

# Opinions

# Everybody has one...

## Remembering Tricia

Tricia Spear Calise was a fighter. Tricia passed away peacefully on Tuesday, April 7, at her home surrounded by her loving family and friends following a valiant battle with cancer.

She fought and pulled for the underdog, and as her mother aptly puts it, the undercats too. Tricia was the manager at the Mountain Shelter Humane Society Thrift Store for more than 12 years. She also was an integral part of our community.

She loved life, she loved people and she loved animals. And, her community loved her and they were with her every step of the way during her brave battle.

Tricia fought the good fight, and is now in a better place than all of us on this side of the spectrum. Her memory will live long within us, never fading, always glowing like Tricia always did.

Nothing was ever impossible for Tricia. She made molehills out of mountains. No task was ever too large. Problems were no longer problems once Tricia came along.

She is one of the memorable faces that will continue to touch our community, even as she has made that final journey. Tricia stood by everyone's side to lift them to their highest potential. She laughed easily, shed tears of joy and sorrow without hesitation and she hugged with no inhibition. This will always be her legacy to a community that she called her home. As was evident during her illness, her community called her its own.

Tricia's family asks that any donations that the community should offer, be made to the Union County Humane Society in memory of Tricia.

Her friends sum up the loss of Tricia with heartache and grief - there are no words to express the sadness and grief felt by everyone who knew Tricia.

She was unbelievably special in so many ways - her love for family, friends and animals, her overwhelming devotion to the Thrift Store and her endless brightness and humor in everyday life. Tricia was beautiful inside and out and those who were fortunate enough to know her were blessed by her spirit and love. Our sorrow runs deep - but Heaven's gain is comforting.

Tricia, we miss you so much.

### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



## Tax Man Cometh

With tax day upon us, I've figured out how to make both the political left and right happy. Stop paying taxes.

The way I figure, if some of us don't pay taxes the police will be underfunded, so we'll have to buy more guns to protect our own property. That would make the right happy. And if there's less money for roads and bridges, then we might burn less fossil fuel in our global warming transportation machines. Which would make the left happy. If the left and right are happy, then we should expect to see a merger of MSNBC and Fox news.

Of course this is about as absurd as me having to file over 100 pages just to convince the federal and state governments what taxes I do or don't owe. I'm glad my accountant gets it. I don't.

One time, I got a letter of inquiry from the government with a big bill for unpaid taxes, penalties and interest. It seems they discovered that I took money from one retirement account and put it in another. So, I wrote them a letter and said, "I took money from one retirement account and put it in another." They replied, "We got your letter." Then another reply, "We're looking into it." Yet another letter arrived to inform, "What you're saying makes sense. So we'll leave you alone about it. For now." What I know about taxes, I learned playing little league baseball: Even when you think you're safe, the umpire can call you out!

You know, the Bible says some things that I just do not like to hear. Jesus was approached by some haters with a trap disguised as a tax accounting question. He wisely deflected with, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). He avoided the trap (nice!) but told us to pay up (oh well).

Paul elaborates on the idea: "Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom" (Rom. 13:7). You might wonder if all the taxes you pay are really due them. In our democratic republic you can address that, but not by making a unilateral decision what you think you will pay. It's by voting for whoever supports tax policy you favor. Then hope

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## Questions and Answers

**Q. When will the county begin resurfacing county roads?**

A. The Road Department hopes to begin surface treatment patching of county roads next week if the weather permits. Due to the bad winter we had, there are a lot of roads that need and will be getting patched. Each year when we go through this process, we have people call and complain about loose gravel on the roadways. People also complain it is knocking paint off their vehicle, and sometimes even getting tar on their vehicle. The first thing you should remember is that signage is always placed when this work is being done asking people to slow down. If you DO NOT slow down, it is possible that you will impact your paint. So please slow down. We can not be responsible for those who do not slow down in these construction areas. These surface treatment patches will remain with loose gravel for about three days before it is swept off. Otherwise, it will have tar leaching through. Please be patient. This process is saving the county and you the taxpayers, tens of thousands of dollars every year.

**Q. Will the county be doing other road maintenance this Spring?**

A. Absolutely. We will begin, maybe before you see this in the newspaper, grading and sloping the edge of the highway shoulders in certain areas of the county. Over time, grit and dirt build up on the shoulders and sometimes to the point to where water can not drain off the highway and instead sits and creates a hydroplane danger and of course ice danger in the winter. Blue Ridge Highway will be the first road we work on.

**Q. Are there special problems that the public needs to deal with related to Spring road maintenance?**

A. There certainly is with regards to grading and lowering the shoulders of the highway and it is worse on county roads where the public maintains their yard right to the edge of the pavement. Just realize that it will create a little bit of a mess for a couple of weeks. There may be some clods of dirt created and if it rains in the middle of the process, there may also be some mud involved. If you can be patient, we will be cleaning up any problems in your yard and the disturbed dirt will also have grass seed and mulch.

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### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



## Letters to the Editor ...

### An Open Letter to the Community

Dear Editor, The family of Tricia Spear Calise would like to take this opportunity to share their gratitude to all those who have been so incredibly present in our lives the last three months of Tricia's life. From the day she was first diagnosed with cancer, the battle was daunting. She wanted to fight, and we wanted to fight with her, and even for her.

So many of you rose up to do whatever you could to help. They started with prayers and positive intentions that streamed morning, noon and night. There were the little messages of encouragement through phone lines, e-mail and Facebook. Food appeared; flowers, cards and pictures of friends with their pets kept all of us feeling like we weren't alone in our journey.

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### Amazing Quilts of Valor

Dear Editor, Quilts of Valor - what a wonderful caring and loving organization. I am a very proud nephew of my uncle (Fred Lee), a WWII Navy veteran. He was at Okinawa, Saipan, Guadalcanal, Marianas and other conflicts. He had recently turned 95 years of age.

I contacted Linda Gorman with the Quilts of Valor in Blairsville. She gave me a web site for Michigan, Uncle Fred's home. I contacted the site, and got an immediate response saying that because of their busy schedule, it would be six months to a year before presentation could be made. Because of the age factor, I was concerned about the time lapse. I then went back to Linda Gorman and not only did this great lady make a quilt available to Michigan, the presentation happened five days later.

I am deeply appreciative, and my Uncle Fred was elated. The beautiful quilt was presented to my uncle, along with his daughters. I have pictures of that treasured day.

Thank you Linda, Jim, Susan and Barbara. I know there are many others. Thank you so very much.

Gary Lee, USN

### Nobody is perfect

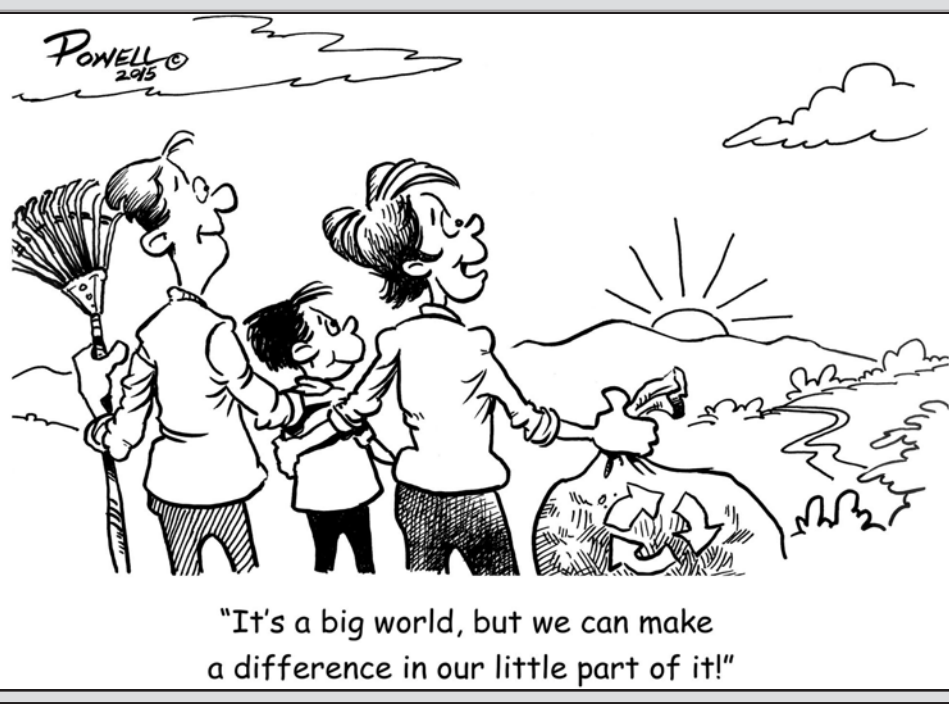
Dear Editor, Ms. Ramsey takes delight in detailing the malapropisms of George W. Bush. She overlooked a couple of beauties delivered by her favorite and current President. Like the one during his campaign where he claims to have campaigned in 57 states with only one to go. And the speech in which he, as Commander in Chief, pronounces Corpsman as corpse man not once but three times! You can view these for yourself. Just google Obama mispronounces corpsman and Obama campaigns in 57 states.

Carol McKechnie

### Stop! In the Name of Equal Rights!

Dear Editor, Why all this commotion about attempts to protect religious freedom—a right that should need no protection, since it is granted in our original Constitution? Should a Muslim business owner of a T-shirt company be forced to fill an order for shirts with the message "Jesus is Lord"? Or should an American Indian child be forced to remove the eagle feather from his braid by his school? Or should Christian bakers be forced to participate in a wedding by providing a cake for a homosexual couple? If you answered "No" to all the above, you would be wrong, because the bakers in the above example actually did lose their business in a court decision. The court said the Indian boy had a right to express his religious beliefs. The Muslim situation has not been challenged—yet.

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### Good Fire/Bad Fire

It's the time of the year when we start smelling smoke in our valleys from some far away woods fire and it has decided to settle in our valley, but don't panic, it's probably coming from a controlled burn or prescribed fire that is intentionally set by forest managers to improve a forest and reduce the risk of an uncontrolled wildfire.

For most of the past couple of years, I have been preaching about protecting our property from wildfire by doing whatever we can to prevent fires, but this week, I will do a complete flip and tell you how foresters intentionally set fires in the forest to prevent wildfires. That doesn't seem to make sense... we set a fire to prevent a fire? Using good fire under controlled conditions for fuel reduction is called prescribed fire. "Prescribed burning means the controlled application of fire to existing vegetative fuels under specific environmental conditions and following appropriate precautionary measures, which causes the fire to be confined to a predetermined area and accomplishes one or more planned land management objectives, or to mitigate catastrophic wildfires." Georgia Prescribed Burning Act, 1992.

Prescribed fire has many benefits, including helping our forest wildlife by removing brush, briars, and undesirable vegetation that they can't eat and creating an open forest floor where grasses and small plants can grow for them. Prescribed fire can also improve our water resources by reducing leaf litter and that can prevent rain water from filtering into the soil. Prescribed fire also helps reduce the threat of insects and diseases in the trees. All of these effects of prescribed fire will improve the health of our forests, wildlife, and reduce the chance of losing the trees and property to an uncontrolled fire. Prescribed fire is a safe way to apply a natural process, ensure ecosystem health and reduce wildfire risk. Healthy forests provide clean air and water, and diverse wildlife populations for Georgia's residents and visitors.

The Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and other cooperators work with the Georgia Prescribed Fire Council (GAPFC) to encourage the exchange of information, techniques and experiences among practitioners of prescribed burning in Georgia. On average, Georgia prescribe burns about 1.5 million acres of forest lands each year. GAPFC advocates prescribed burning as one of the most environmentally and economically feasible methods for managing the state's valuable forest resources. Professional foresters and other land managers throughout the state use prescribed burning for reforestation, aesthetics, and forest access. As a land management tool, prescribed fire is essential for managing wildlife species such as bobwhite quail, eastern wild turkey, white-tailed deer, many songbirds,

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### RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



### Doc Underwood and Clifford

I have told you many times about my great grandfather, Clifford Hyde, who was from Dawson County, GA. His mother was a full blood Cherokee and both Clifford's father and grandfather had fought with a group of Georgia Volunteers during the "War of Northern Aggression" as he liked to call it. As a young man Clifford was working down around Cumming when he got into trouble.

Clifford was sewing some "wild oats" as many young people are prone to do. He loved the taste of moonshine and one evening he'd consumed too much. Moonshine can make you believe you are stronger than you actually are and on this night the moonshine made Clifford think he could whip anybody. He and another man were involved in a brawl. The other man was left on the floor bleeding and presumed dead. So, my great grandfather fled Atlanta and traveled to North Alabama. Later in life he found out the other man had lived, but, he had already married and was raising a family in the little town of Phil Campbell, AL.

His favorite hobby was Turkey hunting. Clifford used one of the wing bones to make a call and up into his 80s he was able to call up and shoot gobblers. Dad told me that he would drive him over to the James Place where the old man would wobble down to Turkey Creek. Clifford would sit with his back against a rock bluff and pull out the wing bone caller. Usually within about an hour Dad would hear the note of the old "Long Tom" shotgun. Dad would walk to where the old man was sitting whereupon he would receive instructions to the location of the dead bird. Dad said, "Clifford never failed to get a bird until he could no longer make the walk to Turkey Creek".

Clifford was also a bee charmer. He would place a coca-cola cap containing honey on the ground and watch until a bee found it. The old man would watch the direction in which the bee flew after leaving the bottle cap and then he would walk in that direction for a couple of hundred yards. He would then sit down and place another honey filled bottle cap on the ground. He would repeat this process until the bee tree was located after which the tree was chopped down and robbed of its honey. It is astonishing that Clifford never wore any protective gear during the robbing process and he was never stung during the process.

Later in life after he had slowed down Clifford became good friends with Doc Underwood. Doc was the resident doctor in the little town of Phil Campbell, AL. Each Tuesday morning for the next 35 years Doc would visit his old friend, Clifford Hyde for a game of Dominoes. The

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### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



## Win \$1,000!

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce would like to extend a warm invitation to you and all of your family and friends to join us at our annual community fireworks display to be held on Saturday, July 4 from Meeks Park. The show will begin after dark and is certain to be a memorable one.

As in past years, the Chamber is again offering chances to win \$1,000 by making a \$10 donation toward the fireworks display. The winner will be drawn on the evening of the fireworks, and does not have to be present to win. Tickets are available from Chamber Board Members, Ambassadors, and at the Chamber office within the Union County Community Center at 129 Union County Recreation Road. You may also make your donation online at VisitBlairsvilleGA.com and a ticket will be prepared for you.

The Chamber would like to say a special thanks to Woodmen of the World, a not for profit organization offering a variety of insurance and investment options, who is helping sponsor this year's event. We also thank the Union County Commissioner's Office, Union County Sheriff's Office, Union County Fire Department and Union County Recreation Department for providing event support in the form of fire and public safety, traffic control, and parking.

For a list of additional events happening this year and for a variety of great coupons

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## Spring Harvest

I delight in the warmth of the afternoon sun this time of year. It hits the blooms of the flowering and leafing trees, reflecting such magnificent colors. Every chance I get I take a stroll through the Young Harris College campus to see the tulips open full, gathering the sun like radiant nourishment, then at dusk, closing their petals tight to savor the vitamins they've captured.

I marvel at the horses and cows that never seem to feel the need to lift their heads, too busy chewing the new green pasture. Green is certainly the main color of the season. Even Crayola hasn't been able to capture every shade that Mother Nature paints as the mountain sides seem to change colors right before my eyes.

Even with this burst of nature surrounding me these short weeks of April, my favorite green gift is found in the grocery store; the bargain price of asparagus, my favorite spring vegetable. If I was a patient gardener, I'd have a half acre of asparagus planted. For me, planting asparagus seeds is truly futile. It takes three years before the first harvest. Planting one year old crowns means two years till I'd see the likes of a few servings at my Easter dinner table. I'm too long in the tooth to go down that path. So, when I can buy a pound of these luscious, pencil thin stalks for \$1.99, I'm in a state of euphoria.

I have to believe that I'm not alone in my lust for this vegetable. It's been around for just a bit more years than you'd probably imagine. It is pictured as an offering on an Egyptian frieze dating to 3000 BC. Greeks and Romans ate it fresh when in season, and dried the vegetable for use in winter. A recipe for cooking asparagus is in the oldest surviving book of recipes, Apicius's third-century AD De re coquinaria, Book III, where he instructs his readers; Asparagus [Tor in order to have it most agreeable to the palate] must be peeled, washed and dried and immersed in boiling water backwards.

I have only purchased the green variety of asparagus, but did sample the white asparagus in Italy. White asparagus is the result of applying a blanching technique while the asparagus shoots are growing. The cultivated so-called

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