

PROCLAMATION
Recognizing
Sheriff Mitch Ralston

WHEREAS, on the morning of Wednesday, January 30, 2013, a storm front spawned a powerful EF3 tornado, with winds in excess of 160 miles per hour, which formed in northern Bartow County and travelled into southern and central Gordon County, impacting widespread areas along a path from Trimble Hollow, Union Grove, Plainview, Farmville, Sonoraville, Dews Pond, Boone Ford, Lewis Corner, and Red Bud communities and outlying vicinities, damaging and/or destroying over 250 residences and injuring a number of citizens before dissipating; and

WHEREAS, this unprecedented natural disaster caused not only millions of dollars in property damage, economic stress and strain on individuals, families, and businesses alike, as well as inflicting physical injury and emotional pain; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Mitch Ralston had the foresight and preparedness to devise, develop, and initiate a natural disaster plan which included the activation of a special fleet of all terrain vehicles with emergency response/rescue equipment, which were then actually pre-deployed along with extra personnel in the tornado's anticipated path as the storm system was being monitored. This resulted in the Sheriff's personnel being on-scene in the disaster areas literally within seconds after the storm, thus being able to perform rescues and to open roads for other first responders. We recognize the uniqueness of this plan; and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Ralston exercised great care and took personal command in the field of all aspects of law enforcement operations after the disaster, directing patrols, traffic control, checkpoints, and guard mounts, organizing personnel from other state and local law enforcement entities who graciously helped our county, as well as organizing and directing humanitarian and relief efforts by his own staff and volunteers in reaching survivors with much needed hot food, blankets, clothing, and other necessities; and

WHEREAS, we recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of Sheriff Ralston and those under his command, in that after a natural disaster of the magnitude that Gordon County witnessed on January 30th, and during the rescue, relief, and clean up operations which subsequently followed in the weeks thereafter, that there were no reports of theft, looting, or public disorder of any kind related to the event.

THEREFORE, we the Board of Commissioners of Gordon County hereby recognize and acknowledge the command decisions by Sheriff Ralston which aided in the emergency rescue and relief operations in this time of critical need. We urge all citizens to join us in offering our heartfelt gratitude for keeping our county safe and our citizens served by his proactive performance.

Signed this 6th day of December, in the Year of our Lord, Two Thousand, and Thirteen by the
GORDON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Becky Hood, Chairman

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Chad Steward, Vice Chairman

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Norris Sexton, Commissioner

