



## Video Journalist Forcefully Removed From Republican Meeting!

Posted by [Brian K. Pritchard](#) in [Featured Stories](#), [Politics](#)

Monday, August 25, 2014

Updated: 21 hours ago

[Comments \(2\)](#)

Last Saturday, Governor Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal sat on the front row of a Republican 'meet and greet' and watched as Dawson County Deputy, Tony Wooten, forcibly removed video journalist Nydia Tisdale from the event held at Burt's Pumpkin Farm.

Johnny and Kathy Burt, owners of Burt's Pumpkin Farm in Dawsonville, hosted a meet and greet for Governor Deal and other Republican candidates. In attendance were: Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens, Republican candidate for State School Superintendent Richard Woods, Department of Labor Commissioner Mark Butler, Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black, Attorney General Sam Olens, 9th District U.S. Congressman Doug Collins, Candidate for U.S. Senate David Perdue and Governor Nathan Deal.

Tisdale, the owner of AboutForsyth.com, has attended many of the candidate events. She video tapes them and uploads the videos to her website. Several of the candidates know her. She is a non-partisan video journalist.

Tisdale told FYN in an interview that, upon arriving, she introduced herself to Kathy Burt. She arrived early and sat on the front row with her video camera in plain view of everyone. No one approached her and no one asked what she was doing with a camera.

Clint Bearden stood in front of the crowd and said let's get this kicked off as he introduced Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens. With Tisdale's camera rolling, Hudgens started making his campaign stump speech. When talking about Democratic Candidate for U.S. Senate Michelle Nunn, referring to the Chamber of Commerce debate between Perdue and Nunn, Hudgens said listening to Nunn

"I thought I was going to absolutely puke."

Hudgens looked at Tisdale and said

"I don't know why you're video taping?"



(Full audio recording of the meeting is below.)

This comment from Hudgens noticeably changed the mood in the room about Tisdale recording the event, especially for Bearden. Hudgens introduced Richard Woods. While Woods was speaking, Bearden went and sat next to Tisdale, and according to Tisdale, he asked her to stop videoing or she would have to leave. Tisdale told him that she was invited and would not stop. When FYN asked Bearden for a comment, he referred us to

the authorities that arrested Tisdale for comment.

As Woods continued to speak, Bearden went to Deputy Wooten for assistance. I then watched Bearden go and speak to the property owners Johnny and Kathy Burt. By this time, Labor Commissioner Mark Butler had started speaking. Bearden returned and said something to Wooten. At this time both Bearden and Wooten approached Tisdale. Wooten told her she had to turn the camera off. Tisdale refused and continued to video. Wooten started to try to remove the camera from Tisdale's hands. When she refused and struggled to keep the camera running, Wooten began to physically remove her from the event. Tisdale physically resisted being removed turning the camera on Wooten screaming,

“Identify yourself, who are you?”

Butler paused as everyone watched Tisdale struggling with Wooten. Deputy Wooten then physically removed Tisdale as she continued to scream and video him.

Butler tried to continue speaking but was interrupted by loud screams coming from Tisdale in the barn (screams can be heard in the audio below). Tisdale told FYN in an exclusive interview (posted below) that she screamed because Deputy Wooten had her arm twisted up her back and she was in pain. The Burts went into the barn where Tisdale was being held. Tisdale told



FYN that Johnny Burt told Wooten to let her go and let her leave. Deputy Wooten said it had gone too far for that and she is going to jail. Sources tell FYN that Tisdale allegedly hit Deputy Wooten. Sources also tell FYN that the Burts asked to have her stop videoing or leave. Tisdale was on private property but Burt's Pumpkin Farm provided their venue for a public event.

Tisdale was taken to jail in Dawson County and charged with felony obstruction of an officer and criminal trespass. Tisdale bonded out at 12:40 Sunday morning. Dawson County Sheriff Department took Tisdale's video camera as evidence. The camera has the full incident recorded on it. FYN spoke to Dawson County Sheriff Billy Carlisle Saturday night. Carlisle refused to comment and referred us to his public information officer on Monday.

After the shock of Tisdale's removal, Butler made light of it and continued with his comments. Butler then introduced Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black. I was sitting there wondering if Black would comment on what just took place. This was a very disturbing scene that had just taken place. Surely Black would make a comment. No, Black gave his seven minute stump speech like nothing happened. Black then introduced Attorney General Sam Olens.



Olens took the microphone and looked around the crowds as if to say Did anyone else see what I just saw? In an apparent effort to show respect for the Burt family, he made the following statement:

“Let me be possibly politically incorrect here for a second. If we stand for anything as a party what are we afraid of with the lady having a camera filming us? What are we saying here that shouldn't be on film? What message are we sending? Cause it's private property they shouldn't be filming? What is the harm? The harm that this poses is far greater than her filming us. What are we hiding? If we are telling you why we are running and what we stand for, what are we hiding?”

Then, as he pointed in the direction from where Tisdale was drug away he continued:

“There is no reason for that, that is not right”.

"It is private property. The private property owner has the right to not have the person there. Who is the winner in the long run? Not a good move."

(Listen to Olen's comment below in audio file.)

Olen said now that I have shocked everyone with my comments he went on to make some campaign comments and then introduced Congressman Doug Collins. Collins introduced Perdue, Perdue introduced Deal. Then the event was over. A little time for pictures and on to another event. Olen was the only candidate to comment on the situation. Everyone else acted as if it never happened. Sources at the event did tell FYN the candidates were not opposed to Tisdale videoing and several were used to her being at events. The only candidate who commented about her videoing was Hudgens.



At the end of the event, Bearden apologized to the crowd for what happened. He said the property owners, the Burts, asked her to stop videoing or leave. FYN tried to contact the Burts for comment, they were not available. I never saw the Burts speak to Tisdale and ask her to leave. I only saw Deputy Wooten and Bearden speak to Tisdale.

The event was advertised as a public event by Governor Deal's campaign through social media. No restrictions were stated on the invitation. It did not state that journalists were prohibited, nor did the invitations have any other conditions. I accepted the invitation and the campaign knew I was attending three days before the event. Tisdale told FYN she accepted the same invitation and they also knew she was coming. Tisdale even promoted the event for a week on various forms of social media including Twitter. A source told FYN that the local paper in the Dawsonville area advertised the event as 'open to the public'.



I had my camera in clear view. I took pictures. I had my digital audio recorder out in plain view. I always record these events so I can refer to the recording for accuracy of a candidate's quotes.

The facts are: Tisdale, a video journalist, was on private property. She went to jail and her video camera was confiscated.

I am not clear if someone from the campaign asked the Burts to stop her from videoing or if they made that decision on their own. No one will answer my question on how the events transpired. I am continually referred to the authorities for answers and they won't comment.

Tisdale's court date has not been set. FYN requested a comment from Governor Nathan Deal's Campaign Communication Director, Jen Talaver. Talaver responded:

"As this incident was in no way related to Deal for Governor, I am referring you to the owner of the private property at which the event took place."

At reference point 3:50 within the video recording, Hudgen's comments concerning Michelle Nunn and Tisdale can be heard. At the 12:15 reference point, Tisdale can be heard demanding that Wooten to identify himself. At the 14:12 reference point, Tisdale's loud screams become audible, claiming that Wooten was hurting her. At the 24:10 mark, Attorney General, Sam Olen's comments can be heard.



## Meet and Greet

from Fetch PRO

58:54



FYN exclusive interview with Nydia Tisdale. Hear Tisdale's answer as to whether she will be retaining legal counsel.....



## Nydia

from Fetch PRO

47:54



### Trackbacks

No Trackbacks

### Comments

#1 Val Smith on 08/25/14 at 07:56 AM [\[Reply\]](#)

Looks like the Repubs only want to preach to the choir. That journalist should have been allowed to film this "public" event and report accordingly. I'll likely not vote for the GOP ever again.

#2 Barb Halaburt on 08/26/14 at 03:09 PM [\[Reply\]](#)

Does anyone know why they would kick Tisdale out but not others who were recording? Is she a Democrat?