology director, and I are continually looking for ways to increase the amount of timely information we can get out to you through this site. Visit often and look for changes.

God Bless and have a great day.

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Howell (Howie) Bruce, Jr.

Chairman

Fannin County Board of Commissioners

www.fannincountyga.org