

Grimes tapped to lead local Republicans

By ROB W. ANDERSON Staff Writer

TAHLEQUAH — There was talk of unity as officers were elected during the Cherokee County Republican Party Convention, held March 16 at the Tahlequah Armory Municipal Center.

The new Republican Party County officers are County Chair Shannon Grimes, Vice Chair Qadosyah Fish, State Committeeman Michael Stopp, State Committeewoman Ezriyah Fish, District Committeeman Jesse Dickenson, and District Committeeman Ronnie Hopkins.

The county's Republican Party will be accessible and plans to "reach out to people across the county" to get as many voters as possible involved in the collective efforts, according to Grimes. Monthly educational meetings will be held to discuss topics of local and state interest.

"I am thankful for and excited by the opportunity my fellow Republicans have given me. They have shown me a measure of trust, and I will work hard to repay that trust by helping share and promote our principles of constitutionally-limited government that has been instrumental to the prosperity our country has known," he said.

Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., was a last-minute guest, and spoke briefly to the audience.

Grimes noted the county possesses many like-minded people to which the party can appeal, and he realizes many are not affiliated with the Republican Party.

"That being the case, I will be working to earn their trust and get them to join our party to give us a stronger voice in striving for good government and accountability," he said. "For those not willing to join us officially, I know there will be many issues we can work on together for the benefit of the people in our county."

Though there was talk of shared goals, some convention participants left the meeting when the day's election did not provide the results they wanted, Grimes said.

Two purported Republicans who admitted they hadn't attended the convention contacted the Daily Press to ask what had happened.

"Sadly, some folks stomped off in a huff when things didn't go their way," Grimes said, "even after they were talking about unity."

The county party's role is to help people by getting voters involved and keeping them informed so they can hold elected officials accountable and ensure "good people" are elected to those positions, Grimes said.

"Our convention showed me that we may well have one of the best, if not the best, organized county in the 2nd Congressional District. The number of people that participated was outstanding," he said. "I don't think there are many counties in our district, or even across the

state, that can boast a delegate count of 81. The credit for that success goes to the great people like Gary and Delores Gore, Pam Counce and so many others who have spent their time and energy building up our party here locally. Without their work and dedication, we would be nowhere near where we are today.”