

Paris...continued from Page 4A**county to build and operate?**

A. It could have been if not for the cooperation of Advanced Disposal, our garbage contractor. We have worked out an agreement with Advanced Disposal where they will put up \$15,000 for site improvements to the county and we will be responsible for the concrete and utility installation. Once completed, Advanced Disposal will pay 100 of the cost of providing a full-time employee to man the site and keep it neat and clean.

Q. What can we take to the new Convenience Center site?

A. It will be for household bagged garbage and recyclables only. There will be no commercial garbage. For those West and Northwest of Blairsville, this will prevent having to go sit in line at the current transfer station. They are called convenience centers and that is exactly what they are. They are neat, clean, do not smell and will not provide an eyesore for the public. This will remove a significant amount of traffic from Deep South Farm Road. We are also looking at a couple of other options next year that could improve the situation in the county further.

Q. Will we have other projects in 2015 other than improvement to the transfer station?

A. Certainly we will. We will continue to be sure that our emergency and public services are top quality and that when you need them, you will have the best trained and equipped assistance whether it is an ambulance service, deputy, firemen, road department or any type emergency service, because that is the most

important for your safety. In addition, we will be adding a small water park and slide to the Meeks Park Pool, we will complete the kayak/canoe launching ramp and walking trail extension and completion of the Tate Mill reconstruction at Meeks Park. We have the plans nearly complete on an amphitheater for the park but anticipate that may have to wait just a little later, maybe 2016.

Q. Are all of these improvements for 2015 to be paid for with SPLOST sales taxes?

A. Most of the projects above are being funded by SPLOST.

Q. Since we have such a good road system in our county, will you be doing any further work on the roads this year?

A. We always have roadwork to do. You cannot let up even a little bit in keeping our roads graded, patched or resurfaced. We have over 600 miles of county roads to maintain. We are also working with GDOT in making improvements to U.S. 76 (Georgia 515) east toward Young Harris. This project should begin purchasing right of way by early 2016 with construction possibly 2017 and completed by 2019. All GDOT roads take lots of years to plan and construct.

Q. How do you pay for roadwork in Union County?

A. It is about evenly split between SPLOST sales tax revenue and the county budget at about \$1 million each. Other than the Sheriff's Office operation and jail, this is by far our most expensive part of keeping our county government operating.

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for special events and Heritage Festival. Courthouse volunteers are only needed for 3 hours, (morning or afternoon) longer if they wish. They answer phones, greet people, and give courthouse historical information. Please contact us at (706) 745-5493 for information; Mon - Fri - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

If you would like to feel a sense of happiness and accomplishment at the end of every day, then think about volunteering as an Auxiliary Member at Union General Hospital and/or Nursing Home. Our duties are varied, but they all give to people in a unique way. Drop by the Information Desk at the hospital 9-4 p.m. or call President, Susan Hahn (706) 379-9600 or Membership, Rosiland Todd (706) 897-3455 for information and applications.

Habitat for Humanity needs volunteers to continue to make the dream of home ownership a reality. Help is needed in our office, home construction, family selection, family support, and Re-store areas. The work is very rewarding and we will train you. Make a difference and call to help today - (706) 379-2484.

The Byron Herbert Reece Society seeks persons willing to give some of their time to serve as volunteers at the Reece Farm and Heritage Center, as members of our standing committees, assistants with mailings and publicity, special need: website design and management. Contact us at reecesociety@gmail.com or (706) 379-3219.

Join Friends of Union County Library and support the best library around! If you love to read and you want to promote reading to county residents of all ages and you want

to make sure there are enough reading materials for all kinds of readers - we have the organization for you. Applications are available at the library and there is an application on our website (www.foucl.org) that can be printed out.

The Union County Nursing Home has a dedicated and wonderful staff to take care of the physical, medical and emotional needs of the 150 residents who live there. But without the tireless effort of many volunteers this work would be much harder. If you have compassion for senior citizens and a heart for volunteering, we would love to hear from you. Apply by calling the Activity Department at (706) 745-4948.

In March of 1966, 33 local residents formed the Union County Lions Club. They did this not to change the world, but to change the world of local neighbors who could not help themselves, by giving the gift of sight. Your Lions have openings for good men and women who would like to change the world for some of their neighbors. We invite you to join us at one of our meetings to learn more about the good work the Lions do. We meet at Steve's Cookie Jar Restaurant every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 6 p.m. We look forward to seeing you there.

Part-time help needed! Kiwanis offers a meaningful opportunity to serve children in our community and around the world. No experience necessary. Full training provided. Perfect for retirees, homemakers, community-minded volunteers with involvement locally, social interaction and service. Kiwanis meets on Monday at noon at Steve's Steakhouse in Blairsville.

Weaver... continued from Page 4A

I don't know, but when I have an opportunity, I take it, so here goes.

Have you been to Vietnam? If so, I have something I want to say to you: "Thank you for going! Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Please forgive me for my insensitivity. I don't know how I could have been so blind, but I was.

When I woke up, you were wounded and the damage was done, and I don't know how to fix it.

I will never stop regretting my actions, and I will never let it happen again.

Please understand that I am speaking for the general public also. We know we blew it and we don't know how to make it up to you.

We wish we had been there for you when you came home from Vietnam because you were a hero and you deserved better.

Inside of you there is a pain that will never completely go away and you know what?

It's inside of us, too; because when we let you down,

we hurt ourselves, too. We all know it and we suffer guilt and we don't know what to do so we cheer for our troops and write letters to "any soldier" and we hang out the yellow ribbons and fly the flag and we love America.

We love you too, even if it doesn't feel like it to you. I know in my heart that, when we cheer wildly for our troops, part of the reason is trying to make up for Vietnam.

And while it may work for us, it does nothing for you. We failed you. You didn't fail us, but we failed you and we lost our only chance to be grateful to you at the time when you needed and deserved it.

We have disgraced ourselves and brought shame to our country. We did it and we need your forgiveness.

Please say you will forgive us and please take your rightful place as heroes of our country.

We have learned a terribly painful lesson at your expense and we don't know how to fix it.

From the heart, Julie Weaver

Parris ... continued from Page 4A

"Fear not: For behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto to you is born this day in the city of David a savior which is Christ the

Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

May God bless you and your family this Christmas season and grant you a Happy New Year! My love and prayers are with you. Selah.

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

said, "You best take care of that girl, son."

Mom and Dad went to Tupelo, MI to marry. After the wedding my folks made the 40 mile drive back from Mississippi. They dropped my mother's folks at home and drove another 5 miles to the Cummings home in Trapptown.

You can imagine the feeling in the home that evening. My grandmother was mad because her son had slipped off to get married. My mother was scared stiff. She said you could cut the tension with a knife. As the evening passed on everyone settled into a new routine. The family all went to bed early because the next day was to be spent hoeing and cultivating cotton. Can you imagine spending your honeymoon hoeing out the cotton crop?

In those days no one locked their doors in this area.

Williams ...**continued from Page 4A**

incredible for a community of our size and speaks to the valuable partnerships that we have cultivated with our members.

Yvette Hansen joined our team as Office Administrator and has done a tremendous job of keeping our membership and community informed of Chamber and community events, while Debra Edwards did an amazing job running the friendliest and most beautiful Welcome Center in the State of Georgia.

Our organization has also continued evolving to meet the demands of a growing, changing business environment. We have put a greater focus on promoting buy local programs that are so important to our local businesses. We have offered many social media classes to help our businesses understand the value and importance of connecting with customers through various platforms. We also provided leadership growth opportunities for our businesses owners and are already seeing those efforts reap rewards through remarkable community service projects and volunteerism on behalf of the participants.

In 2014 our Chamber was proud to unveil the second edition of the North Georgia Farm Trail agritourism guide. Many owners of businesses along the trail have reported increased visitation and sales directly from this four county guide.

Finally, I was personally honored to accept the designation of Certified Chamber Executive from the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. I accepted the honor on behalf of a hard working staff, dedicated Board of Directors, and engaged membership.

Indeed, we have so many reasons to be proud of our outstanding organization. Even without room to list them all here, we have more than enough to justify enormous optimism as we move forward. Our Chamber, and all of you who are part of it, will continue to make Blairsville-Union County proud in 2015. We will maintain our momentum and actively work to shape our own future as one of the best Chambers of Commerce in the state. We will continue to make a positive impact on our community and members through tourism and economic development.

This is a great Chamber. Thanks for being part of it, and thanks so much for helping to make the past year so memorable. I invite you to join me in anticipating what we will accomplish together in the year to come.

Combs...**continued from Page 4A**

this article with all of your heart and make your choice worthy of God's love and grace, For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Do you know Him today?
Frank F. Combs, Blairsville

Bell Ringing Union
County Old Courthouse



January 2nd
in memory of
Virginia B. Meeks Birthday
by Ginger & Terry Meeks

Bell ringing information
at 706-745-5493