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Matt Brooks, Mike Joyner and John Meeks took the oath of office administered by Levy County Court Judge J.T. “Tim” Browning and Eighth Judicial Circuit Court Senior Judge Joseph E. Smith.

This was Brooks’ first occasion to be sworn in as a county commissioner and it heralded the second such occasion for both Joyner and Meeks.

Meeks, who is continuing as the chairman of the County Commission, had requested Senior Judge Smith to be the person to perform this administrative duty for him.

Joyner added a lighthearted presentation ceremony after the more somber yet happy occasion of three men taking the oath of service to the residents and visitors of Levy County. Joyner noted his respect and admiration for both judges and what they are required to do in their capacities behind the bench as he gave them each hats.

Joyner mentioned that Levy County Judge Browning enjoyed taking photographs and that they had been rounding up cattle together one day when the judge joined them to capture this photographically as well.

Joyner, who after retiring from his law enforcement career, which included service as a bailiff, has continued as a cattlemen, said he felt that the judge’s cowboy hat was lacking. So, he presented the judge with an impressive hat for future cowboy endeavors.

Upon receiving it, the judge jokingly mentioned that he may wear it in court.

Senior Judge Smith accepted what appeared to be a gag gift hat. Before presenting that hat, Joyner said Judge Smith had come to help him with his hogs. The judge showed up in shorts and flip-flops, Joyner said.

While some may have seen the jokester hat as being Williston red, the judge mentioned that he considered it to be garnet-colored, in reference to one of the two colors of his favorite college football team – the Seminoles of Florida State University.

Perhaps the most impressive thing about the hat presentation from Joyner to Senior Judge Smith, was that the judge was speechless. Known to be a very accomplished orator, the judge’s choice to not give a 20-minute speech about the merits of hats, friendship, service to others and some number of other possible topics, was met by some with a sigh of relief, although others awaited the sage words of Judge Smith with great anticipation.

Joyner mentioned that his service as Judge Smith’s bailiff gave him ample opportunities to observe the stages of justice being served in the courtrooms of Levy County. The retired bailiff said he holds Judge Smith in high regard for his service to people as a judge.

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Judge Joseph Smith welcomes everyone to the ceremony as County Commissioner-elect Matt Brooks stands behind him and to the left, County Commissioner-reelect John Meeks is behind him and to his right and County Commissioner reelect Mike Joyner is at the far right.



Soon after being presented with the new cowboy hat, Judge Tim Browning thanks Commissioner Joyner.

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(from left) Mike Joyner, Tim Browning, Joseph Smith and Matt Brooks are seen before a series of photo opportunities are seized by a number of photographers. County Commissioner Lilly Rooks is seen in the background.



Mike Joyner and Tim Browning model their hats.

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Judge Joseph Smith unwraps his hat.



Judge Joseph Smith thanks his former bailiff and friend Mike Joyner for the gift.

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Judge Joseph Smith (left) and Judge Tim Browning model their hats for the crowd.



The Levy County Board of County Commissioners is comprised of (from left) Lilly Rooks, John Meeks, Mike Joyner, Matt Brooks and Rock Meeks. Here they provide a chance for a group picture.

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Diane Joyner, Mike Joyner's wife, and one of their grandchildren join Commissioner Joyner at the event. School was not in session that day.

Angie Brooks, and Commissioner Matt Brooks are seen with their children Brityn, Berkley and Baylin Brooks. Not pictured is their youngest Bowen Brooks.



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County Commissioner Matt Brooks is flanked by Levy County Court Judge Tim Browning on the left and Senior Judge Joseph Smith on the right.

Stephanie Meeks, Commissioner John Meeks, Judge Joseph Smith, and the Meeks' children pause for a photo opportunity.



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County Commissioner John Meeks shakes hands with Senior Judge Joseph Smith.