Opinions Everybody has one

Remembering

My Daddy was a veteran of World War II, not just the war, but the memories of the war. Robert Duncan served in Belgium, he

served in Scotland and he was in England. My Uncle Harlan Duncan was stationed in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, protecting America from the Japanese Army that tried to attack America from that frozen front.

My Daddy's first cousin, Woodrow Wilson (not the president) served in Charles the European Theater and Duncan died at the Battle of the Straight Bulge, Dec. 16th, 1944. A lot of other brave Americans Shooting also died that day.

My great-great Grand

Daddy, William Rufus Duncan, was a sergeant with the 52nd Infantry, Company C, Army of Tennessee in the War Between the States. He was one of 120 men who joined the Confed-eracy from Union County. He was one of 18 from that group that returned home alive.

I mention all of this because I believe that we all have veterans in our lineage that fought for, and some died, so this Nation could be what it is today. Freedom as we all know is not free.

I remember as a young boy a man named Homer Blackwell came to visit my Daddy.

The two men went out on the back porch, chewed and spit tobacco and talked about events that they shared in Europe. I wasn't allowed to be out there, which was unusual. It was just a conversation between Homer Blackwell and my Daddy.

When the two men finished their visit, both came back into the house. They shook hands, shared a hug, wiped away a few tears, and said their good byes.

After Homer Blackwell left, I asked my Daddy what they talked about. He replied, "I can't talk about it."

Dec. 16th, is my Daddy's birthday.

Later, my Momma would tell me that Homer Blackwell was with Daddy when he received a letter from his first cousin Woodrow Wilson. Woodrow and Daddy were like brothers in their youth. They went bird hunting, squirrel hunting, rabbit hunting, trout fishing, well, you get the picture.

Daddy received the letter from Woodrow Wilson on Dec. 16th, 1944. It was just Woodrow wishing Daddy a happy birthday and praying for his safety in a war that was nothing but blood and guts.

Soon afterward, Daddy learned that Woodrow Wilson died at the Battle of the Bulge on Dec. 16th, 1944.

Woodrow Wilson is buried in Duncan Cemetery on Fairview Church Road. A U.S.

See **Duncan**, page 5A



"Great news, everyone! The jobless rate is below nine percent!"

ors.

Great Memories

My grandfather will soon celebrate his 97th birthday. Papa still has a pretty good sense of humor and is still in relatively good health. However, he has great dif-

ficulty with short term Mickey memory. Sometime back Cummings my Dad and I took Papa to the woods. Papa always Around felt at ease when he was in the woods. After seeing the The Farm blooming native azaleas

(he called them honeysuckle) Papa began to relax and he laughed out loud and began telling us about some of his favorite memories.

After listening to Papa I realized just how short life is and I thought about many of my own great memories.

Many of my fondest memories are centered on my family. For example, when I was a little boy we moved up north to the windy city of Chicago. I was desperately homesick and right before Christmas Uncle Bud sent me a brand new pair of cowboy boots. I don't know why, but, those boots are etched in my memory. They were one of the first Christmas presents I can remember receiving. I also remember finding orange slices, candy canes, and Brazil nuts under a Red Cedar Christmas Tree.

To this day I can't resist buying those candied orange slices. I guess that is why I enjoy going to Foodland in Blairsville. Wayne Abercrombie is good about keeping me supplied with those orange slices.

Another memory from Christmas involves a chemistry set I received during my fifth grade year in school. Right after breakfast on Christmas morning I went to the basement and began the experimentation process. The first thing I concocted was "wake-up gas" which was nothing more than smelling salts or ammonia. I went upstairs to show my Dad and found him asleep on the sofa. My young scientific mind deduced my sleeping Dad would be a good subject to determine the effectiveness of my "wake-up gas." I placed

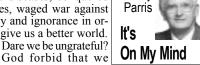
See Cummings, page 5A

We are debtors

When we arrive in this world we are debt-

We already owe for nine months of food and shelter. We are indebted to our ancestors for the comforts and conveniences that we enjoy. They're the ones that have built hospitals where we were born: built schools where we were educated: built

churches where we worship. They're the ones that have battled diseases, conquered enemies, waged war against poverty and ignorance in order to give us a better world. Dare we be ungrateful?



Danny

would not be thankful for their sacrifices. It goes without saying that Godly, honest and hardworking people want to leave some-thing for those who come behind them. As we graduate another generation may we be reminded that the greatest threats, problems, and challenges facing our world are not energy, ecology, government and the endangered species list. The greatest enemy facing this generation is not outer space but inner space. The greatest threats to our nation's survival have to do with the moral and ethical issues confronting us.

The real dangers that can destroy us are internal and not external. They are matters of the very soul of our nation. If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do? Or put another way if the foundations be destroyed what have the righteous been doing?

Much of our world's music, entertainment and sports need to be cleaned up. We have reached an all time low with cursing, filthy language and sexual perversion. Our movie and video industries seemingly thrive on probing deeper depths of darkness to dump into our world.

As the late Vance Havner used to say, "There was a time that we blushed because we were ashamed. Now we are ashamed because we blush.'

It is a shame that the airways are filled with people taking God's name in vain and no one says a word. But you let someone mention God's name in a prayer to bring blessings upon our children and nation and suddenly there are 12 organizations that want to sue you in the name of "human rights."

I have about come to the decision that "hu-

See Parris, page 5A



Johnny

Isakson

On the Hill

Letters To the Editor

The rest of the story

Dear Editor,

We have preacher opinions and politicians' opinions on why the Chicken Crossed the Road.

My hillbilly opinion on why the Chicken Crossed the Road is that the chicken crossed the road to prove to a possum that it could be done.

Dayton Dyer

Kudos to YHC

Congratulations to the Young Harris College "Family" on a wonderful Commencement on May 5th. Cathy Cox presided masterfully throughout the ceremony, Senator Johnny Isakson delivered (without teleprompter) a wonderful address full of wisdom and common sense and students were singularly impressive in their achievements, appearance and conduct. This was the most uplifting event that my wife and I have attended since we returned to Towns County in 2005.

Wm. Ronald Gibson

Share your Faith

— **•** -

Dear Mr. Duncan,

Please don't let remarks such as appeared in a letter in the May 16 issue discourage you from sharing your faith experience! There are far more people in your readership who have experienced similar situations who are uplifted by your sharing.

There are many things in this life that I have not experienced but I don't assume that they don't exist or haven't happened to others. I doubt there is any empirical evidence that God works in our lives but there are volumes and volumes of experiential evidence of same. List me among the many people in this latter category!

Carol S. McKechnie

Flying without a license Dear Editor,

_ 🔶 _

In regards to the Transportation T-SPLOST Tax, the statement, "Economic development suffers if we don't pass this tax" is not a valid statement,

because Georgia has always been behind the 8 Ball in regards to transportation. But yet look at the growth we have experienced; being behind in transportation didn't hinder economic growth. Georgia now ranks 11th in the

country as of 2010 and this occurred mostly since 1995. The economic vitality of Georgia is alive and well considering the slump the country is in.

GDOT is going to waste a lot of that 75 per-cent money before it ever gets to the counties on administration, studies, etc. I will say the counties will be lucky to get back 60-65 percent. And which is best for your county, a 100 percent SPLOST tax or a percentage of a TSPLOST tax. GDOT in Sept 2011 had another change in leadership; one reason being it has become too politicized. GDOT in the past was a well-run and efficient organization but within in the last 10-15 years or so has become too much of a political bureaucracy to fulfill its duties



Q. What is the most important reason for having a Sole Commissioner

form of government? A. It is the fact that "the buck stops here". Sole Commissioners cannot hide behind other commissioners who may have voted for an issue and yet others did not



for political reasons. Everything we do and say, we are absolutely responsible for and you as a taxpayer, understand that and you only have to make one trip to our office to solve or express most problems that exist

Q. Is transparency a problem with a Sole Commissioner form of government?

A. No. It is no different with regards to transparency than any other type of government. Especially in Union County, where I have continuously answered your questions for years, well over a thousand of them in the North Georgia News. Any and all of our records are readily available or can be accessed from our storage files. Our county meetings are always open to the public and our decisions are made public at county meetings. In fact, more often than not, you will receive a decision well prior to a county meeting. With a commission board, most decisions are only made at county meetings once a month. There are no secrets in our local government

Q. One five member commission board in a metro county recently had some serious problems. Do you know what happened?

A. I do not have all the details, but basically, last year, the Chairman was asked to step down and resign to avoid possible prosecution. One other commissioner was indicted and there still is no word on the possible outcome of two other commissioners. This is to say that having a multi commission is no guarantee to keep out corruption or problems in local government.

Q. What are some other reasons that the Sole Commissioner is a good form of government?

A. The second point is cooperation between other groups and governments, especially like Union and Towns Counties. Our counties work together on many fronts. We are both members of the North Georgia Resource Management Authority which handles our recycling and Keep Our Mountains Beautiful programs in our communities and schools. We both are members of the Enotah Judicial Circuit which budgets all the courts, District Attorney and Judges and are both members of the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, the group responsible for our grant writing and planning, just to name a few

We share a role and budget with our SAFE shelter and the Animal Shelter. We both are members of and provide funding for the Mountain Regional Library Board that deals with our public libraries. We work together on ordinances and are members of a joint development authority with three

Kenneth West

Owner / Publisher

Justin Owenby

Advertising Director

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce our annual State of the Community Address to be held Tuesday, June 12, 2012 from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event will be held Joe

State of the Community

at the Union County Com-Garner munity Center and lunch will be prepared by The BUCCC View Grill. This event is open to the public. Union County

Blairsville - Union Cour Chamber of Commerce This year's speaker

lineup was chosen to given attendees a broad look at key community performance metrics. Cindy Williams, President of the Chamber will share information on tourism trends and current projects of the Chamber. Carol Hayes, President of the Northeast Georgia Board of Realtors will bring a real estate update for the region. Mitch Griggs, Executive Director of the Union County Development Authority, will speak about business and industry performance and recruitment.

Due to limited seating, tickets should be purchased in advance and before Friday, June 8th by contacting the Chamber office at (706) 745-5789. Tickets are \$20 for Chamber members and \$30 for the general public.

This year's event sponsor is Victoria's Center which is home to a variety of retail and service shops including Victoria's Antique Mall, Clothes Rack, S.A.F.E. Thrift Store, Ugly Mug Café, Frontier Woodworks, Delco Handyman, Floor Coverings of North GA, and Mayfair Salon & Spa. Remember Victoria's Center when looking for unique gifts, a delightful meal, or specialty services. They are located 2.5 miles east of Blairsville next to Blairsville Cinemas.

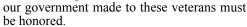
As we strive to grow and improve our member's professional networking opportunities, we challenge everyone to get involved with our chamber. We serve to advance the business interests of our 550+ membership as well as promote the local tourism industry which accounts for over 220 jobs and \$19.52 million in spending every year.

For more information regarding the Chamber's State of the Community Address or to register please call the Chamber at (706) 745-5789 or visit www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com.

I may be reached anytime at Chair@BlairsvilleChamber.com.

As a member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, one of my top priorities is to make sure America takes care of the veterans who have dedicated

their lives to serving our country. Veterans fought to protect our freedoms and ensure our way of life. The people of the United States owe our veterans a great deal, and the promises that



That is why I have supported legislation that would authorize disabled military retirees to receive both military retired pay and VA disability compensation concurrently and legislation to repeal the offset of Survivor Benefit Plan annuities. If retirement benefits for America's service men and women and their survivors continue to erode, they will lose faith in their chosen careers and in our nation's commitment to them. Also, as we continue to rely more and more on our Guard and Reservists, we must ensure that we provide them with the benefits and quality of life equal to the demands we make of them.

It is important to recognize the sacrifices made by American service members both past and present, and it is imperative that we make sure they receive the care, benefits and compensation they've so courageously earned. I am proud to honor these men and women on Memorial Day and every day. When I say my prayers at night, the last one is always for the men and women who keep us safe.

Working for Veterans

Reforming the process by which veterans receive their disability benefits is a priority of mine. There are currently 500,000 claims for service-related disabilities waiting to get processed by the VA, and 40 percent of these claims wait more than four months for a decision. This is unacceptable, and I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to reduce this backlog by simplifying the process and ensuring the expedited and more accurate adjudication of claims. I firmly believe the VA must work closely with the Department of Defense to ensure that veterans and their families are provided with timely and high-quality healthcare services.

See Mike Sims Letter, page 5A

Sole Commissioners

Dear Editor,

There are nine counties in Georgia which have sole commissioners. There are 150 counties that have multiple county commissioners. The sheer number of multiple commissioner counties alone indicates this is a fairer and more representative way to run local government. Sole commissioners combine the legislative and executive branches of local government which allows for quick decisions but also has the potential for more corruption and less transparency.

The workload alone can be overwhelming which can make for wrong and irrationals decisions being made too quickly. There is nothing in local government which requires a quick decision. In fact, a deliberative form of multiple commissioners brings about a better local government.

A multiple form of government replaces the one man, one decision form; with a more levelheaded form of government by a few, as opposed to a government of irrational decisions, by one. Consider if all decisions in Atlanta were made and implemented solely by Kasim Reed? Or if all decisions on the state level were made by Nathan Deal?

A sole commissioner can put a county into deep debt without the knowledge of the voters who are responsible for county debt.

I think Union County deserves multiple commissioners

- • -

Frank Pack

The Big Picture

Dear Editor,

I have lived in Blairsville for several years and this is only the third letter to the editor I have sent as I do not feel the need to respond to every opinion I disagree with.

However it seems there is at least one person who is the "official press secretary" of the Atheists. Believing in God does not mean you will not suffer during your life. We all will in some way or another.

However anyone who credits God for any good fortune or help in life gets a reply from her.

An occasional response is enough for us to get what she does not believe in.

All these anti-God responses makes one wonder who she is trying to convince. The believers that they are wrong or herself that she is right.

Gary Davis

See **Paris**, page 5A

Janice Boling

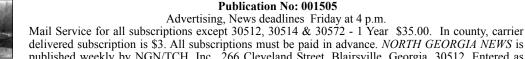
Staff Writer

Todd Forrest

Staff Writer

North Georgia News Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County **Lowell Nicholson Charles Duncan** Editor Photographer

> Website: www.nganews.com E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com Mailing: POBox 2029. Blairsville, GA 30514



delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987 at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. Advertising and subscriptions can be paid by cash, check or credit card.

Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830; Location: 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, GA

