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Candidates qualify in Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties

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TRI-COUNTY AREA – County constitutional officers in Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties qualified as of noon on Friday (June 24), and the county with the most candidates running is Dixie County.

Not only that, but there is on very peculiar situation in the race for Dixie County Sheriff.

DIXIE COUNTY

In Dixie County, Sheriff Dewey H. Hatcher, Sr. is seeking reelection. He is a No Party Affiliate (NPA) and therefore his race will be decided in the General Election on Nov. 8.

Sheriff Hatcher is facing Christopher Paul Cambron (NPA), who is not a law enforcement officer.

Cambron is currently awaiting trial on charges of principal in the purchase of a controlled substance and possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana, according to records. His wife Brenda Cambron was arrested on April 4, too, for the purchase of a controlled substance and possession of more than 20 grams of marijuana, according to records. Bond was set at \$30,000 for each of the Cambrons.

Trials for these defendants have not started, according to records.

While the race for Dixie County Sheriff is rather strange, a number of other incumbents are not so controversial, because they are the only ones who qualified for their posts.

In Dixie County, the following people are going to be reelected because they qualified: Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Dana D. Johnson (NPA); Property Appraiser Robert A. Lee (NPA); Tax Collector Michelle Fowler Cannon (NPA); Supervisor of Elections Starlet Cannon (Republican {Rep.}); and School Board Member - District 4 Timothy Wayne Alexander ((non-partisan race {NOP})).

There is no incumbent running for Dixie County Superintendent of Schools.

The candidates for Dixie County Superintendent of Schools are Jimmie L Green Jr. (NPA); Cheryl C. Pridgeon (NPA); and Mike Thomas (NPA);

County Commissioner - District 1 Wade E. "Gene" Higginbotham (NPA) is seeking reelection and he is facing Micah Jon Davis (NPA).

County Commissioner - District 3 Jody is seeking reelection and he is facing Mark Hatch (NPA)

There is no incumbent running for reelection to Dixie County Commissioner - District 5. Following are the candidates for that seat Benita Corbin (Rep.); David D. Osteen (NPA); Brandon Arren Ross (NPA); and James T. Valentine (NPA).

In the Dixie County School Board Race – District 1, there is no incumbent running. The three qualified candidates will be on the Aug. 30 primary ballot. If one candidate earns 50 percent of the vote, plus one, then he or she will be the Dixie County School Board Member - District 1.

If that does not happen, then the top two vote-getters in this race will face each other in the Nov. 8 general election.

Following are the three qualified candidates running for Dixie County School Board Member - District 1 (They are all non-partisan {NOP}): Patrick Bell; Crystal M. Bush; Amanda Malone Medlin;

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### **GILCHRIST COUNTY**

In Gilchrist County, the following constitutional officers were reelected because no one qualified to run against them: Sheriff Robert D. "Bobby" Schultz III (Rep.); Clerk of Circuit Court Todd Newton (Rep.); Property Appraiser Damon C. Leggett (Rep.); Supervisor of Elections Connie D. Sanchez (Rep.); Superintendent of Schools Robert G. Rankin (Rep.); County

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Commissioner - District 1 Sharon Akins Langford (Rep.); and County Commissioner - District 5 Kenrick D. Thomas (Rep.).

Incumbent Gilchrist County Commissioner - District 3 Gray Todd (Rep.) is facing candidate Richard Frank Esseck (NPA) in the election on Nov. 8.

Incumbent Gilchrist County Tax Collector Barbara J. Merritt (Dem.) will face candidate Donna Stacy (Rep.) in the election on Nov. 8.

There is no incumbent Gilchrist County School Board Member – District 2 who is seeking reelection. That non-partisan race shows Susan P. Owens versus Don Thomas.

Gilchrist County School Board Member – District 4 Julie C. Thomas is facing candidate Gina Louise Geiger in that non-partisan race.

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LEVY COUNTY

Levy County had the least contenders for office, because almost all of the incumbents faced no opposition.

The incumbent constitutional officers that were reelected are Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller Danny Shipp (Rep.); Property Appraiser Osborn “Oz” Barker (Rep.); Sheriff Robert “Bobby” McCallum Jr. (Rep); Tax Collector Linda Fugate (Rep.); Supervisor of Elections Tammy Jones (Rep.); and School Board members District 2 - Chris Cowart; District 3 - Brad Etheridge; and District 4 - Paige Brookins.

Sheriff McCallum provided a statement about his uncontested reelection.

"I want to take this opportunity to thank the Citizens of Levy County for the tremendous show of confidence that they have extended to me as their Sheriff. I am honored to have served as your Sheriff the last three and a half years and look forward to serving the next term.

"I want to specifically thank my God, my family, my supporters and the more than 150 dedicated men and women who serve as employees and volunteers at the Levy County Sheriff's Office. The sworn and non-sworn members of LCSO are the ones who do the hard work to provide protection and service to the Citizens. They provide it 24 hours per day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. I am grateful for their dedication and service which is reflected in my reelection as Sheriff without opposition.

"With the closing of the qualification period at noon today, another chapter has been written in the history of Levy County. According to those who are supposed to know, this is the first uncontested re-election of a Levy County Sheriff in modern history. I am both honored and humbled to be re-elected in that manner.

"In closing, I pledge to continue to work to provide the best Law Enforcement, Detention, Communications, Civil and Court Services and 911 Mapping Services possible to all of the citizens of Levy County. As your Sheriff, my door will continue to be open to provide assistance and service to our citizens in any way possible."

There is no incumbent Levy County Superintendent of Schools seeking reelection.

The two candidates for that post are Jeffery “Jeff” Edison (Rep.) and Jerry Lawrence (Rep.).

Incumbent Levy County Commissioner - District 1 John Meeks (Rep.) is facing candidate Berlon Weeks (Rep.) for that post.

Incumbent Levy County Commissioner - District 3 Mike Joyner (Rep.) is facing candidate Chetley Breeden (Rep.) for that post.

Incumbent Levy County Commissioner – District 5 Danny Stevens (Rep.) is facing candidate Matt Brooks (Rep.) for that post.

It is important to note that all three Levy County Commission races will be decided by all Levy County voters on Aug. 30 because all of the candidates are Republicans. So Democrats and any other voter will help decide those three winners on Aug. 30.

If someone waits until Nov. 8 to vote for a Levy County Commission candidate, that voter will be disappointed.