

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Family Tradition

Lamar Paris said it best on Saturday.

The 2014 opening of the Union County Farmers Market was like a family reunion.

Yes, indeed it was, and what a reunion. Charles Totherow was seen strolling throughout the complex. The Collins brothers were there, minus Toby. Mountain View Farms and Dot Patterson were in their usual booths. And Mike Clark was there right alongside them. Nana and Pop are still selling homemade ice cream.

Harold Berry was there selling his Mountain Honey, and there were a few new faces.

When you go to the Market, you can expect to see some very familiar faces. These are faces that you've come to know over the few years the Market has been up and running.

And of course, you can expect to see Mickey Cummings, the Market Manager.

What you'll also see is hundreds of new faces. People coming to the Market for the first time. A lot of these folks are snowbirds, or families just returning from their winter hiatus in Florida. As for Commissioner Paris, you'll see him every Saturday at the Market. Proud papas always watch over their children.

When the Farmers Market was first built, naysayers trashed the thought, calling the facility a pole barn without options. Folks, the Union County Farmers Market has trashed that theory by a long shot.

It's one of those places that brings the phrase "be there, or be square to mind." It's one of the most popular gathering places in Union County. It generates an estimated \$1 million into the local economy.

An estimated 3,000 - to 5,000 people visit the Farmers Market each week and that's just on Saturday from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. It brings to life the mountain tradition of living off the land. And it keeps local families in Blairsville and affords them the opportunity to sell their produce in Blairsville instead of driving to the Farmers Market in Atlanta.

It means more money spent in Union County than in Fulton County. And it also means a lot less wear and tear on our local population.

Back to the opening theme, yes, it is a family reunion on many levels. We're watching young men and women growing up at the Farmers Market.

Families selling produce at the Market bring their children to take part in the experience. It's amazing how much these children have grown in such a short time frame.

And the bottom line, hopefully, these children are the future of the Union County Farmers Market. Young people who will keep the tradition alive for many years to come. Children whose children will keep the tradition alive way on down the line.

It's a shame that this tradition started as late as it did. It's a shame because if you visited the Market and see how much fun this venue really is, you'd feel the same.

You don't have to buy a thing to come to the Market, but, I'm guessing you wouldn't leave empty-handed.

You see, the Market is contagious. If you walk up and down the aisle, you get the feeling you're in a grocery store.

And yes, you can even buy milk and eggs and fresh meat at the Market. Every year, something new is added. It's a perfect place to shop.

### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



## A Message to Fathers

Father's Day is a time to buy ties and tools, telephone dad and mail Hallmark cards. Of all the days on the calendar, Father's Day grabs my attention more than most other days. I visualize my dad when I was a small lad. He was strong physically. I was never afraid of anything or anyone while I was in my dad's presence. He was confident and in control. No matter the difficulty or crisis I believed that my dad could handle any situation. I never worried about shelter, food or clothing. My dad took care of all of those things.

In essence, my father was my protector, provider and the pride of my life. When I got hurt, I ran to my father; when I needed answers to mysteries of life I felt certain my dad could answer them. I believed in him because he was my earthly father. I looked up to him despite flaws that I sometimes saw.

On Father's Day, I also visualize my own role as a father to my son. Most dads who read this probably feel as I do. I could do a much better job now than I did while my son and daughter were growing up. Dads with young children need to be committed daily to loving, nurturing and growing their offspring. You need to so live that you lead and teach by example. I heard about one boy who said to his father, "Pop, one of the kids said I looked and acted just like you!" "Really," his dad said. "What did you say to him?" "Nothing," the boy said. "He was a lot bigger than me!" Happy is the boy or girl who has a dad who is an example of love, honesty, integrity, prayer and who reveres the Bible and seeks to live by its standards.

On his last visit to Philadelphia, President John F. Kennedy gave a man his pencil. On one end was an eraser that showed signs of great use. A friend asked him, "What do you cherish most about that pencil?" "The eraser," he answered. "Why?" asked the friend? "When I look at the eraser I am reminded that great men also make mistakes." There are no perfect earthly fathers. We all have and will make mistakes. However, every dad who is in the process of rearing children should seek the Heavenly Father's instruction to be the best father possible. None of us had perfect earthly fathers, but thank God everyone who lives has

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### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



## Questions and Answers

### SPLOST, part III

**Q. Why did you receive complaints at the recent bond validation hearing on the county bonding or borrowing money under the SPLOST and utilizing the proceeds to repay the SPLOST debt?**

A. That is a good question because we do not know why. Since SPLOST began, SPLOST bonds have always been utilized to finance part of the SPLOST projects and we have "validated them" the same way each time, which is what is required by law. We have been very consistent and very conservative in our repayment plans and that is not going to change.

**Q. Were those who were complaining and trying to stop the bond validation process in court some of the same people who always complain?**

A. Yes, but I really think (or hope) it was more a case of not understanding than anything. We go through the bond validation process every five years and someone always tries to scare the public into thinking we are going to get the county into a debt we can not repay and they are always wrong because that is not going to happen. During the referendum we voted to bond up to a maximum of \$10 million dollars but we certainly will not bond more money than we can easily repay.

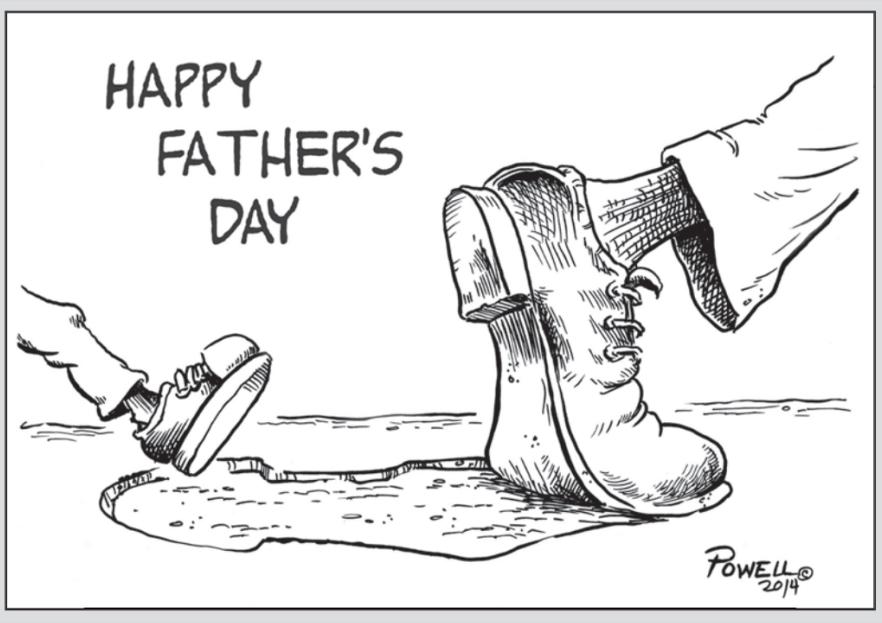
**Q. Why do you think some of the same people, year after year, continue to accuse you of financially breaking our county?**

A. Unfortunately, it is politics. It is a very, very small group who either has political aspirations or simply wants the attention of pretending to be a government watchdog. Unfortunately, as their thinking continues, they often morph from making up statements or taking others remarks and repeating them without even verifying the information, to actually believing what they are saying. In my opinion, their misrepresentations and often outright misinformation continue to be justified by them in their own minds. They have an Internet forum where they can say whatever they want, and unfortunately, anyone can say anything on the Internet, true or false. I can not control what they say nor would I want to. It would be nice if they tried being more truthful and less deceptive, but that is their choice.

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### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



## Letters to the Editor ...

### Support the Lapidary School

Dear Editor,

I have just returned from an enjoyable two weeks mini-vacation in my own hometown of Young Harris, Georgia. My sister from Juneau, Alaska and I signed up for classes at the Wm. Holland School of Lapidary Arts and Jewelry Making.

You ask, "What the heck is Lapidary?" Short version, it is the art of cutting, sculpting, polishing or engraving stones. I am amazed at how many people are passionate about "ROCKS". My sister is one of them; hunting, finding, and polishing. Me, I'm passionate about jewelry making. I have taken classes in the past; Enameling (glass powder fired onto a variety of metals), Glass Fusion (pieces of colorful glass piled on top of each other and fired/melted in a kiln to make a miniature version of abstract wearable art) and also Wire 1 (the art of wrapping wire around those shaped and polished "rocks").

The school fee is discounted for all commuters. For just a few dollars more, we opted for the full blown experience of living on their campus. We shared a room with twin beds, private bath, and three fabulous buffet style meals daily. We were sisters enjoying our pajamas and late night reminiscing after a full day of fun, educational learning from our volunteer instructors

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### Where has all the ammo gone?

Dear Editor

Machine guns and huge stocks of ammo for Federal agencies that have no need for such items definitely raises the question, why? If you are expecting a possible uprising of well-armed citizens who are losing freedoms every day and are being pushed to the limits by our commander in grief and the socialist democrats in both houses, then isn't it logical to heavily arm all Federal agencies just in case? Also if the government is buying up ammo at a rate unheard of in previous times, including all major wars (I have heard 3 billion per month from ammo suppliers). Anyone who has tried to purchase ammo in the last couple of years can tell you there is a definite shortage country wide. Very long waiting list on line and rationing by stores when and if they do receive an order.

Obama, who has referred to our constitution as an impediment is venomously opposed to our second amendment and has tried over and over again to disarm the American public by starting out with small changes here and there until he finally achieves national registration and ultimately confiscation. This has been done

See Adams, page 5A

### Don't sit down and shut up

Dear Editor,

It was reported in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 that Governor Deal is interested in limiting who can file Whistleblower complaints by tightening the definition of Whistleblower. This is in the wake of a large judgment awarded to a Whistleblower who was forced out of her position as the head of the ethics commission for being too vigorous in her investigation of complaints regarding the Governor's 2010 campaign.

Really! This is nothing short of amazing. This is unacceptable. At a time when public trust of all levels of government is at an all-time low, we have the Governor of Georgia in favor of limiting who can file complaints with the legal protections afforded Whistleblowers. This, my friends, is how fascist dictators and banana republics operate. Shut up and sit down.

Here is my message to our elected officials: You work for us. Elected officials serve at the pleasure of the electorate. The electorate is not pleased when we see efforts to silence those who seek to expose corruption at any level. When the electorate becomes sufficiently disenchanted with this type of attitude and behavior, they exercise their civic authority and work to remove those elected officials from office.

Pat Thibodeaux

### Is the check in the mail?

Dear Editor

Jim Steed here. Just asking, if you know if the former Chairman of our BRMEMC ever paid his over due payment/bill of nearly \$50,000? Have they submitted a detailed summary of the hows and whys this could happen and did happen? And who did know about it, and why nothing was done about it? Further, if no, then would the *North Georgia News* want to go out to the HQ's and demand answers to be so printed in your newspaper?

Respectfully, Jim Steed and 49,998 other EMC owners and members

### Danger Will Robinson

Dear Editor

In defense of George Mitchell's "comic strips" as they were recently called by one who may be guilty of throwing rocks in a glass house, George's numbers and facts may not always pass the scrutiny of our erudite citizens who by their own admission possess superior intelligence and privileged information. But in the immortal words of one Hillary Clinton, "What difference does it make!" George's general charges of government incompetence, nefarious dealings, and dishonesty I believe are quite accurate. Media information supports this conclusion and how else can we, the common people, find out what goes on with our Federal Administration except by information published by the media - especially FOX News.

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### A Tough Nut

Some of my favorite memories include going fishing with relatives and friends. One memory was sometime around 1973. A man in our church took our youth group to Cooper's Creek. There must have been 20-30 of us boys and girls. Every one of us caught trout that Saturday. It was a great day, even if we got run out of camp by a bear at 2 in the morning. We camped out there at the Campground for two days. By the last day of fishing were about to run out of food.

I will never forget Mike asking us, "Boys, what kind of food do you have left in your bags?" Troy had some Beef Stew. Nelson had some Beef Soup. Randy had some Vienna sausage while another kid had some sardines. I had some Tuna fish. We were told to bring everything we had to the camp fire. Mike opened each item and placed them in one big pot. He grinned and said, "Tonight we are having what ya got stew." The name came from placing everything we had into the cook pot. The taste mattered not. We were boys and we were hungry. We ate everything down to the last crumb. I will add that I have never had heart burn as bad as I experienced that night at the campground in Cooper's Creek and to this day I cannot eat a Vienna sausage.

Another memory included a fishing trip to the Tennessee River with my Dad when I was 10. There were a bunch of us boys from our neighborhood and we each caught 20-30 crappie. It was a great day. What made it better was the fact the fishing hole was in a cove of the Tennessee River. We parked at the pull off on the Will Cummings Highway not too far out of Chattanooga, Tenn. This place was like our own fishing hole and we went back year after year when the Crappie were running.

Another memory of which I am very fond is a fishing trip to a catfish lake on the farm of my Uncle Rufus. Uncle Rufus was the brother of my grandmother and he was a hero to us boys. He was on a hunting trip to south Alabama with Uncle Olan when Uncle Olan was bitten by a Cotton Mouth. Uncle Rufus saved Olan's life by sucking the poison from the bite and carrying Olan a couple of miles back to his truck. So, every time I got to go to the home of Rufus Baker it was a treat. This was especially true after Rufus built the 15-acre Catfish Lake.

My grandmother would take us to the pond and we would fish with chicken liver. We always caught enough fish for supper. On one particular day we were fishing with cane poles. I drew the bait on the pole toward my face and tried to cast the bait as far as I could. But, as I tried to make the cast I caught myself with the hook right in the lip. At first I was very quiet and tried to keep the event to myself. But, soon realized I needed help. I was pretty embarrassed

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### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



## Shop Local, Save Big

On the heels of our recent overwhelmingly successful Buy Local Extravaganza, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce is gearing up for our next big opportunity to support local businesses and save big. The Buy Local Weekend is a three day event coordinated by the Chamber and co-sponsored by SafeGuard Lock and Vault and WUCG Community Radio. The event offers residents and visitors an opportunity to explore various local businesses and save 50% on hot selling, featured items. Local shoppers can expect great deals at restaurants, gift shops, attractions, apparel boutiques, service companies, and more. The 2014 Buy Local Weekend is slated for Thursday, June 19 through Saturday, June 21 during normal, individual store hours.

Residents and guests who are interested in receiving the list of participating businesses and the half priced featured items should notify the Chamber and ask to be added to our distribution list. This can be done by calling 706-745-5789, emailing admin@blairvillechamber.com, or logging on to www.VisitBlairvilleGA.com and either live chatting with a Chamber employee or clicking on "Request a Newsletter" and signing up for "Buy Local Coupons & Events." Coupons are also available at the Chamber of Commerce and at participating local businesses. There is no

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## Why Do Fish Eat Fake Flies?

One of my fondest childhood memories of summer was going fishing with my Grandfather. He had a big, old Cadillac convertible. He'd put the top down so the poles could stand up in the back seat. Then we'd take the ferry over to another mass of land bordering Chautauqua Lake.

We'd sit on the grassy mound under a large shade tree, and I'd wait patiently for him to uncover the worms that would serve as enticement for the fresh water sunfish, perch and bass. I was sure they were lining up to chow down as soon as they got wind of our arrival. My Gramps and me, we wouldn't talk much. We didn't want to take a chance we'd scare the fish away. Eventually, that little red and white bobbin would sink, then emerge, sink then emerge, sink then emerge; my adrenaline would be pumping. I'd sometimes nab a small fish, that my Grandfather would then make the biggest deal over, all to build my self esteem. More often, I'd reel in to find that I needed to re-worm. Fish really like worms.

So why do we fish for trout with fake flies? Hopefully someone will share the answer to that at our first annual Trout Day to be held this Saturday, June 14th, at the Union County Farmers Market. We invite you to come and share your expertise along the shores of Butter-nut Creek that day.

For the kids, between the hours of 10am and Noon, we'll have fishing, too. All children under 14 years of age are welcome to come cast their luck to see what they might catch. There will be adult supervision, poles and bait.

I've never understood the sport of "catch and release". When I was a child fisherman, I took home every thing I caught. As tiny as those sunfish were, my Grampa cleaned and filleted them for dinner that night. I'm sure my Grandmother had more fish in the fridge to help support our meager efforts, but the dinner after that day of fishing was a glorious celebration of my special time with my Grandfather.

Bring your kids and your grandkids to the Market this Saturday so they can have such special memories, too. And if you like the great taste of the local trout, be sure to be at the market after

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