

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## A Panther Tribute

Union County Panther football was founded in 1957. At the time, only Roy Dyer had ever played football before that time-treasured date.

The Panthers shut out their first two opponents by a combined score of 51-0. They faced Cleveland in the season's third game. They won that one by a score of 18-13.

It wasn't until the season's fourth game that a Panther football team ever lost a game. It was a dreaded, heart-breaking loss to East Fannin.

The final score of that game was oh so close, 18-14. It started a losing streak as the Panthers were downed by Madison County the following week 35-13.

It was the last game the Panthers would lose in 1957, as they shut out their final opponents by a score of 70-0.

Jim McAfee, Max Helton, Roy Dyer and Charles Owenby became the first gridiron legends in Union County football history.

The other 22 Panthers on that 1957 team went on to legendary status in later years. And, the rest as they say is history.

The 1957 team is trying to leave a legacy behind. They hope to place a perpetual monument outside Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium. They also hope to put a life-size bronze sculpture of a panther outside the Union County Fieldhouse to honor the school's life-long mascot.

The monument would breakdown all you need to know about the Class of 1957 Panthers. The principal, legendary educator C.R. Collins, Head Coach Dave Hardin, Assistant Coach R. Neal Collins and the 1957 football team named by senior, junior, sophomore and freshmen classes.

It also pays tribute to the first Union County Quarterback Club members. The stone is dedicated to all past, present, and future UCHS athletes, coaches and supporters.

And, while we're asking for help, we also need a scoreboard - hint, hint Coca Cola, or, maybe Wal-Mart. The existing scoreboard usually is disabled by the end of the first quarter of each game. We definitely need a new scoreboard.

Here's where I come in, Union County High School's Mr. School Spirit of 1978. Rally the troops, make this happen.

I'm appealing to everyone who has ever been connected with the Panthers' football team and this incredible community. These things we mention are legacies from the community. They can't be paid for with taxpayer dollars.

And yes, I wouldn't ask you if I had not already made a contribution to this worthy cause. I made a contribution because I am a Panther, I bleed purple and gold, and I believe in the legacy of our athletic programs, especially the Panthers' football team.

Please help with these projects, our high school athletic teams depend on us for improvements that go beyond the taxpayer dime. To donate, contact the Class of 1957's Bill Parker, or Quarterback Club President, Gary Rogers.

As a young boy, I didn't get to attend the Panther football games. However, I couldn't wait for the *North Georgia News* to come out so I could read about the exploits of our Mighty Panthers.

I learned about Donald Dean, Jake Dyer, Phil Patton, Terry Rogers, Lamar Paris, Bill Jones, Robbie Turner, Lewis McAfee, Ronnie Byers and many, many more Panther greats.

What I would have given to go see them play in person when I was a boy. They were my heroes, still in high school, but, they were my heroes.

Today, the Panthers are still my heroes, regardless of what sport they play. I ask that they be your heroes too.

Let's remember the boys of 1957.

## Letters to the Editor ...

### Get informed

Dear Editor

I listened on C Span to Norm Ornstein from the American Enterprise Institute, a conservative group. He discussed his new book, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks* which is about Congress being such a dysfunctional mess. Surprisingly, he puts most of the blame on the GOP. The new Republican Party has turned radical! Representatives are sent to Washington to be problem solvers and America has some serious problems. However, the Republicans don't want to solve problems because it might make President Obama look good. They have become 100 percent obstructionists. They decided that no matter what Obama or the Democrats propose, even if its very good for the country, they will ALWAYS vote NO. So nothing gets done and the problems remain. Democrats have brought up many beneficial bills including important job creating bills, but they are either filibustered by Republicans in the Senate or when sent to the House of Representatives are not even brought up for debate.

The two parties have always been adversaries, but used to compromise and come up with solutions, but not any more. Republicans continue to vote against what's beneficial for most Americans. Mr. Ornstein said that its very important for Americans to know what's really going on in America.

Patricia McCarthy

### Still not news

Dear Editor, and Mr. Smith:

Once again, as I said in my letters of Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 and is also clearly stated in the letter from Emily Newton on Jan. 1, newspaper articles containing opinion are NOT news articles. The article in the Dec. 11 newspaper about the tea party movie night is mostly opinion, not merely an announcement of an event. Notice that in the Jan. 8 issue there were several brief articles announcing upcoming events, including meetings of both the Republican and Democratic parties. They were factual articles, noting the time and place of the events, and did not include the opinions of the group or the writer. Even if I agreed with Mr. Smith on the immigration issue, I would still know that opinion belongs on the editorial page. That fact has nothing to do with freedom of speech.

Thank you, Mr. Smith, for your invitation to a tea party meeting, but I believe you have said it all, and there is no need for me to attend.

Nancy Shofner

## Football, Weather and Government

The last couple of weeks have been stem winders for football and weather. We have been reminded that life is a mixture of winning and losing. Auburn beat Georgia. Rats! Auburn beat Alabama. Hee! Hee! Florida State beat Auburn. Disgusting! The ACC beating the SEC. Mercy!

Ice, wind, rain and minus zero temperatures here in Blairsville and surrounding North Georgia, unusual. Downed trees, fallen power lines, frozen pipes, surging electrical bills and gas bills. Indeed, this has been one of life's losing seasons for many people. Some folks lost work, thousands lost electrical power temporarily, some lost water, and some lost their houses and cars due to fallen trees. There were some who lost all earthly possessions through house fires.

Did you see on TV the couple who had a frozen drain pipe underneath their kitchen sink and when they removed it found a long-lost sapphire and diamond wedding band? They discovered that it belonged to previous tenants of the home. It is now back to the grateful couple in time for their 40th wedding anniversary. About four or five years ago I put some items in a "safe place" and they have been lost in that "safe place" for years. Being house bound for a few days I found them.

Well, football, weather and the government all seem to be out of control, but even some good things happen in losing seasons. The Preacher in Ecclesiastes 3:1, 6 alluded to the winning and losing seasons of life. We think in terms of celebration when we win and crying when we lose. But there are situations when you lose you win. If you weigh 250 lbs and go on a diet and lose 50 lbs you are not crying but celebrating. Most of our losses are temporary and can be recouped. However, there are some things you don't want to lose.

In my personal opinion it seems that America is at one of its lowest levels in my lifetime. If you can hear, see and feel it is evident that we have lost our moral moorings. Politically, we have been so disappointed in, and abused by our politicians and leaders that multitudes have lost all faith in our governmental process. Our national debt is depressing for

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### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



## Questions and Answers

**Q. How did we fare this year in the number of building permits issued?**

A. We just received the year-end report from the Building and Development Department and we continue to be encouraged by what we see. For instance, the month of December saw the most residential permits issued (12) since December of 2007 (12). Total residential permits issued for 2013 was 99. For comparison, in 2007, 195 permits were issued and the next year after the housing market collapsed 85 permits were issued.

**Q. Is the building department responsible for enforcing the Georgia contractor's license?**

A. Yes. When the licensing law went into effect in 2008, Georgia placed requirements into the law that mandates building inspection departments be responsible for ensuring everyone working in their jurisdiction be properly licensed when a contract is entered into with a homeowner. The inspectors can be personally fined if caught allowing unlicensed persons to do work.

**Q. Besides general contractors, are sub trades required to be licensed in Georgia?**

A. The licensing requirements apply to anyone doing electrical, plumbing or heating and air other than a homeowner doing the work themselves.

**Q. How does a contractor go about getting licensed?**

A. You can refer to the Georgia Secretary of State website, www.sos.ga.gov, under "Licensing" and complete an online application to take the required test. Builders are required to earn up to 6 credit hours per year to maintain their license and the Building and Development Department holds two classes per year for this purpose. You can call the Building Department at (706) 439-6045 and get on their mailing list to be notified of these classes.

**Q. What if I just need some minor repair work done on my house. Do I have to get someone who is licensed to do this?**

A. Minor repairs such as replacement of siding, roofing, paint and trim work do not require you to hire a licensed person and a building permit is not required for minor repairs.

**Q. Can I still build my own house without having to be licensed?**

A. Yes. Owners can build their own

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## Business of the Quarter The Wine Shoppe

First Quarter 2014 means the opportunity to celebrate another wonderful business in Blairsville-Union County as our Business of the Quarter. Every three months the Chamber recognizes a member business in the community who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to make Blairsville-Union County a great place to live, work, and play. This quarter we are pleased to recognize *The Wine Shoppe*.

Owner, Bill McGlamery is a well known and well respected business owner in Union County. A wonderful member of the Chamber, he has sponsored and participated in many Chamber events. Most recently, *The Wine Shoppe* took first place in the 7.5-foot tree category in our annual Tour of Trees. Kudos are also in order here for Jane McGlamery.

Bill McGlamery serves on the Union County Development Authority Board of Directors and the Board of Directors for the Selective Service. He is very active in Rotary and was recently name Rotarian of the Year for his contributions to the organization. He has donated wine products and gift certificates to a number of local charities. Most notably, he donated all of the wine for the Humane Society

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## Olive You

When, as a little tot, gazing at the holiday table at our home or at the relatives, I spotted the olives on the relish tray, I made stake of them. Initiation into this culinary addiction started with just the typical black "ripe" olive ("Be careful. They have pits," my mother always warned me.) Not too long into my childhood, when realized that there was a limit to the number of black olives I could covet, and still leave some for my cousin Joey, I learned to acquire a taste for the small green olives with the pimento filling.

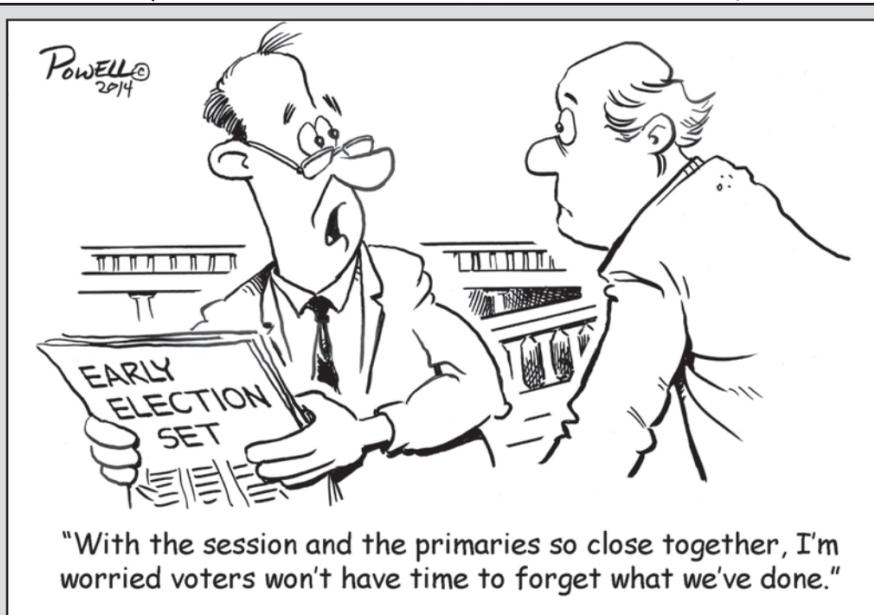
By junior high school, my olive addiction grew. My Uncle Si lived about two hours from us, in Niagara Falls, NY. When he would come to visit, he'd stop at the Italian importing store and bring us two paper bags filled with a traditional Sicilian bread shaped like a foot, pounds of Genoa salami, a large wedge of a hard, strong provolone cheese and a plethora of olives, a large variety, tossed in oil, herbs and mixed with celery. My cup runneth over with love.

I was in college when I had my first Greek Salad. It took a little getting used to the pungent tang of the feta cheese, but I immediately became smitten with the flavor of the kalamato olive. Except for the canned black and green stuffed olives, my budget as a young adult didn't include purchasing more exotic olive fare. A few years ago, Ingles brought Union County the "olive bar." It was then and there I decided that green olives stuffed with blue cheese were going to be my gourmet treat. They were far better for me than a Dairy Queen indulgence and much more delectable, to boot.

When I visited Italy and Sicily this past year, I treated myself to olives every opportunity I had, and there were many. They came in all shapes, sizes and colors I had never seen before. Their texture varied, and the herbs and spices that they were tossed in gave way to enormous satisfaction of my taste buds.

It was a breezy Spring day in Cefalu,

See Leone, page 5A



"With the session and the primaries so close together, I'm worried voters won't have time to forget what we've done."

## Exercise your rights

Dear Editor,

As we begin the New Year, I look back on 2013 and wonder what 2014 will bring. 2013 was a year that saw implementation of a health care law that over 60 percent of the American people do not want, a labor force participation rate that has not been this low since the late 1970s, huge increases in food stamp use, government surveillance of law abiding citizens while people cross our open borders unchallenged, increased benefits for illegal aliens and cuts for our retired military. Spending is out of control and the government just keeps printing (oh, I'm sorry, "digitizing") money. The president continues to rule by executive order. Congress passes laws before anyone has a chance to read them, and then exempt themselves from those laws. The country is in deep trouble. We wonder why our elected officials will not listen to us. Is there nothing we can do to stop this abuse of power?

Believe it or not, the Founding Fathers had an idea that this very thing might happen - that the federal government might become too powerful and out of control and stop listening to the people they were elected to represent. The Founders had experience with tyrants, you see, and were determined that the rights of the

See Thibodeaux, page 5A

## Thankful to Minnie

Dear Editor,

This is our story of our little hero. We have two little rat terriers, Dotisie, now 8, and Minnie, now 6. On Dec. 22, at 6:45 in the morning, we were all in bed when Minnie woke me up, and when Minnie, all 11 pounds, jumps on your chest, you must get up.

When I opened the bedroom door and stepped into the kitchen, the entire area was completely lit up. At first I thought we'd left all the lights on, but as I stepped into the dining room and looked out the French door, I saw our deck was completely on fire. There were flames reaching right up to the roof of the porch.

I immediately went back into the bedroom and woke my husband - he jumped out of bed and when he saw the fire he ran down the stairs and out to the garage to get the hose, but because it was so cold, he had disconnected the hose and put a styrofoam cover on the faucet.

So, he had to get everything reconnected and he tried to reach the fire but the hose wasn't long enough. He had to connect a second hose - then he ran up the deck stairs and was pouring water on the flames. Meanwhile I dialed 911 and they assured me they would send the fire department. Ralph worked on putting the fire out until they arrived. It was in the low 20s and there he was in his shorts, no shoes, with the wind blowing water back on him - he was freezing.

The fire department arrived and they were wonderful, efficient, knew just what to do, and

See McGuirk, page 5A

## Papa Should Have Stayed in the Field

As a little boy I learned that trying new things adds some spice to life. It was in July of 1968. My Papa was trying to get his cotton

laid by before our revival. Late in the day a thunderstorm ran Papa out of the field. He came to the house frustrated because he couldn't get his cotton plowed. I soon heard him and my grandmother fussing. When Papa got angry about something he would do one of two things, he would go to the woods to walk off his anger or he would go to the local store to listen to the old men tell tales. Since it was raining that day Papa asked me to go to the store with him.

Upon entering the old store Papa told me to get a "belly wash" and some peanuts. I went to the old drink box and found a Fanta Peach drink and a long bag of peanuts. I carefully poured the peanuts into the bottle and sat back on a crate to enjoy the afternoon treat. I sat on the crate, finished the drink and peanuts and listened to the old men talk about farming. After a while I got bored and reminded him that Granny wanted us back at home after 20 minutes. The store keeper, Eb Trapp, grinned. This comment about Granny embarrassed Papa. He was not about to go back home yet, so, he told me to go get another drink and more peanuts. This time I got a Nehi Grape. I soon had the drink and nuts finished off.

I sat there awhile and listened to the old men talk about coon hunting. But, once again I soon became bored. I started to remind Papa about going home, but, he beat me to the punch and he told me to get another drink. This time I reached into the box and pulled out a Fanta Strawberry drink and another bag of peanuts. Since it was still raining the old men began discussing storms. At first their comments were interesting, but, I soon realized they were just trying to outdo one another with their tales. So, I looked toward Papa and he motioned for me to get another drink. This time I found a Mountain Dew, but, instead of peanuts I was soon enjoying one of those giant Butterfinger bars. Most of you will remember the giant Butterfinger Bars that must have been 9-10 inches long and cost 25 cents. Those were some great candy bars. Anyway, by this time I had consumed four large soft drinks, three bags of peanuts and a giant Butterfinger candy bar in a little less than two hours. That is quite a day for a 10-year-old boy. Finally, Papa's anger subsided and he decided to go home.

When we got home I felt funny it was as if I couldn't keep still. I was on a buzz. I decided to rob a wasp nest for fish bait and ended up with multiple stings. Granny got me doctored

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### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



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