

Lumpkin County's first water line completed

By Sharon Hall
The Nugget

Prayer, singing, speeches and a display of gushing water marked the official opening of Lumpkin County's first water line, running from Birch River to Blackburn Elementary School.

The commemorative ceremony was held at the new elementary school, which was one of the reasons for the line, and its first customer.

Cooperation between the city of Dahlonega, school board and water and sewer authority made completion of the first phase of the transmission water line possible.

The water authority issued bonds for construction of the water lines, the city is supplying the treated water at a nominal cost, and the school board kicked in some of the cost of running the lines, to Blackburn, since they were not scheduled to run that far in the original plans.

Originally, Phase One would have stopped at Georgia 400 and Highway 60.

Nearly seven miles of lines were laid beginning in the city limits at Birch River and running to Georgia 400, then to Blackburn Elementary off Auraria Road.

The pipe was sized, said county commissioner Steve Gooch in a speech at the commemoration ceremony, with growth in mind.

Along Highway 60 to the 400 intersection, the pipe is 16 inches in diameter, which will accommodate anticipated



Johnny Trammell, left, with Jackie Townley Construction Company, Inc., turned on the water at Blackburn Elementary School's hydrant in a ceremony to celebrate the first water lines completed by Lumpkin County Water & Sewerage Authority. Pictured are county commissioner Steve Gooch, Dahlonega Mayor Loy Jones, water authority members Haines Hill, Wyman Walden, Randy Harvey, authority director Curt Moore, and authority member Don Circi. (Staff photo/SHARON HALL)

commercial and industrial needs. The remaining portion is 12 inches and large enough to serve the residential growth forecast for the area.

"Now that water is running," Gooch told those attending the ceremony, "we have another important task before us. Recruiting industry to our community will be much easier with the availability of sewer service. Preliminary

plans are now under way to design and build a force main sewer to serve the Georgia 400 and Highway 60 area for a potential retail development."

Gooch said the county has applied for a \$500,000 state grant, and he feels sure it will be awarded, but without help from the city the project will not be possible.

"I see this as a perfect example of city/county coopera-

tion for the good of all the people of the county," Gooch said. "I believe the city and county have accomplished a lot over the past year and a half."

The city, county and water authority met Tuesday to begin negotiations on tapping into the city's existing sewer treatment plant to provide service to the 400/60 intersection. Acting director of the au-

The cost of tapping into the water line is half-price through Dec. 31, for a \$550 tap fee, \$100 deposit and \$50 connection fee.

thority, Curt Moore, gave thanks to former director Jimmy Walker for his hard work in getting the line completed in time for the opening of Blackburn Elementary. Johnnie Chattin for his assistance with permission from the Cherokee Indians for a bore under the Chestatee River on Indian land, John Washington, an engineer with Moreland-Altobell who has worked with the authority to complete the project, Jackie Townley of Townley Construction Company, Inc., Jim Collins with Summit Pipeline, David Luke, superintendent of schools and Kim Jones, media representative for the county schools, for setting up the ceremony.

The job before the authority, providing infrastructure for the county Moore said, "is like eating an elephant. But you do it one bite at a time."

The next job Moore is working toward is signing up customers along the new route.

The cost of tapping into the water line is half-price through Dec. 31, for a \$550 tap fee, \$100 deposit and \$50 connection fee. Anyone interested can contact the water and sewerage authority, 867-6580.