

## Paris... continued from Page 4A

bility of great opportunities for the future of Downtown Blairsville.

### Q. Personal comment about Sorghum Festival Group.

A. We have already had some negative comments regarding the tearing down of the old fort and how it is a historic structure. All these things were considered before this process began. The county could no longer justify maintenance on a facility that has not served a purpose for the past 10 years. We also had to consider that the Sorghum Festival Group does not have the time or manpower to maintain a facility that they are no longer using. This outstanding group of ladies and gentlemen have dedicated years of their lives to the festi-

val. The festival is always two complete weekends in one of the prettiest times of the year, and they work almost 24/7 carrying on the long tradition of the Sorghum Festival. They grow, harvest, dry, chop heads of the sorghum, rent out all the booths, make the Sorghum and provide an amazing two weekends for one of the largest tourist seasons and events in the mountain area. They also have the annual Square Dance both Saturday nights during the Sorghum Festival. While the rest of us have the opportunity to ride in the mountains and enjoy the great weather and fall leaves, they are spending time away from their family helping sustain this historic event that has been held in Union County for more than 49 years.

## Cummings... continued from Page 4A

instead of being in 1/4 time the song was played in 3/4 time or maybe even faster. The whole situation is now a legend at Union Hill Church. Some even think it is not true. But, I was there.

An even earlier memory happened when I was 2 1/2. It was March in 1960 and we were visiting from up north. Actually, Mom and I had come home so my sister could be born. Mom knew the doctor in Haleyville well and wanted to use him for her birth. We were sitting in Sunday morning service and the preacher walked to the pulpit to begin his sermon. I was riled because I was not allowed to sit with Papa. As scripture began to be read I found my chance. I left the pew in a hurry and ran to the "Amen Corner" where he was sitting. I figured I was safe there with him. I tried my best to remain still and quiet. And I was for maybe a minute. I eased to the end of the pew and Papa looked

at me, so, I grabbed a hymnal and pretended to look at it. I made another break when he looked away. I dove under the pew and popped up in front and began playing hide and seek with the Deacons.

They were all laughing and I was having a good time until I noticed my mom. She was coming for me, so I made a dash for the preacher. Soon the whole audience in the church was laughing. I mean everyone even the preacher and I was the center of attention. Can you imagine what my mom was thinking and feeling. Remember, she was 8 1/2 months pregnant and chasing this little kid across the stage at our little country church. After another mad dash around the stage she grabbed my collar. I cannot remember what happened. All she'll say is that I never acted up in church again. And it was a long time before I was allowed to sit with Papa.

## Karnes ... continued from Page 5A

going into debt, the school system has been able to add classroom and lab space at both the middle school and high school facilities, upgrade HVAC, increase overall security systems, and add 10 new school buses. These are only a few of the benefits that ESPLOST has provided to our students and community.

The great thing about all of these improvements is that our students now have available to them is that everyone that visits or passes

through Union County and spends money here has helped pay for it all. For anyone that may be against this tax, please feel free to visit some of our neighboring counties who do not have the 1-penny tax. Visit their facilities, and check out their school buses. We are blessed here in Union County. Thank you for all who voted last time, and I ask you vote "YES" again on May 22nd. Sincerely, Jason Karnes

## Mattee... continued from Page 4A

a combination herbicide/insecticide. Mowing the weeds will also stress them, making them more susceptible to herbicide treatment.

For cool season grasses, which most of us have, September is the most important month for lawn care. What we do in the fall impacts the condition of our lawn in the spring, so it is always important to get a soil test done at least as soon as you see problems.

Union and Towns County Extension will be hosting production meetings over the next month. We have our North Georgia Vegetable Production Meeting on February 28th at the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and the Northeast Georgia Corn Production Meeting March 13th, from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the

Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. Pesticide credit will be available for license holders, and dinner provided at both of these events, but only to those who pre-register by calling Union County Extension at 706-439-6030 to reserve a plate.

## Harper...

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attendance. We are announcing our next tourism trip. It is scheduled for 9/2-9/9, 2018 and will be 2 days in Jackson Hole Wyoming, 1 day in Yellowstone National Park, 1 day in Sheridan Wyoming and 2 days in Rapid City South Dakota. For details on the trip call the Chamber office at 706 745-5789.

We continue our goal of helping small businesses in Union County continue to be successful and profitable.

## Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

ly battling. While the culture may have shifted, the lines of safety do not change. They are constant. Adolescent-type arguments of "it's not fair" must fall on deaf ears when it comes to workplace drug and alcohol policies that place safety first. Both the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. armed forces model of drug-free workplace programs have achieved significant improvements in safety and productivity.

We spend too much time arguing about whether this drug or that behavior is the gateway to further drug use, when at the core lies one truth: drugs and safety don't mix.

At the end of the day, we are in a time where substance abuse crosses all spectrums of

age, gender, race, occupation, and personality type. There are no more stereotypical drug users, there is a substance abuse problem in the United States, and it is a huge problem for the employer that allows gray space in its policies.

The most recent Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Index shows the greatest increase in use of all illicit drugs by U.S. employees in 12 years, based on laboratory drug test results. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, drug and alcohol-related deaths in the workplace soared in 2016 with a spike of more than 30 percent in a single year. The Bureau of Labor Statistics data also show that fatal work injuries in 2016 were the highest since 2008. These trends are not the way we want to go, and a work culture that enforces safety first is the path to reversal.

U.S. employers have the opportunity to not only hold the line, but also a responsibility to protect the vulnerable worker from accident or injury by those who may be under the influence at work. Drug testing policies are not meant to be punitive or "gotcha" campaigns, they are about ensuring safety because people matter. In protecting employees, customers or the general public, safety must be a highest priority.

## Fowler...

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identify with Christ. Millions stepped into that aisle to begin their walk with Jesus.

The world is a better place because of Rev. Graham, but his only boast is in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:14). We grieve, but not "as do the rest who have no hope" (1 Thes. 4:13). He closed his autobiography talking about heaven. "I look forward to seeing Christ and bowing before Him in praise and gratitude for all He has done for us, and for using me on this earth by His grace - just as I am." Goodbye, Billy Graham. We will see you soon.

## Mitchell...

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if, upon entering through that door, AR-15 in hand, Cruz had come upon an armed, trained police officer whose duty it was to monitor access?

What if the officer, through the glass, had noticed Cruz approaching, rifle in hand?

If we, as a people, really cared about our children, the conversation would not be about this or that type of rifle. It would be about hardening a soft target.

At Douglas, that conversation would have - should have - been held thirty years ago. It wasn't. Now what? Never mind. Just sayin'.

George A. Mitchell

## Blanchard...

### continued from Page 4A

and arming school employee volunteers was not discussed.

But what if signage was placed that stated that our campus was not a gun-free campus and that armed personnel (our resource officers) were on duty at all times? Most campus shootings are conducted by sociopaths. Sociopaths tend to be keen thinkers so those who are focused on killing will, more than likely, look for a venue that is "gun-free". The least we can do is put up a deterrent.

Signage is cheap; children's lives are precious and price less!

Zeb Blanchard

## Deyton...

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We should be able to come up with minimal regulations regarding property maintenance that would be fair to all. I am totally sympathetic to the people who are unable to keep up their property for whatever reason and I am all for helping those people.

Instead of people complaining about all the litter, I would like to hear them talk of how clean our community is. Let's take pride in our beautiful county and our property.

Peggy Deyton

**Bell Ringing Union County Old Courthouse**



February 1, 2018  
**In memory of Emma Lena Kelsoe**  
date of death 2/1/2017  
by Dale, Sue, Mary and Jesse

February 13, 2018  
**In memory of John and Virginia B. Meeks**  
**Wedding Anniversary**  
by Ginger and Terry Meeks

February 14, 2018  
**In memory of Frank Shuler**  
by Betty Jane Shuler

**In memory of James "Jim" Collins**  
10/3/1945 - 1/12/2018  
by UC Historical Society

Bell ringing information  
at 706-745-5493

# UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Children's Story Time	<b>Every Monday:</b> Union County Library	11 am
Kiwanis Club	Steve's Steakhouse	Noon
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6 pm
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 pm
Tri State Bus. Women	<b>Every Tuesday:</b> Cabin Coffee	8 am
Tuesday Strippers	Mtn. Presbyterian Ch	9:30-2:30 pm
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm
Smoky Mtn. Melodies	United Methodist Ch	6:30 pm
Hi Country Harmonizers	Branan Lodge	6:30 pm
BINGO	<b>Every Wednesday:</b> Civic Center	7 pm
Masonic Luncheon	<b>Every Thursday:</b> Cooks Restaurant	11:30 am
Rotary Club	NGTC	Noon
Get Fit	First UMC	5:15 pm
Lockheed-Martin Ret.	<b>First Monday of each month:</b> Blairsville Restaurant	9 am
Volunteers/Handicap	First Baptist, H Bldg.	6 pm
CERT	St. Francis of Assisi	6:30 pm
Allegheny Masonic Lodge #114, Masonic Lodge	Masonic Lodge	6:30 pm
Brownie Scouts	<b>First Tuesday of each month:</b> United Methodist Ch	3-5 pm
Blairsville City Coun.	City Hall	6 pm
Amateur Radio Club	Branan Lodge	7 pm
Gaddistown Hmakers	Woody Gap	7 pm
Knights/Colum. #2563	place TBA	7:30 pm
Enotah Ch. #24 RAM	Masonic Temple	7:30 pm
Exercise class	<b>First Wednesday of each month:</b> Senior Citizens Center	10:30 am
Tri-Cty Wom. Lunch	Monet's Rest.	Noon
Better Breathers	UGH Classroom 2nd Fl.	1 pm
Quilts of Valor	<b>First Thursday of each month:</b> Coosa Methodist Ch	9:30 am-2:30 pm
MMQG	Mtn. Presbyterian Ch	10 am-3 pm
Awake America	City Hall	11:59 am
NAMI Fam. Support	New Hope Counseling	12-1:30 pm
Blairsville Sorghum Fest.	Fort Sorghum	6:30 pm
Open Road ORV	Civic Center	8 pm
"Nailed" Book Club	<b>First Friday of each month:</b> G-N-G Bakery	10:30 am
UG Hospital Aux	UC Nursing Home	Noon
Feel Good Friday	Wellness Center	7 pm