

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Kudos

The summer of 2015 has almost been a blur. As they say, "time flies when you're having fun." I take this time to give a few shout outs to some very deserving folks. I like to take the time to give kudos where kudos are due.

First, I'd like to say thank you to Alan Kay for taking the time to give the newspaper an interview regarding his adventure on *The History Channel's* ultimate survival series *Alone*.

Blairsville is swelled with pride over Alan's triumph on British Columbia's Vancouver Island.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



I can tell you that he is a down-to-earth individual and as happy as he can be to be from Blairsville as anyone I've ever met in my life.

Shifting gears, I'd like to encourage the community to come out to the Union County Farmers Market this weekend as the newest inductees to the Agricultural Hall of Fame are revealed.

I want to thank Mickey Cummings and the Union County Historical Society for all they do in regards to the Agricultural Hall of Fame. It is a fitting tribute that long-time farmers and local contributors to the agricultural industry truly appreciate.

I also want to congratulate Union County High School on its recent honor of the Bronze Award from *U.S. News & World Report*. It's yet another validation that we have one of the finest school systems anywhere. We have a class group of educators and administrators that truly are dedicated to getting the most out of the students that they teach.

Speaking of Union County High School, I give a loud shout out to the band members from 1971-1979, better known as the Culpepper Years. These loyalists are coming together at the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall on Saturday, Sept. 12 between the hours of 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. to remember the dedication of Larry and Marcie Culpepper, who turned the Panthers' Marching Band into an award-winning ensemble. Former band members are traveling here from as far away as Germany, Arkansas, Winston-Salem, N.C. and various other locations. Some are still here at home.

Also, on Sept. 6 at 2 p.m., be at Copperhead Lodge where Union County will greet the *9/11 Ride to Remember* as our community joins others to remember the lives lost in the Sept. 11, 2001 tragedy that touched our nation. We will never forget.

Sacred Work

I was there at the invitation of my Haitian friend, Manno. Far off the dirt road, down a well-trodden foot path, I sat with a little group under some coconut trees in a lean-to of palm fronds. I was in the country to help and to teach. But I was about to be schooled.

This Sunday school class was for illiterate people, so the lesson was simply the rote memorization of a Bible verse. Manno called a phrase and the class repeated. It worked for me as I still recall that Creole verse. The text exhorts the believer to work in order to have means to help the needy. It slowly occurred to me that this band of believers didn't see themselves as the recipient of anything from me; rather their work was to benefit the less fortunate, despite their own poverty. I was ashamed at my condescension.

God created us to be productive and creative, as we are made in his image. Work is a blessing to our families and others, and meets a need of our fellow man, even if indirectly. If you don't believe work is a blessing, ask the one who needs a job. The Christian is motivated by working as though it is for the Lord himself (Col 3:23). As we combine that with diligence, ingenuity, and anticipation, the blessing is passed along.

Since work is a blessing from God, it is our sacred vocation, even if it's not income-producing. If you consider what is wrong in the world around you, and how that intersects with your resources or interests, you have found your calling. God made people "to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). God placed you where you are for such a time as this. Os Guinness wrote, "Many followers of Jesus today have not begun to wrestle with the full dimensions of the truth of calling because they have not been stretched by the real challenges of today's world and by the momentousness of the present hour."

All who have been reconciled to Christ are given the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18). There is no distinction here between the clergy and laity, for all share this ministry. Your God-given work is to bring the love, hope, and mercy of Jesus into

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All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Questions and Answers

This week's questions were answered by the Georgia Department of Transportation regarding the widening of Highway 76 to a four lane between Blairsville and Young Harris. These questions came from some of the property owners. I appreciate very much GDOT answering these questions for them and for us.

Q. Are the surveys completed on the new Young Harris route and if so, could the property owners be given a copy of the survey plat or aerial photo map?

A. Property surveys will be completed by the end of summer 2015 and will be available to all residents at that time. Aerial photography is available, but dated circa 2007.

Q. Could a date be given for a preliminary estimate of when property Right of Way will be purchased and when construction of the highway might begin along with an estimated completion date?

A. Right of Way purchase is scheduled to begin in 2017, with construction scheduled to begin in 2020. The Right of Way acquisitions are expected to last 3 years while construction duration will be two years. (This would mean R/W purchases would begin in 2017 and take up to three years to complete, and construction of the highway/widening would be completed in 2022).

Q. Regarding the property Right of Way purchases, what is the general time line on this?

A. No specifics are yet available, only the 3-year window mentioned in Item 2 above.

Q. Will Georgia Department of Transportation make the property owners an offer before the property is appraised or after?

A. After the property is appraised and Right of Way is authorized, acquisition can begin.

Q. Will the homeowner and/or property owner be allowed to utilize a certified appraiser?

A. GDOT establishes valuation for each property. The property owner may utilize a certified appraiser as well but it is not necessary.

Q. Will offers include compensation for reasonable expenses of moving, rebuilding, or simply relocating plants and trees?

A. The valuation is explained in details during the meeting with the property owner.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



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Letters to the Editor ...

The Culpepper Years

Dear Editor,

Thank you so much for the article you had in the paper regarding The Culpepper Years Band Era.

I was a participant in the UCHS band from about the time Larry and Marcie arrived until the left in 1979. I remember starting out on the little black plastic flutes if you will, and our first concert playing on them in the old Junior High School lunchroom.

I remember when I got my clarinet, although I really, really wanted to play the flute, it was by choice of my mom to play clarinet because she loved Benny Goodman. LOL!

I remember quitting a few times only to get right back in and I am so glad I did too. I loved the trips, the competitions and the pa-

See Barnes, page 5A

Lamar is all we need

Dear Editor,

Great letter from Wm. Ronald Gibson. Dale Carnegie 101, "Do not hire more help than you need; the more people on the payroll, the less production per employee."

Lamar Paris is all the commissioner we need. Good job sir. You are so appreciated.

Cindy Mae Tidwell

Thank you Blairsville-Union County

Dear Editor,

In today's world, country and community we hear too often negative comments about people or situations others deem as newsworthy. I'd like to take the time to express my gratitude and give thanks to a number of local people, businesses, and out-reaches in Blairsville, GA that stepped up to the plate to "Pay it Forward" on Aug. 10, to me and a young struggling local couple. Through circumstances beyond our control we and they, with a newborn, became "homeless" - everyone's worst possible fear.

In a matter of four hours with skill, expertise, net-working and above all else "benevolence" shown on our behalf of the following - "Good Samaritans" who made it happen - to put a roof over our heads. The spotlight award for kindness goes out to these local earth angels - first kudos to Southern Bank and Trust; Monica Payne, Chastity Miller, Sabrina Dexton, April Ketchum, Suzy Jenkins and Josh Rudnek, under the tutelage of Southern Bank and Trust executives, they as their sign outside the bank says - "In God We Trust," put their faith-based belief system into action by finding us the apartment and being instrumental in networking with us to get the utilities/electricity on ASAP. All they did warms my heart and will never be forgotten.

Next, a complete stranger from Nashville, Tenn., left her work to drive us around in her car to see the apartment, lease it and bring a few items to it - to make it suitable to live in that night and baby safe. She will be remembered always for putting her life on hold to help us, a very special, special young woman indeed, thank you Rebecca Bria.

Next, cheers goes out to manager Toni Fu-

See Ravenhall, page 5A

Who is footing the bill?

Dear Editor,

Who is paying for the Policemen directing traffic at Chick-fil-A? I have noticed for the past two days, city policemen directing traffic at Chick-fil-A opening? Is the taxpayer or Chick-fil-A paying for this. If it's the taxpayer, I don't think that I should be paying for something that is benefiting the restaurant. While I welcome a new restaurant, they should have thought about the traffic pattern and the congestion it would create. If Chick-fil-A is paying for it, then good. My tax dollars are being used wisely.

A concerned citizen,
Mark Brown

On Immigration

Dear Editor,

Theodore Roosevelt said this: "In the first place, we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates - (to integrate somebody into a larger group, so that differences are minimized or eliminated, or become integrated in this way) - himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else; for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed or birthplace or origin. But, this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet, an American and nothing but an American. There can be no divided allegiance here. Any man who says he is American, but something else also, isn't an American at all.

We have no room but for one language here, and that is the English language... and we have room but for one sole loyalty, and that is loyalty to the American people."

These words were from Theodore Roosevelt. Do the immigrants of today respect us? Some do and are proud to be an American. Others don't. They come here because our government gives them free handouts. This should be hotly addressed in the next election.

Richard Paolillo

Make your vote count

Dear Editor,

Are we being represented by those we elected? Well, would you have voted in this economy for the largest tax increase in Georgia history? Would you go on vacation while babies were being slaughtered and their little parts sold? Would you allow illegal aliens to have Driver's Licenses which are virtually indistinguishable from those of American Citizens? Would you forget how you voted? Would you vote to allow GMO food to be sold without being so labeled? Would you have voted for John Boehner? Would you?

Sadly, too many of our elected representatives have. And we let them get away with it, unchallenged. They brazenly defy our wishes, and then boldly declare that they are conservatives who are certainly "better than the alternative". And they get re-elected, often unchallenged.

See Thibodeaux, page 5A

A quest for excellence

Dear Editor,

Big shout out for the Union County School System!

While reading about the High School award of a Bronze Medal by the *U.S. News & World Report* I felt a sense of pride for all the teachers and administrators of Union County and our students who made this award possible. I was thinking about how far we have progressed as a High School so soon after missing AYP, Annual Yearly Progress, the measure which was used at that time to grade schools. This was made possible by a

See Hughes, page 5A

The Brooks Girls

Exxie Brooks and her sister, Fayrene, were tall and refined. Each displayed a little more class than many of their peers in the area around Trapptown. Their father owned a little farm just down the road from Union Hill Methodist Church.

Exxie began dating a boy just down the road from their house. The boy's name was Clay. But, we all knew him as Pug. Pug was my grandfather's brother. Uncle Pug adored Exxie and soon the two were married. Pug wanted to give his bride everything she dreamt about and he soon realized that he could never provide for his wife the way he wanted on a farm in North Alabama. So, the young couple soon began making plans to move to the city of Chicago where Clay hoped to make his fortune.

Uncle Clay tried to convince his brother, Coon to make the move north with him. But, Papa wanted to stay on the farm. Soon Uncle Clay landed a job in an automobile plant as a machinist while Aunt Exxie found work in a Motorola plant. Clay and Exxie were making good money and their lifestyle showed it. Clay would periodically bring his family home for visits. He would always be driving a big Buick and Aunt Exxie would be dressed up and looking good on each visit.

One time Clay met my dad and his brother in the field. He blurted out to the boys that he was sorry they were so poor. Dad and his young brother ran to their mother with tears streaming down their face asking her about why they were poor. This event coupled with Aunt Exxie being dressed so well created a bit of friction within the family. Pug didn't mean anything by his statements or his driving a big car and certainly Aunt Exxie never wanted to cause problems with her sister-in-law. So, the slight resentment never reached a boiling point, but it lasted for years.

Later on my grandmother's doctor suggested that Papa should take Granny away from the family farm for a few years. He said, "The woman is working herself to death. She needs to get away for a few years." So, Coon Cummings and his young family soon found themselves living in Chicago and Uncle Clay helped them to find an apartment. Papa found a job on a loading dock in a warehouse. And Exxie helped my Granny find a job at the Motorola Plant. Granny fit well into her new position and soon she was promoted. Granny was now Exxie's boss. Everything was well in the Cummings house.

Later after I was born we went to visit Exxie and Clay. As little boys do I was prone to get into things. Each time I got into mischief Mom would scold me and Exxie would then scold my mother. Later Exxie called my mother into the washroom and said, "I asked him to stop, but he will not." Apparently, I found a box of washing powders

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Take 5 with Dave Goodspeed

This week's Take 5 is with David Goodspeed, AIA; Architect and Principal of Goodspeed Architects. David has 40-plus years of Architectural Design, Building Envelope and Practice Experience. That experience is quite diverse including contributions to the project leadership and design on some 20-plus hospitals; 30-plus K-12 Schools, including Performing Arts facilities; University facilities; Correctional Facilities; Airport Concourses, including Hartsfield International Terminal; and a myriad of residential projects from single family to high rise multifamily.

Here are his responses to my five questions:

1. What is the coolest thing about being an architect?

"Simple answer is realizing that I have had a part in some amazing design opportunities. I am always humbled by seeing my conceptual design coming to completion, with people using the facility as it was intended. I am blessed to have had the opportunity to contribute in the creation of the built environment, for the common good, and improving the quality of life."

2. What is the biggest project you've ever worked on?

"There are several large projects in my resume, several new and renovated healthcare facilities that reach an average of \$250 million. But the largest project I've worked on is easily the Harts-

See Williams, page 5A

Cracklin'

Definition of "Salute" - An act or gesture of honor, recognition and respect.

The Union County Farmers Market event this Saturday (Sept. 5) is our 6th Annual Salute to Our Farmers.

It will include an amazing Tractor Show with judging starting at 10 a.m. Tractors need to be there by 8 a.m. At 10:30 a.m. Mickey Cummings and Bud Akins will give tribute to this year's inductees into the Union County Agricultural Hall of Fame. At 11 a.m., everyone, young and old, will stand by and ohh and ahh as the old rusty putters line up with new shiny tractors for the big parade.

I'd walk down the three aisles of the Market and give everyone of our farmers a rose that day, if I thought it would touch their hearts. Truth is, most of them would prefer a good homemade piece of Cracklin' Bread, warm out of the oven, with a glass of cold milk to wash down four super strength Ibuprofen. They're experiencing a body full of aches and pains this time of the farming season.

I was forced to try a tiny bite of Cracklin' Bread on Tuesday. A gentleman had brought it, warm out of the oven, and was sharing it with the vendors at Tuesday's Market. I refused three times, because I don't eat grain or corn meal. I could tell his feelings were starting to be hurt, because a good Southern gentleman doesn't understand how one can turn down anything made with milled corn, even a "Yankee" gal, like me.

Paul Reeves, the woodcrafter hobbyist and the Market "instigator, extraordinaire," broke me off a piece of the bread the size of Manhattan Island, tempting me with it. I finally took a small corner of a piece, then nearly grabbed the whole aluminum wrapped parcel and ran to a corner to break my six-year fast. Goodness it was divine. I'm not going to bake it, though tempting as it may be, but I am going to share with you how you make it.

Total Time: 45 min, Prep: 15 min, Cook: 30 min, Yield: 6 servings, Level: Easy

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Farmers Market Moment

JorAnne Leone



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Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Lowell Nicholson
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Website: www.nganews.com

E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

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Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514