

North Georgia News

Hometown newspaper of Blairsville, Suches and Union County since 1909

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Tommy Townsend takes "family recipe" nationwide

By Charles Duncan
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The legend of Jack McClure abounds throughout the North Georgia Mountains.

An admitted moonshiner by trade, McClure was a mountain of a man, standing well over 6 feet and weighing in at more than 260 pounds.

He began dabbling in the illicit moonshine industry during the Prohibition years and continued his lawbreaking ways until cancer dealt him two pair, aces and eights, in 1969.

McClure, better known to his grandchildren as *Granddaddy Mimm*, was a man of character, morals and lived by the mountain code. His word was his bond. If he didn't like you and told you to watch your back, he meant it – and vice versa.

A native of Young Harris, he made the best moonshine and fruit brandies in the in the North Georgia Mountains and made a profitable living for him and his family.

McClure's moonshine money was the difference between going hungry and meat, beans and taters on the table for many families in Towns and Union counties.

Mimm never frequented the church house, but was known to sit in his 1946 Ford

in the church parking lot during revivals and listen to the sermon of many a Baptist preacher.

McClure's moonshine recipe had been stored away in the family's memory for more than 40 years. That is until his grandson Tommy Townsend inquired about it after talking with a distillery group in Milledgeville.

Moonshine is legal today, just as long as the government collects the tax revenue.

Tommy was only 2 years old when his infamous grandfather died, but the stories of the fear and respect his grandfather commanded –



An authentic bottle of Granddaddy Mimm's Authentic Corn Whiskey.



Blairsville's Tommy Townsend believes Granddaddy Mimm's Authentic Corn Whiskey will be a best seller. Photo/Charles Duncan

along with never-ending reports of Granddaddy Mimm's charity and compassion – throughout the North Georgia Mountains – are engrained in his life today.

Tommy is a minor celebrity himself, serving as the lead vocals and lead guitar for Nashville-based Waymore's Outlaws, the band that backed up Country Music legend Waylon Jennings during his heyday.

While on tour in Texas last March, he was talking with a friend from West Texas about moonshine. Tommy remembered the legend of his grandfather's moonshining days. He mentioned to the friend that his grandfather used to be a legendary moonshiner in the North Georgia Mountains.

"Jack said, 'really?' Can you get your hands on that recipe? You can make moonshine legally today," Tommy said. "I talked to Momma and my uncle, did some digging and came up with the recipe."

With the family's blessing, Tommy is moving forward with producing *Granddaddy Mimm's Authentic Corn Whiskey*, using the same recipe and the same simple ingredients with all of the taste and tradition enjoyed by mountain folk, celebrities and high-powered politicians that began 80 years

ago.

On Jan. 25, Townsend announced his partnership with Georgia Distilling Company Inc. in Milledgeville to recreate and market his grandfather's original moonshine recipes legally for the first time.

Dubbed *Granddaddy Mimm's Authentic Corn Whiskey*, and Peach and Apple brandies, these mountain spirits will be produced on stills using the Jack McClure design, and built in Georgia using his secret family recipe originated in Towns County.

The back label on the whiskey bottle urges those who partake of these spirits to "please drink responsibly and don't forget to tithe on Sunday."

Granddaddy Mimm wouldn't have it any other way.

Another line of the Mimm product is *Maggie Moon*, named after Tommy's youngest, and offers a sweeter brand geared toward the ladies.

The spirits will be on the shelves sometime in June.

"I guess the message that I'd really like to get out there is, a lot of people are so

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Patriots surround Courthouse Square

By Charles Duncan
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If you heard the sound of musket fire in Downtown Blairsville on Thursday, there was no reason to be alarmed.

These sounds are quite normal during the third week in April each year.

The Sons of the American Revolution continued their annual tradition of celebrating Patriot's Day on the Courthouse Square last week.

For the third consecutive year, members were outfitted in full Revolutionary War era ceremonial dress. The SAR members were in their element as they sought to celebrate the early days of our nation's history.

"Patriot's Day is celebrating Lexington-Concord, the start of the Revolutionary War, the call to arms, all over the United States," said SAR member Terry Legg. "We try to celebrate it every year and make people aware that this is Patriot's Day. It made us a free nation."

Every hour, on the hour, the group fired their Revolutionary War era muskets in tribute to the civic holiday.

"We like for people to know that we're here," Legg said. "It's just a big celebration."

At 1 p.m., Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris

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Local members of the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution gather outside the historic courthouse. Photo/Charles Duncan

Lilac Lady surprises Commissioner

By Charles Duncan
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The *Lilac Lady* on Thursday presented Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris with a framed remembrance of lilacs in bloom at Meeks Park.

"I love lilacs," Arlene Gray said Thursday evening. "I often asked the preceding administrations to consider planting lilacs here in Union County. This is the furthest South that lilacs can grow."

Gray has lived in Union County through several commission administrations. She approached each administration ask-

ing them to beautify the county by planting lilacs.

In 2007, she approached Commissioner Paris about the same issue.

"I didn't really know him that well back then," she said. "I invited the Commissioner and the facilities manager to lunch. I had been up to Rochester, NY where they had just had the 30th Annual Lilac Festival and it drew a crowd of 100,000 people."

"Martha Stewart had been there about three days before I got there," she said. "On her show, she talked about how ev-

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Arlene Gray presents Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris with a framed remembrance of lilacs in bloom in Union County. Photo/Charles Duncan

Day of Prayer ceremonies set for May 3rd

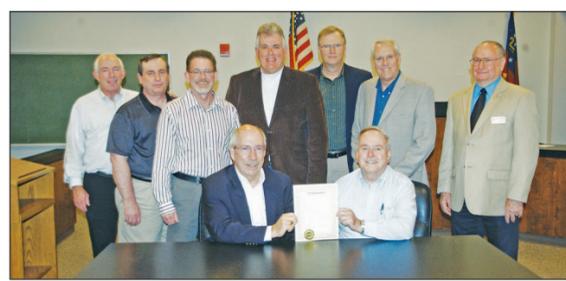
By Charles Duncan
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Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley wishes every day could be National Day of Prayer.

The mayor and other dignitaries and local pastors turned out to celebrate the signing of a county and city proclamation declaring May 3rd, as Union County Day of Prayer.

"I take my God, my prayer life and my church very seriously," Mayor Conley said. "I couldn't do what I do every day without my maker giving me guidance in what I do."

On May 3rd, Union County will mark the 61st Anniversary of the National Day of Prayer with a pub-



Commissioner Lamar Paris and Mayor Jim Conley kickoff Day of Prayer ceremonies by setting the date for the event. Photo/Charles Duncan

lic gathering featuring prayers by area pastors, and a prayer testimony by respected local physician Dr. David Gowder, MD.

The prayer celebration will be held in the sanctuary of the First Baptist Church of Blairsville on Thursday, May 3rd, at 7 p.m.

"They say I'm a politician," Mayor Conley said. "But I say I'm a public ser-

vant and of course I'm his servant above all."

The theme of this year's Day of Prayer is "One Nation Under God" and is based on the verse from Psalms 33:12 which reads: "Blessed is the nation whose God is Lord."

"Everyone is invited to the event that will include prayers for military troops, local emergency

forces, governmental leaders and the community," said Jim Powell, event coordinator. "Please come and join us in this united effort and unique opportunity for citizens and their elected leaders to join in united prayer to acknowledge together the sovereignty of almighty God, and to seek His guidance and blessings for our nation even as we depend on Him."

Powell said that there was a lot of behind the scenes organization skills that must be appreciated and celebrated in 2012's remembrance and prayer service.

"It is an opportunity to bring together the different

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BOE honors Region 6 Champion Mock Trial Team

By Charles Duncan
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The reigning Region 6 Mock Trial Team from Union County High School is basking in additional honors this month.

The Mock Trial team won the Region 6 Championship in February and advanced to the State competition at the Gwinnett Justice Center on March 16 - 17.

Union County finished among the top teams, and was among the teams that received four rare outstanding awards.

Mock Trial Team Coach Amy Payne told the Union County Board of Education last week that Jeffrey Ward and Cameron Schuette earned

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Teacher Coach Amy Payne

Duncan named NGN Editor

Kenneth West, publisher of the North Georgia News and Towns County Herald, announced last week that Towns County Herald Editor Charles Duncan has been named editor of the North Georgia News in Blairsville.

Duncan, 51, has been editor of the Towns County Herald since October 2008. He will continue in



Charles Duncan

that capacity in addition to his new duties with the North Georgia News.

Duncan replaces



Todd Forrest

Norman Cooper who is now pursuing other profes-

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Mountain Home Show Friday, Saturday

The 15th Annual Mountain Home Show at North Georgia Technical College begins Friday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

The two-day event also is scheduled for Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Come see ideas for your home. We have some of the best companies in our show this year. The economy is just beginning to recover, and our show will be better than ever with many

new exhibitors. When you see their beautiful exhibits, you will know they are proud of what they do.

Learn how to remodel and get more for less; learn how to save the most energy for the least cost; generate ideas for your mountain home; and attend exhibits sponsored by local businesses.

One community run trade show helps local businesses share the cost of advertising. Your attendance is a way of helping support the local construction industry which employs your neighbors. Experience the Mountain Home Show, you'll be glad you did.

The Mountain Home Show
Home Show
Friday, April 27, 2012 9AM - 5PM
Saturday, April 28, 2012 9AM - 5PM
North Georgia Technical College
1500 North Georgia Blvd., Blairsville, GA 30512