

Cannery...from Page 1A

...mings, businesses will continue to peak until early-mid August when business begins to taper off through the later summer and early fall. The canning plant will be open every Tuesday and Thursday from 6 a.m. to noon until October 16th. The cannery is expected to open for a few Wednesdays during August.

Last week marked the third year that the canning plant has been at its current location, situated behind the Farmers Market, and according to Cummings, the new plant is like night and day when compared with its former spot.

"The boiler in this one is brand new and in the other building the boiler was from either 1970 or 1972 but it was installed when Clyde Collins was the school superintendent if that tells you anything," he said. "But it's more efficient, we can run things better, we have more hot water, we have more sinks, we've even improved the amount of space this year as compared to last



Union County Farmers Market Manager Mickey Cummings puts the finishing touches on some green beans at the Union County Cannery. Photo/Todd Forrest

year. Our space was limited because we had some equipment moved out that we don't use anymore so we've got more table space."

Currently, green beans are the top vegetable at the cannery but that will give way

to tomatoes, apples, and others.

"Green beans are one of the most popular along with tomatoes and apple sauce. We do a lot of vegetable soup too so those four things are our most popular," Cummings

said. "Green beans right now then the tomatoes start coming in but the apples won't start coming in until late August or early September."

Cummings is still expecting big things from the cannery in 2014 after processing reached an all time high in 2013. Last year saw the largest amount of items processed since Cummings began working in Union County.

"We processed right at 17,000 jars last year and before that the largest amount we had done was around 11,000 or 12,000," he said.

Cummings encourages everyone to come out and take advantage of the cannery, which has plenty to offer and plenty of folks to help out.

"Patrick Fix, Bethany Brown, Kristy Peney, and myself are always there and we've also got a lot of volunteers that can come and even if you don't know anything about canning we have plenty of people who can help you," Cummings said.

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the cemetery.

"Lamar (Paris) called me one day and they had a service over at the War Memorial, said Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley. "So after the service was over, Elmer Haog, Pete White, and several others have already started a proposal. They're not looking for the city for funds to do any of the work that needs to be done over there. They're looking for the city and county to maintain it after the work is done. The organization is going to raise the funds. I think the city should claim it. It would be an honor to."

Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris is in agreement with Mayor Conley.

"For years this cemetery has been pretty much neglected except for keeping the grass cut," Paris said. "Many of the markers are badly in need of some tender loving care. It is called the Old Blairsville Cemetery and there are 37 graves with inscribed headstones and legible names and dates and more than 50 unmarked graves. The oldest grave that has a legible inscription is that of Sara Addington who died in 1844."

Refurbishing tombstones, putting markers on their appropriate sites and investigating potential sites are going to be a major part of the overhaul.



The grave sites of these early Union County residents will soon be restored with a focus on history and preservation by locals, and city and county governments. Photo/Matthew Jarrard

"This thing is going to involve a lot of people. This is the genesis of the idea. Right in the beginning stages," said White. "There could be early settlers in this community. There may be people that don't even know they have family buried there."

The Sons of Confederate Veterans have seen organizations get the right contributions before at other sites and this one is just as important that the right contributions be made. White, Paris and Mayor Conley are certain that once people see it in the paper, it may shed light for other

groups to see.

"We can be thankful for the restored courthouse we have today for the same reasons," said White. "Back in the late 70s early 80s a realtor was pointing out the old courthouse and public-spirited people got together and now we have a beautiful site."

This is not a project to be taken lightly, Paris said.

"We want to make sure we are doing everything correctly so we will be doing research and getting advice on how to proceed," Paris said. "We have someone coming up next week who has worked

at a Gainesville cemetery for 15 years to look at the cemetery and advise us on how to proceed."

Audit...from Page 1A

about \$13.7 million this year, which is up slightly from last year's revenues of \$13.1 million. Total expenditures were about \$12.3 million, which is up from last year's expenditures of \$11.8 million.

"All-in-all, the ending fund balance of the general fund which is the equity of the general fund, ended its 2013 year with \$3.7 million, which is an increase of about \$537,000 over than 2012's amount of about \$3.2 million," Fraley said. "That is a positive trend in the county's general fund. That 3.7 million is about 25 percent or three months of the county's total annual expenditures. Rating agencies tell us often that they like to see it at about two or three months so that's looking good. Because the county's year end is Dec. 31st the fund balance does tend to be a little bit higher at the time because the tax revenues have just come in, but again, it does look good, especially as its relation to the annual expenditures of the county."

As for the required communications, Fraley reported no significant difficulties with the audit or disagreements with managements as they conducted the audit.

"The county's finance department and county commissioner were completely cooperative in getting us all that we needed in a timely fashion to enable us to render

our opinion within the state guidelines and we certainly appreciated that."

There were some audit adjustments that were delivered to management and approved, Fraley reported.

"They've been reflected in the financial statements that the county will publish to ensure that they are fairly presented," he said. "We did have a few audit findings that standards require us to cite as part of our audit process, we also have some management recommendations. When I say adjustments, I mean accounting adjustments, which sometimes they are reclassifications. Maybe a revenue has been reported in one category that needs to be reported in another category. Often times in our world, reclassifications are things that don't affect the bottom line or the net income. Again, they've been posted to the records. There was nothing missing and there wasn't any problems, they are just accounting adjustments that sometimes get missed when you go through the closeout process of a government of this size."

In other business, the county's financial statement will be posted in the Courthouse for a period of 30 days, which went up last Thursday and was published in the *North Georgia News*.

"In less than 30 days the financial statement will be put

online by the state because we present the audit to the state," Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris said. "As soon as the state reviews it, they will automatically put it online for anyone to look at."

Up next on the agenda was a list of capital purchases of more than \$5,000 from January 2014 to June that are now available at the Union County Commissioner's Office.

Commissioner Paris also announced that the county has entered into a real estate sales contract with Wesley Woods Inc. for 6.889 acres off Woods Road. The purchase price of the property is \$10,900 an acre.

"We purchased 10 acres from Wesley Woods last year, which is adjacent to our current property behind North Georgia Tech. They came to us and told us they would sell us this remaining tract that ties into the 10 acres that we previously purchased and that would be all that they are selling. It's a beautiful property and we plan on looking for some grant funding for an off-road bike trail. While some would question the county purchasing the property, my philosophy is: they do not make anymore real estate."

Finally, the county appointed Peggy Nelson Callaway to fill the remainder of the term of Judith Vaughn on the Union County Library Board through June 30, 2016.

Green Bean...from Page 1A

...sians, demonstrations, cannery tours, a kids tent with appearances by Mr. Green Bean, and a little bit of everything to suit everyone's taste.

However, the focus of the festival is our nation's backbone, local farmers.

All vendors are in high spirits as the general consensus among the farmers is this will possibly be the largest crowd the Market will see all year.

Get to the Market early. Items are expected to be going fast and furious and if you

aren't at the Market before noon, the pickings are sure to be slim.

Last year, vendors had to return home to grab more goods, as many items sold out quickly. Freddy Collins' booth was a huge hit last season as Collins went back to his farm to pull some more corn, along with beans, which sold out before noon.

The Green Bean Festival celebrates the nutrient rich heritage between green beans and the people that call North Georgia home.

The Green Bean Festival hopes to establish a larger market for locally grown varieties, to promote sustainable "green" living, to increase tourism in Union County and surrounding areas, to pass on the vast knowledge of our farmers to the next generation, and to create a fun, family-orientated event.

The Green Bean Festival highlights many aspects of this popular vegetable including everything from origins and history to pressure canning and favorite recipes.