

# Fellowship and food at Community Center

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Fellowship of The Hills Pastor Marty Duncan welcomed almost 140 law enforcement officers, active and retired to the Union County Community Center on Saturday to break bread and enjoy the fellowship of their fellow officers.

It's the second such breakfast, and the guest list included retired officers from all over the United States and active federal, state and local officers for the surrounding counties in North Georgia.

Pastor Duncan, who is also a retired state police officer from Florida, said "Our goal is to honor the men and women who wear the badge



Law enforcement officers from throughout the state, region and nation gathered at the Union County Community Center on Saturday to celebrate fellowship within the fraternity. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

for their dedication, loyalty, and professionalism as they serve to protect the citizens of this great state."

The event featured door prizes, and a chance to help the Derrick Whittle Memorial Scholarship Fund and Xtreme Christian Outdoors Sports. Donations to the latter helps the group take veterans and special needs children out to enjoy the wonders of the Great Outdoors.

The event also served as a chance for law enforcement to pray for the family of fallen Towns County Sheriff's Lt. Brian Wilson, who was laid to rest on Wednesday, May 8th.

"Father, we ask that you continue to comfort Lt. Brian Wilson's family and watch over them," Pastor Duncan prayed. "We thank You for joining us this morning."

The breakfast, an event to allow for fellowship of the men and women wearing the badges and serving and protecting our streets, was paid for entirely by Fellowship of The Hills Church.

Pastor Duncan said the event's goal is to "let these officers know we appreciate what they do."

The event's emcee, Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley, introduced the day's honored guests, former Georgia State Trooper, the Rev. Brian Stewart of Simple Message Ministries, and Crisp County Chief Deputy Billy Hancock.

The event's emcee, District Attorney Langley, was introduced by Pastor Duncan.

"We bring to you this morning, a man of God, our District Attorney, Jeff Langley," Pastor Duncan said.

"I get a chance to work with these guys in uniform every day," Langley said. "I see their dedication and hard work and sacrifice. It's a great opportunity for myself and Fellowship of The Hills to come out and honor you and thank you."

"We want to honor you physically, by giving you breakfast, we want to honor you materially by giving you

door prizes, and we want to honor you emotionally and build your morale by bringing you words of encouragement that will uplift you," Langley said. "Finally, we want to uplift you spiritually."

Langley introduced the day's honored guests, former Georgia State Trooper, the Rev. Brian Stewart of Simple Message Ministries, and Crisp County Chief Deputy Billy Hancock.

The Rev. Stewart, who started the ministry to take the Gospel to our nation's law enforcement officers, told the group that he was encouraged by the large turnout.

"I've been to a lot of these events, and I've never seen such a turnout," Stewart said.

God called the Rev. Stewart away from the Georgia State Patrol.

"We (law enforcement) don't have to be told that this world is screwed up," Stewart said. "That's why God called me out. When he called me to this ministry, there was a period of time that he sent me to my knees."

"I prayed, Lord, show me your heart and he did," he said. "God loves each and every one of you. He wants a re-

lationship with you. And that's what Simple Message Ministries is about."

Hancock, a 34-year veteran law enforcement officer, and longtime friend of Pastor Duncan, said there's nothing in the Bible that suggests that Christians cannot be law enforcement officers.

"Officers with a foundation built on a personal relationship with God can make a difference," he said. "Having a personal relationship with God, puts you in a position to not only be used by God, but to know his purpose."

"If you don't have a personal relationship with God and his son Jesus Christ, then I tell you, you can't be the best law enforcement officer that you can be," Hancock said.

Dignitaries in attendance included State House District 8 State Rep. Stephen Allison, Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, Blairsville Police Chief Johnny Carroll, Union County Sheriff Mack Mason and Towns County Coroner Tashina Eller.

But, the most important dignitaries attending the event were the law enforcement officers that were honored for their service to their communities.



The Union County Honor Guard presents colors at Saturday's event at the Union County Community Center. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

## Lee receives Eagle Scout Award

On Sunday, April 28, Samuel Todd Lee, son of Leon and Charlene Lee of Atlanta, and grandson of Judith and Leon Lee of Young Harris, received the Eagle Scout Award in a ceremony at St. James United Methodist Church in Atlanta.

Samuel's path to his Eagle rank led him through six states where he spent more than 60 nights camping with his troop. The activities associated with that camping were as varied as backpacking through the mountains of the Philmont Scout Reservation in New Mexico to kayaking through South Georgia swamps, skiing in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, and caving in North Georgia. He earned 26 merit badges and served as patrol leader and lead instructor for



Eagle Scout Samuel Lee

his troop.

His Eagle Scout project was building a large counter for the game room in St. James United Methodist Church, which sponsors his troop and where he is active with the youth group. T/May15,G1/SH