

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### It's time to come together

Union County is one of the most generous and giving communities in this great nation. That's why I ask this incredible group of people to come together once more to help one of our own. Curtis Stephens was injured in a terrible accident while volunteering at Fort Sorghum. He lost a hand. The group that Curtis volunteers with has dedicated untold thousands of dollars to help this very community. And now, Curtis could use some of the magnificent Union County community generosity. Curtis and his family are going through trying times as he adjusts to his physical injury. Some of those adjustments will be financial. That's where we as a community can help. I'm not sure whether a relief fund for Curtis and his family has been established. But, I do know that during the upcoming Sorghum Festival, there will be a raffles to raise money for Curtis and his family. "We're all pitching in and trying to help out," said Sorghum Festival co-organizer Kim Bridges. "We're going to be holding raffles to try and help Curtis and Sarah out. So we're hoping to be successful with the raffles." The raffles are a way folks can help out. To help, just go to the Sorghum Festival as you normally would. While you're there, ask about the raffles, and then take part in that event. Nothing in life is guaranteed, but I can guarantee that the good folks in Union County will come to the aid of the Stephens family. I ask that our loving community come together and help this young family in their time of need. We can help, we can make a difference, we can continue to show the world what makes Union County, GA so special. Together, we can help this young family at a time when they need it most. Together, we can leave a lasting impression for those who volunteer of their valuable time and give back to this incredible community. Curtis has always been there for Union County when it comes Sorghum Time. Let's be there for him.

#### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



### Fabulous Fall

Fall, my favorite season of the year is making itself visible. The dogwoods, sourwoods, poplars, walnuts and burning bushes are all beginning to display their fall fashions. I am amazed at the bright, brilliant colors that God paints through His creation. Every season of the year is glorious but I am partial to the fall. Several things I contribute to my love for the fall. First of all, Regina and I married in the fall. Columbus discovered America in the fall and our son was born on Columbus Day and our daughter was born the next October. In the fall, I fall more deeply in love with my wife of 55 years. Each fall we reminisce about our dating days when there was a cool crispness in the air that made us want to cuddle up. We just cuddle up now because we are cold. Every fall, I fall more in love with our children as we celebrate their birthdays and recall the days of their childhood. The blessings of the gift of children will be rewarding to the end of life's journey. As we celebrate Columbus Day I fall in love with America all over again. What a glorious privilege to be a citizen in the land of the free and the home of the brave. America has fallen on some hard times but I never see the flag flying without getting a lump in my throat and thanking God for America the beautiful. Football is another reason I love fall. I like almost any kind of ball, but college football is my favorite sport which I believe to be the most exciting and entertaining sport of all. The "Dogs" and fall go together. The Dogs have just beaten the Vols and should take care of Vandy before they take on those ghastly Gators. Then fall is the time to fall back one hour to Eastern Standard Time, the way God began it in the beginning. As Yogi said, "It gets late early now." The earth seems to be settling down in the fall. It is getting quieter and more relaxed as it readies for its winter nap. In fact, it seems to be easier to fall asleep in the fall than at any other season. In conclusion, I love everything about the fall except those falling leaves. I predict the summer rains will produce a bumper crop of leaves. Those leaves are far more beautiful on the trees waving in the breeze than they are lying on the ground. Each fall season reminds all of us that, we too, like all of God's creation

#### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



### Questions and Answers

**Q. We have not heard much about the new SPLOST program since we voted to extend it back on 11/5/13. Can you update us?**  
 A. Our current SPLOST III, which began April 2009, will expire in March 2015. The new SPLOST IV program will begin in April of 2015. The first actual proceeds of the new SPLOST will be received in May 2015.  
**Q. Can you give us a reminder of what SPLOST is?**  
 A. SPLOST stands for Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax. It is one penny of the 7 pennies sales tax that you pay on each dollar when making a purchase. This money can be used by the county for capital projects and roads and bridges and related items.  
**Q. Have we completed all the projects that we had on our SPLOST III list that will end in March of next year?**  
 A. There are two sets of projects in our SPLOST program. The City gets a portion of the SPLOST sales tax and I do not have any information on their projects. However, the county also has a list and we have expended funds on all projects, although because of a lack of funding we have had to reduce the scope on some projects.  
**Q. What does the SPLOST law require regarding starting and completing all projects?**  
 A. There are two types of projects. Tier One projects and the "other projects." Tier One projects are declared at the time of passing the SPLOST and are generally major projects such as new courthouses or jails. If a Tier One project is identified, funds must be utilized to pay for completion of that project before any other funds are expended. Union County DID NOT have any Tier One projects in the current SPLOST III or the upcoming SPLOST IV, therefore the remaining projects do not have the funding and starting and completion date restrictions of Tier One projects.  
**Q. How do you determine what the revenue requirements will be for the projects that you work on or complete?**  
 A. When projecting revenue for a SPLOST project of 6

#### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

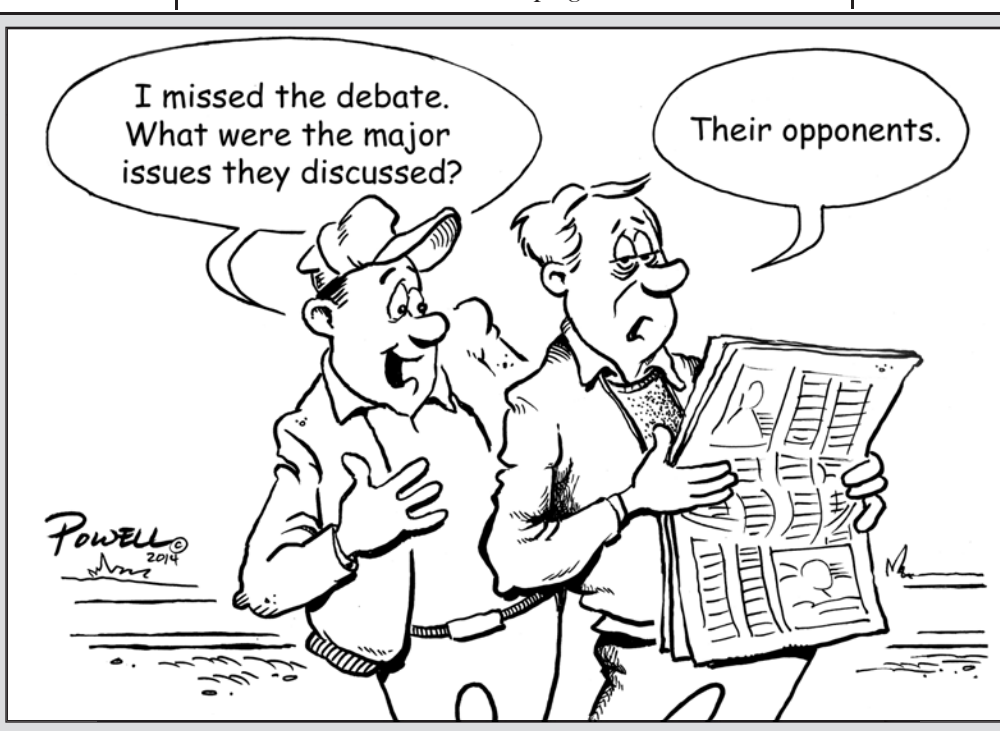
Lamar Paris



## Letters to the Editor ...

### Praise be to God

**Dear Editor,**  
 The presence of God was surely felt at the 180th Homecoming Celebration at Coosa United Methodist Church on Sept. 27 and Sept. 28. The community's support of the "Singing" on Saturday night, plus the wonderful guest musicians helped start the weekend of activities on a positive note. Sunday's Celebration Service and "Dinner on the Grounds" following the service was surely a time that won't be forgotten. Thanks to the *North Georgia News* for their excellent coverage of this special time. To all who attended and those who wished us well, thank you. I am grateful; to God for showing my husband and me the path to Blairsville and Coosa UMC. Thank you, **Paulette Petrarca**, Coosa UMC, 180th Homecoming Chairperson



### Are taxpayers paying for this?

**Dear Editor,**  
 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING to be held by the City Council of the City of Blairsville, in the Conference Room at Blairsville City Hall, 62 Blue Ridge Street, Blairsville, Georgia, at 6:00 p.m. on October 7, 2014, buried in Legal Public Notices section of September 24, 2014 publication of *North Georgia News*, captured taxpayer's attention and aroused suspicion. Government census in year 2010 reported City of Blairsville population was 652 persons, and 129 persons were age 65 and older. Tan Yard Branch Apartments, a classified RD 515/Tax Credit type property designated for residents 62 or older or those with disabilities, is managed by Boyd Management in Columbia, SC. Interested persons need to be informed about convoluted NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING to be held by City of Blairsville municipal government officials. Full disclosure of specific loan amount, scope and location of improvements, and pay-back terms/conditions should be made public prior to meeting. Discerning Union County taxpayers will attend Public Hearing on October 7 and ask probing questions regarding proposed improvements to Borrower's "facilities," the "Blairsville Facility," and undefined association of "Authority," "Bonds," "Borrower," and "affiliates." Published NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING reads in part, "with respect to the proposed plan of finance for the issuance by the Housing Authority of Cordele (the "Authority") of its revenue bonds in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$40,000,000 (the "Bonds"). The

See **Nalley**, page 5A

### Business as usual

**Dear Editor,**  
 With regard to Congressional legislation, there is at least one thing on which we can all agree: not every bill proposed should be passed. Each of us, individually, would oppose certain bills. When the Senate or the House passes a bill and the other will not, it is called deadlock. When there is a lot of deadlock, we call it gridlock. Deadlock is not all bad because not all bills should be passed. That said, why judge Congress by the number of bills it passes? Why not judge it by the number of bills defeated? How many new laws is enough? Some call this a do-nothing Congress because there is too much gridlock. Whether there is too much gridlock depends on your point of view. Personally, I think our government functions best when all three branches are NOT controlled by same party. It is good when legislation can be slowed down and opposing viewpoints considered. The result is better legislation. An example of law enacted under one party control: Obamacare. Whether or not you are

See **Woolsey**, page 5A

### Time to clean the road



**Dear Commissioner Lamar Paris,**  
 My name is Carol Hancock and I live in Suches. I'm also a very disgruntled citizen of Union County. There was a bicyclist event over the weekend of Sept. 27 & Sept. 28 in which the bicyclist traveled up Highway 180. As you are aware 180 was repaved over the summer through our beautiful mountains and they did a wonderful job. They finished in time for the tourists we expect to come up and enjoy the beautiful fall foliage. My complaint is the event that went on over the weekend with the bicyclist did not turn out well. They do not respect the beauty of the mountains that we as citizens are so proud of. They took white spray paint and defaced our new paved roads (see photos attached). I feel someone in Union County knows who sponsored this event as a Sheriff's patrol car was stationed at the bottom of the mountain at Vogel State Park at the time the event was going on. The citizens' tax money went towards paving the roads and we feel the organizers should be held responsible for the expense covering up the graffiti. I have spoken to several people in our community and they feel the same. It looks like graffiti you would see in a Detroit subway and felt it should be brought to your attention. I want to thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this matter and look forward in hearing from you as how this issue will be handled. Sincerely yours, **Carol Hancock**

### Responsible journalism?

**Dear Editor,**  
 It's an election year. Two political parties are running. You wouldn't know that by reading the *North Georgia News*. Right in the middle of the front page of this week's edition are two very long articles with colored pictures of the Republican event held last week in Union County. And they were written by the editor of the paper, Charles Duncan. What's wrong with that? The event did take place in Blairsville and that could be considered news. But back in June, when Michelle Nunn, Democratic

See **McCarthy**, page 5A

### The Shoe Is Now On The Other Foot

As a parent is there anything you worry more about than your kids? This has really come home to me over the past few years. When I was a boy I loved to go barefoot even in the winter time and I never wore shoes in the house. As a result I was constantly coming down with a cold. Therefore, my Dad forbade me from going barefoot during winter, even in the house. Late one night I woke up to a feeling of urgency. I jumped from the bed and looked for my shoes. The only ones I found were my brand new and heavy Sunday dress shoes. I put them on and walked down the hardwood floor to the only bathroom in the house. My parents' bedroom was just down the hall and the sound of my walking awoke my mother so she woke up my Dad and told him we had an intruder in the house. Dad couldn't find his shotgun so he grabbed his 3 iron and walked down the hall. He noticed the bathroom light on and kicked in the door and there I sat. I explained to Dad, "You told me not to go barefoot in the house and these were the only shoes I could find." When my oldest son was born I would get up 3-4 times a night to check on him. On one such night I turned to check on him as I was going to bed. I had turned off the lights and the house was very dark. I went to Will's bed and bent over his little body. I still could not see anything so, I bent over further. I guess I got too close to his face and much to my surprise I was punched directly in my left eye by Will's 2-year-old fist. My wife and I took went shopping when Will was 3 years old. I explained to Will that he should stay close and that he should not talk to strangers. I remember looking away for just an instant and Will was gone. I could not see him anywhere. I was really beginning to worry and I called his name. I could faintly hear Will's voice answering me. I walked closer to the sound and realized he had locked himself in the dressing room. Later I asked him why he had gone into the dressing room and he said he just wanted to see what was on the other side of the door. My youngest son, Wade, came along and I noticed that he was the inquisitive one. He was always asking questions. One morning I was awakened at 3 a.m. by someone shaking my face. I thought something was wrong and jumped from the bed trying to figure out what to do. I came to myself by looking into Wade's eyes. He grinned at me and asked, "Dad, why are green beans green?" I took a deep breath and thought to myself, "I'm a County Agent. I can answer this question." So, I carefully explained the process of photosynthesis to my 5-year-old

#### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



See **Cummings**, page 5A

## Take 5 with Dr. Mark Causey

This week's Take 5 is with Dr. Mark Causey, owner of Causey Orthodontics. Dr. Causey has expanded his practice to Blairsville while still operating locations in both Cumming and Flowery Branch. He has quickly become an enthusiastic supporter of our local community and is a proud member of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce. Here are Dr. Causey's responses to this week's Take 5 questions.

#### Blairsville-Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



1. What is your job title and what do you do at your company?  
 I am an orthodontist and own Causey Orthodontics here in Blairsville. I specialize in correcting the alignment and bite of children and adults.
2. Tell us your favorite aspect of your position?  
 I am very blessed to be able to meet and get to know new people every day. I love interacting and learning more about our patients and their families.
3. Tell us a little bit about your background.  
 I was born at Union General Hospital in 1981. Our family later moved to Gainesville, where I graduated from East Hall High School. I attended Duke University and played basketball for Coach K. I later transferred to University of

See **Williams**, page 5A

## Sorghum - It's More Than a Molasses

Most folks I know who relocated to this region from the north, or from Florida, had never heard of sorghum before they arrived here. In the US, sorghum is only grown (measurably) in 14 states, most in the south, southwest and lower Midwest. Comparably, corn, sorghum's "kissin' cousin," is harvested in every state of the Union with the exception of Alaska and Hawaii. When I think of corn products we consume conspicuously in this country, from corn I think of canned/frozen corn, corn chips (38,000 Mexican Restaurants in the USA) and popcorn (39,660 Movie Screens). Then my mind goes to other by-products using corn, such as ethanol and livestock fodder. Ignorantly, I don't think of corn syrup as being high on the list of consumable products. After all, I only use corn syrup when I make that pecan pie on Thanksgiving Day. Yet, fructose is corn syrup. And the average American consumed approximately 27.1 pounds of high fructose corn syrup in 2012. Really? Nearly 30 pounds of corn syrup, which helps to explain why each year, roughly 1.9 million Americans age 20 and older are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. Another 79 million Americans, age 20 or older, have what is called pre-diabetes, and are at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes in their lifetime. I think it's safe to say the average American doesn't consume a tablespoon of sorghum syrup annually. So why is sorghum even a crop in this country? Like corn, there are so many more by-products to sorghum. In the U.S. since the 1950s, sorghum has been raised primarily for forage and silage, with sorghum cultivation for cattle feed. Grain sorghum has also been utilized by the ethanol industry for quite some time because it yields approximately the same amount of ethanol per bushel as corn. In India, and other places, sweet sorghum stalks are used for producing bio-fuel by squeezing the juice and then fermenting into ethanol. Sorghum is higher in protein and lower

#### Farmers Market Moment

JoAnne Leone



See **Leone**, page 5A