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and all the folks who have helped put me back on my feet. I wondered how many people in this world think that gathering to pray for our nation is a total and complete

farce. If there was any doubt about the power of prayer, the best evidence was sitting beside Lowell Nicholson on the front pew at First Baptist Church on Thursday night.

I pray for my nation every day, I pray for my family and friends, the *North Georgia News, Towns County Herald* and West Printing Company. I pray for a blessing for

all and for forgiveness of the world's woes. Prayer really works, I'm living proof and I'm praying every day for the good people in Union and Towns counties.

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know that Caleb's sons were fighting in the Continental Army with George Washington. Also, unknown to the British was Caleb and his brothers were making Kentucky Long Rifles for the Continental Army. Robert Baker's grandfather was one of the first men to build a fort in Pennsylvania. John Baker traded with the Indians and built a fort and blockhouse in Franklin County, PA sometime around 1650. Later he served as a colonel in the French and Indian Wars. Go back another 100 years and we find another Baker. Sir George Baker was a Doctor. He served as "Surgeon-in-Ordinary" to Queen Elizabeth. He wrote several books about health and mak-

ing of medicines. George's grandfather "John" had another reputation. John was a prominent man. He served in several capacities to the English Throne. He served as the Under Secretary of London in 1520, the Recorder of London, the Attorney General of England, Cabinet Minister, and Speaker of the House of Commons. Sir John "Bloody" Baker acquired this nickname by helping the King of England, Henry VIII, persecute Catholics and protestant dissidents. It is my understanding that Henry VIII's wife hadn't born him any male heirs. So, he sought to divorce this woman. When the Pope refused to grant an annulment or divorce to the King he began persecuting both the Catholic

and the Protestant Faith. My ancestor Sir John "Bloody" Baker helped Henry VIII in this persecution and as a result acquired many lands and homes from those persecuted. He also acquired the infamous nickname. Through the years my ancestors have all acquired different reputations based upon their actions. My goal for the Union County Farmers Market is to develop a reputation of having a location where consumers can come to buy locally produced, high quality vegetables and high quality crafts produced by local artisans. This year the Union County Farmers Market has more than 30 vegetable producers signed up for the 2012 season. These vendors will have all kinds of vegetables for

sale. We will also have fresh bread vendors, homemade ice cream, candy, baked goods, and yes, the Lion's Club will be selling hamburgers and hot dogs for lunch. Chambers will be there selling their meats and sausages. We will have local artists selling quilts, soaps, pottery and jewelry. But, our roots are still centered in agriculture. So, you will be able to buy sweet corn, tomatoes, okra, beans, peas, squash, potatoes, melons, berries, fruits, greens, honey, sorghum syrup, cucumbers and pumpkins at the Farmers Market. The Farmers Market will be open on Saturdays (from 7 AM - 1 PM) and Tuesdays (from 3 PM - 7 PM) beginning on June 2nd. I look forward to seeing you at the Farmers Market.

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Pride has not excluded any place nor any profession; from heaven to earth, from politics to preaching, from athletics to astronauts; in short, pride is like kudzu, its roots

run deep and goes everywhere. The title of this article comes from the last phrase in the first verse of Isaac Watts' hymn "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross": "When I

survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride." Isaac Watts received that

inspiration from none other than the Apostle Paul in Galatians 6:14. A good rule of thumb happens to be if you are tooting your own, horn make sure that you are playing in an orchestra.

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www.ftc.gov/credit. Then mail to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281. The Credit Bureaus include Equifax (800) 685-1111 www.equifax.com; Experian (888) 397-3742 www.experian.com; Transunion (800) 916-8800 www.transunion.com. These three companies use a different model or method that creates a slightly different number. A helpful online resource is located at

web.extension.illinois.edu/money/credit_report4.cfm. Another useful resource is located at www.federalreserve.gov/consumersinfo/fivetips_creditscore.htm. In conclusion, get copies of your credit report—then make sure the information is correct. Always do your best to pay your bills on time. These questions can help you make better decisions about lowering your credit score: Do you pay your bills on time?

What is your outstanding debt? How long is your credit history? Have you applied for new credit recently? How many and what types of credit accounts do you have? And last beware of credit-repair scams. Your Chamber is working hard for you. We want this community to feel the support that is given by a dedicated Staff, Board and many Volunteers. If you are one of our 500-plus chamber members, know that your membership is

important to us. The success of your business allows the Chamber to have success. If interested in a Chamber membership, please contact the Membership Coordinator, Janie Farist at (706) 745-5789. I may be reached anytime at chair@BlairsvilleChamber.com or go to www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com for more details.

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money on interest costs, getting away from the federal guidelines probably saved us several hundreds of thousands of dollars while speeding the project up by at least a year and maybe two. Q. Are there any other long term debts that the county owes other than related to SPLOST projects? A. No. Other than lease payments on copiers and law enforcement vehicles, Union County has no other debts. In the past couple of years we completed payments on the 30

acres of property at Meeks Park (\$ 1 million) that we purchased and we also completed the 10-year payment on the 9-acre Elliott property (\$980,000), where the Union County Health Department is located along with the Drivers Service Center and athletic fields, all used on a regular basis. We also completed payments on the five fire engines purchased for each volunteer station, (\$890,000) and at the same time completed all other previous SPLOST projects

debt free. Other than current SPLOST projects, Union County is debt free and very few counties are in this enviable position. In addition, we have a lot to show for our SPLOST projects of which we are all very proud!! Q. Does Union County have any debt on our courthouse and jail as most counties do? A. NO. Both the Union County Courthouse and the Union County Jail are completely paid for, debt free, from previous SPLOST.

News from the Georgia State Senate

In continuation of our weekly budget series, we will now focus on the state's FY2013 budget appropriations for the Board of Regents. The members of the Board of Regents are appointed by the Governor, and their terms last for seven years. There are 18 members of the Board of Regents, including one member from each of the 13 congressional districts and five members appointed from the state-at large. The Board oversees the University System of Georgia, which consists of 35 colleges and universities, the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, and

the Georgia Public Library Service. The University System of Georgia receives appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly, and the Board of Regents approves the budget for the University System. For FY 2013, the Board of Regents approved a budget of \$1.8 billion with total funds (including tuition, research funds and federal grants) reaching \$6.2 billion. This is an increase of \$89.6 million (5.16 percent) from the current year. In addition, the Board of Regents approves tuition increases for University System of Georgia (USG) colleges and universities. Last month, the Board approved tuition increases - to go into effect this fall - which will increase tuition at most institutions by 2.5

percent. However, there are three exceptions to the 2.5 percent increase: tuition at Georgia Tech will increase by 6 percent, tuition at UGA will increase by 5 percent, and tuition at Georgia State University will increase by 3.5 percent. FY 2013 Board of Regents Appropriations

- Agreed to restore the \$112,447 cut to the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI); and add funds to GTRI by \$50,000 to research industrial storm water solutions for Georgia's poultry industry.
- Restored the \$583,453 cut to the Medical College of Georgia Hospital and Clinics.
- Added \$3.6 million for the Health Professions Initiative for graduate medical education and the Nursing Faculty Initiative.
- Added \$76.4 million for enrollment growth which is based on a 3.05% increase in semester credit hours and operations related to additional square footage.
- Reduced funds for personnel and operations by \$35.3 million as part of the 2% cut to Regents. Added \$25,000 for the Southern Legislative Conference's Center for Advancement of Leadership Skills program which will be held at Georgia State University during FY2013.
- Agreed to not place Georgia Gwinnett College on the same formula-funded support in the University System in FY2014.
- Added \$500,000 for a teaching Eminent Scholar.



Sen. Steve Gooch represents the Georgia Senate District 51, which includes Dawson, Fannin, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Pickens, and Union counties and portions of Forsyth and White counties. He may be reached at (404) 656-9221.

UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Every Monday:		
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 pm
Children's Story Time	Union County Library	Noon
Kiwanis Club	Steve's Steakhouse	Noon
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6:30 pm
Every Tuesday:		
Mtn. Woodcarvers	Senior Center	6 pm
Sweet Adelines	United Methodist Ch	6:30 pm
Every Thursday:		
Masonic Luncheon	Cooks Restaurant	11:30 am
Butternut Ladies Golf	Golf Course (Apr-Oct)	8:30 am
Rotary Club	St. Francis of Assisi	Noon
Fourth Monday of each month:		
Misty Mtn Quilt Guild	Blairsville	12:30-1 pm
Fourth Tuesday of each month:		
Cub Scouts Trp. #101	UC Elementary School	7 pm
Eastern Star #304	Location not listed	7:30 p.m.
VFW Post #7394	Steve's Cookie Jar	6 pm
Compassionate Friends	Grinds & Glazes	Noon
Fourth Wednesday of each month:		
No activities listed		
Fourth Thursday of each month:		
UT Homebuilders	YH College	7 pm
Lions Club	Steve's Cookie Jar	6 pm
Cruisers Club Meeting	Sr. Center pavilion	6 pm
Fourth Friday of each month		
Eastern Star #471	Location not listed	7:30 pm
Fourth Saturday of each month:		
Youngcane Lodge #597	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm