

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Spelling Bee an important sport

Thirty-six students from Union County and Woody Gap School gathered last week at the Union County Board of Education. Their quest: becoming the champion speller and representing Union County in the District Spelling Bee in Marietta.

It was an event to behold as additional seating was required to allow parents to be able to attend the event. Still, it was standing room only.

Several rounds were required to get to the final two participants, sixth-grader Emi Leonard and seventh-grader Tommy Orchanian, both of Union County Middle School.

It was amazing to see just how many great spellers there are in our school system. Also, it was amazing to see the large turnout of family and friends who were anxious to see their spellers in action.

Though it was only a small sample of the talented students that are in our school system, it was a glimpse at the future. These young students soon will make us proud at our high school.

Emi will represent Union County at the District Bee in Marietta on Feb. 28. Tommy will serve as the alternate.

In a day and age when 'lol' and 'omg' are all the rage thanks to texting on the cell phone, it's refreshing to witness our young students prove that they actually can spell words in the English language.

The Spelling Bee is as competitive as any sport. It requires the use of different muscles, particularly the brain. And it requires the same amount of hard work as training for any athletic event.

Congratulations to Union County fourth graders Alyssa Byers, Isaiah Ortiz, Brenna Thornley, Eli Underwood, Eloise Whisenhunt, and Sydney Wynn; fifth graders Lilly Burnette, Landon Clark, Leah Libert, Riley, Lowry, Austin Taylor, and Hunter White; sixth graders Reid Baumeister, Will Blalock, Tina Bowman, Caldie Fortenberry, Brittany Lloyd, and Emi Leonard; seventh graders Jame Farris, Adam Gillispie, Kevin Miller, Chandler Mullis, Tommy Orchanian, Luke Prather, and Joseph Farris; eighth graders Milo Bauman, Lily Butler, Carson Chambers, Hunter Kelley, Bayley Patton, and Britt Waller; Woody Gap students Molli Tritt, Ivre Cantrell, Caleb Brown, Kelli Tritt, and Chayil Aponte. We're so proud of all of you.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



A Love Story

I stepped from the evening cold into a room warmed by the stove in the corner, and by the welcome of a pastor for over 50 years. I sought writing insights from Danny Parris, who has yielded this column space, at least for now. As we sat by his wall of well-used books, I listened to his heart for people as he shared his story.

I finally asked about the subject at hand, love and marriage. "Well, marriage is of God, instituted before the church," he started. I injected, "Tell me about you and Regina?"

"I asked God to give me someone to love, and to be loved by." Danny doubts the notion of 'falling in love,' but believes that God chose Regina for him. Perhaps evidence for that was their first outing together, a double date when he thought he was paired with the other girl! But it was Regina that sat next to him in the car, and the rest is history.

"Well, marriage is about leaving, cleaving, and weaving." What a wordsmith! Actually that comes from Scripture: "A man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." Stories from his life unpack that idea.

The young Parris family left parents, church, and Fannin County in a U-Haul and VW after church one Sunday night, moving to New Orleans. Leaving means starting a new life together, finding your own way.

"Everything we have done, we have done together." Cleaving is having Regina as his partner in life and ministry, so she is always close by. In a service, they usually sit together until sermon time. A friend dubbed their pew 'the love seat!' Stepping into the pulpit, he will "look for God, then Regina" before he starts.

Sometimes hardship weaves lives into one. It was hard to hear of his nearly tragic crash in a '52 Ford with his expectant wife and son. But through it, God firmly called them

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Questions and Answers

Animal Control Ordinance, continued

Q. What are the requirements regarding vaccinations for pets under the Animal Control Ordinance?

A. Any dog, cat or ferret, which is more than three months of age, must have a valid and current rabies vaccination which must be administered by a licensed veterinarian. The burden is on the owner to provide verifiable proof of vaccination to animal control officers.

Q. What is the penalty for not having your pet vaccinated?

A. An animal owner who is found in violation of this section regarding vaccinations will be required to comply within seven days, or the animal control officer is authorized to impound the animal and have the animal vaccinated. Any animal impounded under this section will not be released to the owner unless and until all of the requirements of this ordinance are met.

Q. I can't afford to have my pet vaccinated. What can I do?

A. For discounted spay/neuter you can call Logan's Run Rescue at 828-837-4944 or North Georgia SPCA at 706-745-7722. In certain cases partial scholarships may be available at a vet's office based on income and need. The most important thing is to have your pet fixed! In the long run it will save you money and possible aggravation.

Q. My neighbor keeps his dog on a chain in the yard all the time. Isn't this illegal?

A. Tethering a dog is not illegal; however, it is the policy of animal control that tethering or chaining a dog as a permanent means of confinement is an unsafe, unwise, and dangerous practice. In the event an owner uses a tether or chain to confine a dog, it should be of sufficient construction as to not constitute abuse or a danger to the dog and should allow the dog sufficient freedom to safely perform its necessary activities and functions in the judgment of animal control. Improper, inhumane, and unsafe tethering and chaining is considered animal cruelty.

Q. What can be done about barking dogs?

A. In the latest revision of the animal control ordinance,

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor ...

The Vietnam Veteran

Dear Editor,

After watching a recent presentation concerning "The Moving Wall" (a tribute to Vietnam Veterans), it has occurred to me once again how little the public understands the vet from this era. It goes without saying that this was a very unpopular war and that those who served during this time period were treated with a disrespect unheard of in wars previous or since. This in itself is a tragedy. The real tragedy goes even beyond the 58,299 names of the men and women listed on the above mentioned wall known to have been killed or missing during this conflict.

The greater tragedy is the thousands and thousands more of our men and women who served in the country of Vietnam and are now suffering and dying at an alarming rate due to the effects of a chemical defoliant (agent orange) that was sprayed on a daily basis. The VA now admits to some 20 diseases, such as a number of cancers, Parkinson's, heart diseases, etc., that are attributed to this chemical. And to make the nightmare even worse, it is now known the effects of this chemical can be multi-generational.

See Norwood, page 5A

Thanks GDOT

Dear Editor,

Thanks to the DOT for always doing a good job keeping road sides neat and clean and roads smooth. They have state of the art equipment and are hard workers. You are much appreciated.

Cindy Mae Tidwell

Keep government out of the church

Dear Editor,

In response to Charles Cheves' letter to the Editor, *North Georgia News*, Jan. 28th.

Dear Charles Cheves, when you have an opinion about a topic it call be worth hearing, but to abuse others and call them names because it doesn't go along with your views, is simply immature and childish. In your letter to the Editor, Jan. 28th, I was surprised to see you make the statement that you are a proud, progressive liberal cur. I commend you for owning up to the fact. Good show! That you demand Christians to keep their religious beliefs out of the government of our country should work both ways! I ask that the government keep their beliefs out of the churches that call themselves "Christians!" It really should be a two way street. You cannot have it all your way. In

See Holsapple, page 5A

Remember Misty Mountain

Dear Editor,

One year ago this ninth day of February, my dear friend and model railroad buddy Charles Griffin died. It is only fitting that Charles and his Misty Mountain model railroad be remembered, for he and the railroad were so important to Union County. His railroad gave so much happiness and enjoyment to the thousands from far and wide that visited. Everybody, especially the children, were filled with excitement, joy, and nostalgia after viewing the display.

It was the largest and finest model railroad layout, for hobby, in a home, not in a mall or part of a large club, in the country. It took seven years to build, and was operated by Charles for nearly fifteen years. And, all the admission money charged, all of it, went to the local Historical Society, the Humane Society, and numerous other charities. Charles was a true southern gentleman, filled with love and generosity for his fellow citizen.

Fortunately, his daughter-in-law, Pia Kluth, inherited the Misty Mountain RR, and she is keeping open and running the railroad in

See Steed, page 5A



"Don't worry...it's revenue neutral."

To all the cop bashers out there...

Dear Editor,

Today, I stopped caring about my fellow man. I stopped caring about my community, my neighbors, and those I serve. I stopped caring today because a once noble profession has become despised, hated, distrusted, and mostly unwanted.

I stopped caring today because parents refuse to teach their kids right from wrong and blame us when they are caught breaking the law. I stopped caring today because parents tell their little kids to be good or "the police will take you away" embedding a fear from year one. Moms hate us in their schools because we frighten them and remind them of the evil that lurks in the world.

They would rather we stay unseen, but close by if needed, but readily available to "fix their kid." I stopped caring today because we work to keep our streets safe from mayhem in the form of reckless, drunk, high, or speeding drivers, only to be hated for it, yet hated even

See Allen, page 5A

God loves you

Dear Editor,

A lot of folks believe in their own ability to achieve or accomplish their own goals, their own dreams, their own visions, even their own destiny. The world is full of people who try to squeeze everything out of life no matter the cost, whether it be using other folks for their own personal gain or getting even for a hurt someone has afflicted on them. The world we live in has not changed a whole lot in over 2500 years. People are still trying to be king of the hill, doing their own thing no matter who it hurts, even their own family members. When God created this world He said it was good, it was in perfect form, no sin existed. Purity reigned. Peace prevailed. All was right with the world, but then God gave Adam and Eve freedom to choose right from wrong, to make their own decisions in life and thus sin raised its ugly head in the presence of Satan, a fallen angel from heaven and ever since the fall of mankind in the Garden Of Eden life has never been the same.

God has made a way of escape from this old sinful world into a perfect place called Heaven where life will once again be pure and holy and peace will reign forevermore, if we have accepted Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior and Lord. We all have goals, dreams and visions of what life should be like or how we thought it should have been, but ultimately all of mankind has a destiny to meet. A destiny that will change your life for the good or bad. We all make bad choices at times. None of us are perfect. We all have imperfection in our makeup, but the good news is God still loves you and wants only the best for you, so strive to seek God's righteousness and just believe on His Name and leave the rest to Him. Amen

Frank F. Combs

Aunt Bess

Aunt Bess was the eldest sister of my grandmother, Glenna Cummings. Aunt Bess and her husband lived across the road from her grandfather, Papa Franks. Aunt Bess was a kindly old lady that loved kids. But, she was as tough as a pine knot when the situation presented itself.

Aunt Bess had an only son that was about to graduate high school and head to college.

However, an Army recruiter came along and was trying to convince the young man to join the army instead of going to college. This really upset Aunt Bess and she was really worried about the situation. One particular afternoon the Army recruiter came by to see Aunt Bess's son. The recruiter and the young man were in the front room talking while Aunt Bess was on the back porch doing the laundry. While she was doing the laundry she was fretting about her son joining the Army. She was beginning to get really angry when she heard shouting at the front door.

Aunt Bess ran through the house to find Nancy Franks, her grandmother standing at the front door. Nancy said, "Bess, come quick. A hog has stolen Papa Franks' teeth." Everyone including the Army recruiter ran across the road to the Franks place. Picture this scenario. Papa Franks had been feeding his hog when he got a case of the hiccups. The hiccups caused Papa Franks to spit out his false teeth into the hog trough as the hogs were eating. One of the hogs got the false teeth stuck in its mouth. Papa Franks was trying to catch the hog to get back his teeth. During the commotion the hog got out of the lot.

Aunt Bess and the rest of the folks ran to the back of the house just in time to find a hog running up the hill toward her and the rest of the crowd. Grandma Franks said, "I was scared to death, but, had to laugh. This hog was mad because everyone was chasing him. But, he was smiling at us." That hog had Papa's teeth stuck in its mouth and it looked as if the hog were smiling. When the 200-pound hog got close to Aunt Bess she dove and tackled it. She took the teeth out of the mouth of the hog and walked to the spring to rinse off the teeth. Afterward she presented the teeth back to Papa Franks and he promptly put them back in his mouth.

After worrying about her son's schooling and then the hog, Aunt Bess was almost spent. But, she still had enough energy to deal with the recruiter. She looked into the officer's eyes and told him, "My son ain't going into the army until he finishes college. Do you understand?" The recruiter said, "Yes ma'am, whatever you say is all right with me." Aunt Bess's son, Alton, graduated from Auburn University in 1956 with a BS Degree.

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Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Calling All Start Up Businesses

Are you considering starting your own business or have you recently opened the doors to your first business venture? If so, this article is for you! The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce the upcoming launch of our OnDeck Series.

Designed specifically for entrepreneurs in early to mid-stage business, the OnDeck Series will provide you with the resources to evaluate and implement your business vision by creating a thorough, well planned business strategy.

Created and hosted by trained professionals at The Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the OnDeck Series includes tools, resources and materials to help you start and grow your business venture. Participants will learn to evaluate and refine business concepts with current marketing strategy, research and competitive analysis tools, develop a financial forecast and develop best practices for managing your business. In addition, the SBDC business consultants are available with free one-on-one coaching during the series and for the life of your business.

This series is being generously sponsored by ROI Institute, Inc., a Blairsville based consulting firm that travels the world implementing

See Williams, page 6A

Boogie Woogie Salads

This time of year I often write about trying new soup recipes. And many of you are so kind to stop me in the grocery store or at the Farmers Market, even the gym, to tell me how much you enjoy these soups. For most of us, we serve winter soup as an entrée, but we like to have something with it, besides crackers or a chunk of bread. I always choose salad as the perfect accompaniment to a winter bowl of potage. I never tire of a plate of amazing goodness tossed together. That's my Italian recipe. Every dinner comes with salad.

One of the issues we have with eating salads in winter is that they become monotonous. It's the romaine lettuce, cucumber, cherry tomato with some bacon bits and cheese syndrome. We put 4 different bottled dressings on the table to help change the droning experience. Yet, fresh winter vegetables and fruit (yes fruit!) give us an easy opportunity to transform this sideshow.

For generations in the South, greens have been a vegetable staple, cooked to a soggy, yet tasty dish. Times have changed. Fresh Mustard Greens and Kale, in raw form, have become trendy as salad ingredients. Today you can find bags of baby Kale and Mustards in the "lettuce" section of most supermarkets, already cleaned and torn, ready to toss. They are two of my favorites, and are as different "fresh in a salad" as a fresh spinach salad is to canned spinach.

Let's make it a winter salad by adding a winter fruit, the orange, as an accompaniment. Here's what you need to make a four to six serving salad. 1/2 bag or 3 cups of baby Greens; 1/2 bag or 3 cups of baby or tender Mustard Greens; a handful of radishes, thinly sliced; 1/3 cup of raw almonds, slivered or sliced (you can buy small bags in the baking section of the store), two oranges, cut into membrane free sections. For the dressing you'll need the juice from a half of lemon and a half of orange (or use an 1/8 of a cup of bottled lemon juice and 1/4 cup of orange juice); 1/2 cup of extra virgin olive oil; salt and pepper to taste.

After you section your oranges, set them

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