

# Wreaths...continued from Page 1A

to purchase 400 wreaths, though the actual number of wreaths to be placed by volunteers that day in Canton will be greater than 11,000.

"On National Wreaths Across America Day each December, volunteers place wreaths on individual veterans' graves in over 1,200 locations through the U.S., with ceremonies at sea, and at each of the national cemeteries on foreign soil," according to Knights literature.

Continues the literature: "The Knights of Columbus are dedicated to ensuring that every headstone at the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton is adorned with a live holiday wreath this year. The Knights of Columbus have successfully sponsored this drive locally for several years."

Bill Lyon and Dan Poirier, both of Assembly 2563, have been working closely to make sure that this year's wreath fund drive is a success.

"We're just doing our small part to make sure these veterans aren't forgotten," said

Lyon.

Along with its association with St. Francis of Assisi in Blairsville, Assembly 2563 is also affiliated with St. Anthony Catholic Church of Blue Ridge.

The Knights ask that anyone wanting to donate to cover the cost of one or more of the 400 wreaths for this year's Wreaths Across America Day mail the following information to P.O. Box 1448, Blue Ridge, GA 30513: name, address, phone number and email address.

Donation checks should be filled out to Knights of Columbus Assembly 2563 and mailed to the same Blue Ridge P.O. Box with the information requested.

The sponsorship of one wreath costs \$15, a family sponsorship of \$60 covers four wreaths, a small business sponsorship costs \$150 and covers 10 wreaths, while a corporate sponsorship will allow for the purchase of 100 wreaths for \$1,500.

"Individual wreaths are

\$15, but for each two wreaths purchased, the Knights will receive a third wreath without charge," according to the Knights.

For people wanting to pay by credit card, they can go to [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org) and select donate, then "Sponsor a wreath with a local fundraising group."

The webpage will redirect to the donation website, at which point donors should put in the Knights' group ID, which is GA0153, and follow the instructions from there.

Questions about the Wreaths Across America campaign can be directed to (770) 377-2377 or [miaga30512@gmail.com](mailto:miaga30512@gmail.com).

"Anyone wishing to help with laying wreaths is recommended to be at the Georgia National Cemetery early, as parking is at a premium," according to the Knights. "Wreath laying will start at 11 a.m. ... (on) Saturday, Dec. 16."

As of press time Monday, only 15 of 400 wreaths had been sponsored through the official Wreaths Across America donation website.

# Honaker...continued from Page 1A

Mortuary Activities.

In short, he served as a caretaker for all those who so valiantly and bravely laid down their lives for their country, for the American people and for the freedoms and liberties that every American citizen enjoys to this day.

Like many U.S. soldiers who either enlisted or was drafted during the 1960s, Honaker is a veteran of the Vietnam War, having served two tours in Vietnam as a Graves Registration Specialist, from 1966 - 1967 and from 1969 - 1970.

"I found myself responsible for caring for those who died serving our country," said Honaker. "I don't regret for one minute the service for my country, not one minute do I regret. Would I have liked to have not gone to Vietnam? Yes, it would have been nice. But I don't even regret that because I was able to serve my country and to serve those who fell on the battlefield and to serve their families who waited anxiously for their loved one to be returned to them."

Like many who served during the Vietnam War, like many of those who serve during wartimes and in warzones, the war did not leave Honaker when his tours in Vietnam ended. For many years following, both during his time in the military and after when he went on to serve as a Christian missionary and pastor, the past events he experienced in those jungles clung to him, though differently compared to most.

Honaker wanted his experience in the war to be accessible to his family and loved ones and to those years from now who might wonder what happened during those tumultuous times.

"In early 2000 I began thinking about putting some thoughts on paper about my two tours in Vietnam," said Honaker. "I wanted my children, my grandchildren and future generations to know what I did in Vietnam."

"When I was writing, I had no intention of publishing a book for the world to read. I didn't want to do it. But



Union County Lion Karen Clark introduced Honaker in the Oct. 26 meeting. Photo/Lily Avery

as I progressed, and others read what I was writing, they encouraged me that it was a story that needed to be told.

"So, in October of 2014 I wrote the book, 'The Dead Were Mine.' It details my two tours in Vietnam. It goes into a lot more detail about what I did and why I got into that."

Using diaries, notes and slideshows he kept during his time in the service, as well as case files and reports, Honaker's book joined the ranks of more than 400 titles that have been written about the Vietnam War and the struggles those soldiers faced both overseas and when they returned home, unwelcomed and still trying to sort through the pieces of their life during the war.

"I have received letters and comments from combat veterans and civilians who have thanked me for writing that book," said Honaker. "They said, 'I had no idea what happened to my buddy when I put him on that helicopter.' They had no idea what happened and for them to be able to read that book and be able to understand how well they were cared for and the degree that the United States government took to make sure

that everything was done for them, gave them peace."

Families need closure for their loved ones who never came home. Soldiers need closure for their comrades who fell during the rage and violence of war. And for a moment, no matter how brief, Honaker can provide solace to those who survived, letting them know that the person for whom they grieved was abundantly cared for after their passing.

"For those who have been in war, it is all still very real," said Honaker. "It doesn't go away. It's still emotional. It's still there. You never get over it."

## Parkinson's Support Group

Please note that the Blairsville, GA area Parkinson's Disease Support Group (PDSG) no longer meets at the Cabin Coffee Company, rather we meet at the First United Methodist Church of Union County (UMC), located at 938 Highway 515, Blairsville, GA. We meet the second Wednesday at 3 p.m. NOV17Z1CA

## Run Above the Clouds recognizes their sponsors

The scholarship program that is the reason for the Run Above the Clouds road races is funded by sponsorships from local businesses and individuals and some contributions of material and services which help offset operating costs. This year as in the past, most of the sponsors have been with us for some time and a few new folks have been added to the list. Response has been good and we feel confident that we will be able to maintain a level of scholarship offerings that we set when we recently expanded the offering from one to four years.

This year's premier sponsors included United Community Bank, Allstate Insurance (The Enota Group), Blue Ridge Mountain EMC, Alexander's Store, Knepper Heating and Air, and Troncalli Subaru.

Among the regular business sponsors we welcomed Akins & Davenport, PC; Cone & Associates, CPA;

Paradise Hills Resort and the Lance Law Firm in Blairsville and Chestatee Ford and Yahooola Creek Grill in Dahlonega. Regular sponsors returning included DMI Collision, Logan Turnpike Mill, Louise McTaggart, Realtor; Suches Dirt Daubers, Wet 'n' Wild Car Wash, Budget Propane, Milton Martin Toyota, Cabin Coffee, Ware Chevrolet, Union General Hospital, Jim's Smokin' Q, Southern Bank and Trust, Two Wheels of Suches, Mikes Seafood Market and Grill, Nelson Tractor Co.; Total Recovery Paint & Body, Jerry Henderson State Farm (Blairsville), Donna Minnich State Farm (Dahlonega), Byers Well Drilling, Southeast Spray Foam, and Southeast Geothermal.

Other business sponsorship came from Nationwide Insurance (Blairsville), Jones Insurance Agency, Joseph E. Bork, DDS; Sunset Builders, The Downtown Development Authority of Blairsville, The Lake Winfield Scott Cabin

Owners Assoc., the brotherhood breakfast group at Zion Baptist Church, Mountain Crossings, Mountain Property Ltd., and Park Sterling Bank.

Gifts of goods or services came from Stroud P. Stacy Esq., Suches.com, West Printing, North Georgia News, Cooper Creek Pottery, Coosa Creek Marketing Products, Brasstown Valley Resort, Wolf Mountain Vineyards, Big Peach Running, Odom Springs Vineyard, The Wine Shoppe, Candice Youngberg.

Individuals who supported us include Lamar Paris, Jim & Lexi Adkins, Blair and Pam Hyatt, Betsy Chamberlin, Wally and Diane Duffy, Stan and Pat Kunka, Jim Cain and Marc Puckett.

These are the people who make possible scholarships for Suches high school graduates and post-graduates and the Run Above the Clouds urge you to patronize the businesses and thank the individuals.

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