

Paris...continued from Page 4A

and/or pay off the Community Center debt with SPLOST funds. The county has not nor will we ever make "illegal" decisions regarding financial dealings of our county.

Q. "The company that did our county audit cautioned the commissioner that several of the methods used in accounting for taxpayers money left openings for unethical dealings. Previously "already approved" priority projects are abandoned while minor questionable projects for nonprofit organizations are completed."

A. These are statements made by people who have no understanding of the SPLOST law. Union County has always hired a consultant to keep the county SPLOST projects not only legal, but on task and within budget as much as possible. One of this group's complaints is that the county said we would expand our jail, but we did not. They also indicated that building a jail was a tier one project and must be completed above all other projects. However, this is also not true. The jail was NOT listed as a tier one project.

Q. What is a tier one project?

A. Usually it would include a new courthouse, jail, 911 Center or sports complex, when advertised as such. However, our jail proposed addition was never listed as a tier one project on our current SPLOST, but was listed as simply an expansion, not a tier one project. The law does not require us to complete a project, but we are required to spend money on the project. The purpose is so you can determine if the project should go forward as planned. However,

tier one projects must be completed. We spent over \$7,000 in studies, including the jail, to determine if expansion was financially feasible to expand our jail and second, we spent an additional \$52,000 replacing all the HVAC units on top of the jail. We also upgraded some of the security at a cost of \$3,500.

Q. So why do you not go ahead and add on to the jail? We understand that it is over crowded.

A. First, we discovered that if we add on to the jail and enclose the existing recreation yard as a new pod, there is no where else to move the small recreation area. The only area remaining on the side of the mountain is where all of the electrical grounding mats are installed for the electrical system, which can not be built on or covered with a solid surface.

Second, we currently already spend over \$ 3.6 million on the jail and sheriff's operation per year, plus another \$385,000 which includes the courts, judges, district attorney, public defenders and juvenile court. Then if you add on the Probate Court, Magistrate Court, and Clerk of Court, all which have separate functions, but several include dealing with those who have broken the law, we have a total of \$4.7 million spent on criminals every year, which is 33 percent of our total budget. Nearly \$5 million a year spent on criminals and their crimes is plenty. I want to spend the rest of our funds on projects that directly impact and improve the lives of our law-abiding citizens,

Next week more SPLOST issues including the jail.

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

given portions of the sacrifices they received from people coming to the temple. These priests would get bread, grain, beef, lamb or goat meat depending on the offering given at the time. This person sitting beside Calvin whispered, "I am glad I am not a priest. I just couldn't eat one of those goats." Calvin looked at her and grinned. She happened to be one of his best customers over the past 3 years.

During the next two weeks the Farmers Market will be celebrating the summer season by recognizing Beef Month on June 21 and a BBQ Blast on June 28. Our local Blue Ridge Mountain Cattleman's Association will celebrate Beef Month by giving away samples of fresh cooked beef and by providing

recipes to you at the Farmers Market on June 21. Joe Garner is our President this year and he and other people from the Blue Ridge Mountain Cattleman's Association will be at the Market on June 21 to celebrate Beef Month and the \$1.5 million beef industry in Union County.

We will celebrate our annual BBQ Blast at the Farmers Market on June 28. If you have a BBQ Pork, Rib or BBQ Chicken Recipe and want to try it out please bring a sample of your recipe to the Farmers Market and enter it in our recipe contest on June 28. A set of 3 judges will determine our winners, so come on out and celebrate the summer with us at the Farmers Market.

We're waiting on you to make an appearance.

Parris ... continued from Page 4A

he could say was "give me." When he returned, his prayer was "make me."

A couple I once knew that had been married for many years always made jokes with each other (especially the husband). Once I asked the husband where the wife was. His reply, "Oh, she's at the beauty shop." "She's trying to make a comeback." That's what the prodigal did. He made a come-

back. You may have made a gom (a major, mega mess) of your life but you can make a comeback with God's help. The devil wants to make a laughing stock of you but God wants to make you a new creature through His love and grace. Make up your mind today, let God make you a blessing in order that you may make a difference in this world.

Williams...

continued from Page 4A

to realize that Janet went well beyond her required duties. Many people never realized that Janet was a part-time employee because she volunteered countless additional hours to successfully pull off many projects and events. Among those were the Spring Arts & Crafts Festival, Green Bean Festival, Halloween on the Square, Bluegrass Festival, Christmas on the Square, Great American Clean Up Day, and of course the wonderful new downtown streetscape. Each of these saw tremendous participation and community impact under her direction.

I was given the wonderful opportunity of working even more closely with Janet when she became a member of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors in 2009. In the almost six years she served, she held the title of Secretary and chaired both our Tourism and Governmental Affairs Committee. Janet was always quick to offer to serve and followed through on every commitment she made, but even more than that, she always made time for me when I needed support, advice, or simple encouragement. For this, I will be forever grateful.

Outside of her regular job and the many additional hours she dedicated to it, Janet is widely known for her work with the Union County Relay For Life. As a community volunteer she worked diligently to recruit and retain teams for the event, served as the Team Captain for St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, and worked on Daffodil Days which raises additional money to support the American Cancer Society. One would have a hard time quantifying the number of hours Janet has spent in service to this organization that has a tremendous impact on so many residents of Union County.

Finally, it is important to note Janet's willingness to serve as the Union County Appalachian Trail Community Chairperson.

Janet led Union County to receive the designation as an AT Community in 2011, and only recently stepped down as Chair of the committee. Through her foresight, Union County was one of the first communities to receive this designation in support of hiking, one of our top tourism activities.

Time and time again, I have seen Janet step up to lead efforts that directly benefit Blairsville-Union County and its citizens. She is the epitome of a community servant and a champion for the positive economic development of Blairsville and Union County. As a community, we could never say thank you enough for her unbelievable efforts which have enriched the lives of many. When Janet's vehicle finally pulls out of Blairsville-Union County en route to her next adventure, I will be the sad girl in the rearview mirror waving goodbye. However, deep in my heart, I will know that angels should not be selfishly kept from the rest of the world, and so I will smile for all the people who are about to welcome her to her new home in South Carolina.

Gray...

continued from Page 4A

about Christ, but they do not put out a jihad on those who refuse. Can't we just accept that everyone has a choice to make and not ban long-standing customs that have been a part of our culture because they "may be offensive" to someone's sensibilities? Or is it too late for the U.S., previously known as the Land of the Free? Respectfully submitted,
Arlene M. Gray

Leone...continued from Page 4A

I'm tellin' youz. Jason Dusenberry (yeah, I know, it doesn't end in "I". He's not one of us, but he's OK.), he has heritage plum tomatoes that your mama would give her two youngest children up for, really.

Frankie. So listen, you can't find the good Italian bread at the Market, at least not yet. But you still need some pane, no? So check out Logan Turnpike Mill. They got homemade breads, rolls and fried pies. They are famous worldwide for their grits. (Don't ask. Who knew that youz could put salt and pepper on Farina and serve it for dinner?)

So, Frankie, whada youz think, huh? How about making an appearance at the Market? This Friday night, I know you are busy. It's open-

ing night of your new movie, Jersey Boys. Youz are getting great reviews. (Clint Eastwood directed it, huh? I'm surprised, ya know? I would have thought Scorsese or DeNiro, but what do I know?)

I'll be there opening night because the local cinema is showing it at the same night it premiers, on June 20. Too awesome, really. I'm inviting all my friends to join me cuz itz going to be the best. The story about youz is great. Can't wait to see it.

So what, Frankie? If you aren't up too late with the parties and stuff, could you make it to the Farmers Market on Saturday morning? I can get you a good price on peppers. Ask for JoAnne.

Cheves ... continued from Page 4A

not create a freestanding individual right to have guns."

Justice Stevens wrote in his book that the Second Amendment was: "adopted to protect the states from federal interference with their power to ensure that their militias were well regulated." State militias, of course, are a thing of the past, replaced by the active and reserve federal military and the national guard. State governments no longer ask citizens to bring their guns and form a militia, so that the Second Amendment has no present day application. Certainly it is is not logical to ignore all but the last clause. But in relatively recent times special interest groups like the NRA began to argue that the Second Amendment created an individual right. Most legal authorities considered this view to be "a form of ideology masquerading as constitutional law." Back in 1991, retired Chief Justice Warren Berger (a conservative appointed by

Richard Nixon) described the individual rights argument as "one of the greatest pieces of fraud... on the American public by special interest groups that I have seen in my lifetime."

In 2008, the conservative majority of the Supreme Court, appointed by Reagan-Bush-Bush (including a couple of fellows who publicly condemn "activist courts" that arbitrarily make new laws) decided District of Columbia v Heller, accepting the NRA individual rights argument that Warren had labeled a "fraud." Stevens said in his book that this decision "departed from the original understanding of the Second Amendment." So, after more than 200 years of the militia interpretation, you are now likely to see pistol packing parishoners in church, a well armed drinker sipping martinis at your favorite bar, and a "carry" enthusiast devouring a hamburger and fries at McDonald's with an AR 15 slung on his back. Go ahead, gun rights people. Tell me that is an acceptable logical practice. I'll laugh in your face - unless you look like you might shoot me.

Charles Cheves

Burch ...

continued from Page 4A

million tax dollars were given to these now out of business companies.

Perhaps it's not technologies at all, but rather bureau regulations she wants. The new EPA regulations on coal fired electric power plants (that produce 52 percent of the nation's electric energy) will cost each household \$50 more each month. If not, then hydroelectric must be the answer. The EPA is proposing new regulations that will allow them to control all water, even to the point where the Federal Government can make you pay for water out of your own well. With control of all the nations' water, it could meet 6 percent of the nation's electric power needs.

Ms. Williams, what more do you want Congress to do?
George Burch

Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse



June 15th in memory of **Paula Paris Johnson** by Ginger & Terry Meeks

June 17, 2012 in loving memory of **Lori Michelle Nuce** by Mom, Dad, Bette Lou, and Maryann Forever in our hearts and memories.

June 18th in memory of **Pauline Neal Jarrett Harkins** One year gone by, I still miss you. Love, I.T. Harkins

June 19th in memory of **Bill Meeks** by Ginger & Terry Meeks

Bell ringing information