

# Opinions

## Everybody has one...

### Offering a step up in life

For what seems like forever, Allegheny Lodge No. 114 F&AM has been making a difference in the Union County community.

From scholarships to food boxes during hard times, to helping families at Thanksgiving and Christmas, the Lodge has always been there when members of the Blairsville-Union County community needed it.

Saturday, we witnessed the heart of the Lodge's benevolence as members worked tirelessly to raise the much needed funds to do their good works.

These dedicated Free and Accepted Masons and their family members offered their *Big Country Breakfast*, a \$6, all you can eat meal to raise funds to benefit local scholarships, and food boxes at Thanksgiving and Christmas for community members.

They also use the funds to benefit the Masonic Homes and the Widow's Fund.

Saturday's menu consisted of biscuits, gravy, sausage, bacon, eggs and pancakes. At times, the Lodge on Rogers Street in Downtown Blairsville was packed full of locals, elbow-to-elbow getting plate after plate of food prepared by members of Allegheny No. 114.

Folks took them up on their all you can eat breakfast bargain. They sat and ate and enjoyed themselves and enjoyed the fellowship of one another.

It's a sight to see these dedicated, community-minded individuals at work. And best of all, their works benefit families and students in the Union County community.

The event provided fellowship, brother- and sisterhood, and provided an inside glimpse of what makes Union County the great community it has always been.

The members of Allegheny No. 114 have other fundraisers throughout the year, like their food booth during the annual Highland Games at Meeks Park.

All-in-all, I can say that they are a community-oriented organization. They are benevolent in their works and their goal is the betterment of this great community.

Also, there are other Masonic lodges that make great contributions to our beloved Union County and Blairsville, they are the Brothers at Dooly No. 367 and Young Cane No. 597.

Like Allegheny No. 114, they too work hard to raise funds, benefit our young people and help folks in their time of need.

The lodges are part of a great network of community-oriented organizations that include Rotary, Kiwanis, the Lions Club, the Blairsville Jaycees, Blairsville Cruisers and the Glenda Gooch Foundation.

Of course there are many other civic organizations that make Blairsville-Union County the great place that it has always been.

Together, these great and wonderful organizations make us feel blessed to be a part of this great community and enjoy the treasures of the great North Georgia Mountains.

The great part about Saturday's *Big Country Breakfast* event, the folks who came in, cash in hand, handing it to these benevolent individuals and asking nothing in return.

It pretty much says it all when you experience the generosity of a community that is grateful for all that an organization like this does when it truly counts.

I feel blessed to have grown up here, and experienced the true meaning of community.

#### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



### To Tell the Truth

Someone has said that "there are people who exaggerate so much that they can't tell the truth without lying." The ninth commandment teaches us that we should speak truth and refrain from lying.

Deception, falsehood and lying originated with the devil. He is a liar from the beginning and the father of all lies. Not only are there those who love to lie, but there are those who love to believe a lie rather than to believe the truth.

Most Americans have come to the point of accepting lies and falsehoods as being just a normal way of life. "Everybody lies" is not true, but the devil will tell you it is true.

In the political arena we are plagued with deceit, lies, half-truths and false information of all kinds. Business circles as well, seek to profit by false and underhanded deception. Major corporations are charged with false advertising and are hauled into court by consumer groups. Even in religious circles there are those peddlers of lies rather than prophets of love and truth. People exaggerate or outright lie on resumes. They lie about places of employment and falsify fake degrees. This is done across the spectrum - from theology to cosmetology.

How shameful that in just the last few days 35 teachers, principals and administrators of the Atlanta Public School system were indicted by a Fulton County grand jury with charges ranging from making false statements (lying), theft, racketeering, influencing witnesses and conspiracy. They allegedly lied and influenced thousands of children to cheat on the state's Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT).

Lying is not confined to just a certain occupation, race or ethnic group. Lying permeates all mankind. Mankind is prone to lie from birth. Kids lie. Adults lie. Young and old alike lie but shouldn't and don't have to. We lie to God, ourselves and to others, but shouldn't and don't have to. Ladies, have you ever seen your neighbor, sister church member or family member with a new outfit on and said, "Oh," "that is so nice and looks so good on you?" But all the time you were thinking, "where

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#### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



### Miscellaneous Questions

**Q. You reported in January that the unemployment rate for Union County was 6.6 percent. Has there been any change?**

A. The February unemployment statistics are now out and Union County has had a small increase to 7.3 percent as have most of the surrounding counties. For instance, Towns is now at 8.5 percent and in January they were 7.1 percent. White County is now 8.8 percent and when we reported in January they were 7.8 percent. This is no cause for alarm as we are in the middle of winter and naturally can expect a downswing in the number of jobs available as many of them are seasonal. We certainly hope to see the unemployment numbers continue to decrease soon.

**Q. We keep hearing a rumor that Chick-fil-A is coming to Union County. Is this true?**

A. Chick-fil-A has definitely expressed an interest in having a store in Union County and a lot of people have been working toward that end. However, with a large chain, you really do not ever know for sure until and unless they have a public announcement. We are very hopeful, but time will tell.

**Q. We heard that North Georgia Technical College will be expanding some of their programs at their local campus here in Blairsville. What can you tell us about this?**

A. We are always excited for any possible expansion of NGTC. They received funds from a local bank a couple of years ago to allow them to prepare some preliminary plans to submit for future funding for an expansion. That funding has been applied for and if successful, we hope that there will be an expansion in the near future. This would be something that NGTC would announce, but Union County is fully supportive of any efforts that are being made and wish them luck with the final funding effort. They should know if they are successful within a few weeks.

**Q. What effect will the new high-speed fiber-optic Internet service have on bringing jobs to our area?**

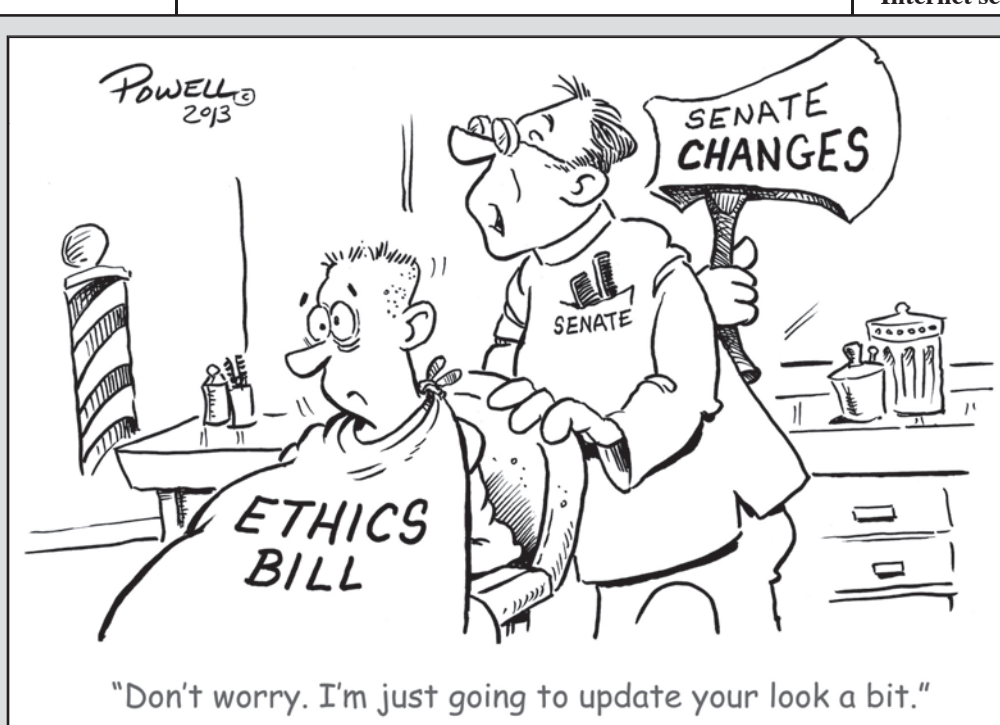
A. According to Mitch Griggs our Economic Development Director, who was quoted in the recent issue of the Georgia Trend magazine, "We're achieving capacities and speeds that frankly rival just about anything on the Eastern seaboard," Mitch says of the network, which was infused with federal stimulus funds. "We can drop 10 gigs on a business at the drop of a hat without any new construction required." Mitch says the next steps are marketing the availability of this network to the world at large and educating existing business on how to utilize it. So we are really excited to be poised to bring new industry to the area and to support existing industry.

**Q. Speaking of a boost to the local economy, when will the Farmers Market open for the 2013 Season?**

A. There will be a special one day opening Thursday, April 18, for a special Ramp Festival. You will see more details on that soon. The regular Opening Day will be Saturday, June 8. The hours will remain the same, 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The first Tuesday opening will be June 11 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Mickey Cummings Market Manager, tells me that we have al

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### Fireworks in April?

While April is not a month commonly known for discussions of fireworks displays, I personally believe there is never an inappropriate time to dream about summer fun. As the Chamber staff and Board of Directors look ahead to the coming months, we eagerly await the 2013 fireworks display in Meeks Park.

The date for this year's event has been confirmed for the evening of Thursday, July 4th. While most

residents of Union County are familiar with the show, many are not aware that the event is organized and paid for by the Chamber of Commerce.

As in past years, the Chamber is again offering chances to win \$1000 by making a \$10 donation toward the fireworks display. The winner will be drawn on the evening of July 4th, and does not have to be present to win. Tickets are available from Chamber Board Members and at the Chamber office within the Union County Community Center. Additionally you may see volunteers of the Chamber at various local events this spring and summer. Please consider a donation that will ensure the continuation of such a great show in Blairsville.

The Chamber would like to say a special thanks to Woodmen of the World, a not-for-profit organization offering a variety of insurance and investment options, who is helping sponsor this year's event. We also thank the Union County Commissioner's Office, Union County Sheriff's Office, Union County Fire Department and Union County Recreation Department for providing event support in the form of fire and public safety, traffic control, and parking.

For a list of additional events happening this year and for a variety of great coupons and offers, go to our website at [www.VisitBlairvilleGA.com](http://www.VisitBlairvilleGA.com) or call us at 706-745-5789. I can be reached directly at [President@BlairvilleChamber.com](mailto:President@BlairvilleChamber.com).



Cindy Williams

### Letters to the Editor ...

#### Just saying good-bye to a dear friend

It was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of Jack Lance. He was a great friend and the best basketball coach that I ever knew. My success at Union County High School was due largely in part to his dedication to the sport. The youth of Union County were taught the best basketball fundamentals by him which made my coaching job much easier.

Jack and I both had the fortunate experience of Luke Rushton's Legacy at Young Harris College. Coach Rushton, the "Dean of Basketball Coaches," instilled in his players the importance of fundamental skills and Jack exemplified those lessons.

I know the community of Union County will miss his presence as a mentor and coach as much as I.

#### Phil "Fish" Meadows

*Editor's Note: Phil Meadows is a former head varsity basketball coach for the Union County Panthers. He knew the late Jack Lance Sr. very well, and his success as a UCHS basketball coach was due in large part to the fundamentals taught to his young charges by Jack Lance Sr.*

*We join Coach Meadows in expressing our condolences to the Lance Family and offer our prayers for the family as they mourn the loss of a father and grandfather.*

#### Chamber of Commerce events

<b>Wednesday, April 10</b>	
2 pm	Tour Misty Mountain Model Railroad-16 Misty Mountain Lane
6 pm	Bingo - Union County Community Center View Grill
<b>Thursday, April 11</b>	
8 am	Mountain Networking Referral Group Meeting - Cooks Country Kitchen
11 am	Blood Drive in memory of Derrick Whittle - Union County Courthouse
12 pm	Union County Rotary Club Meeting - 2nd Floor Cadence Bank
5 pm	Trivia Night & Tacos - The Union County Community Center View Grill
5:30 pm	Blairsville Union County Chamber of Commerce "2nd Business After Hours 2013" - U.C. Community Center
6 pm	Union County Lions Club Meeting - Steve's Steakhouse, Cookie Jar Restaurant
<b>Friday, April 12</b>	
9 am	Trackrock Spring Hammer-In - Trackrock Campground & Cabins
9 am	Can You Can? Seminar - Union County Library
10 am	Chamber Ribbon Cutting for Coldwell Banker High Country Realty, 211 A Cleveland Street
7 pm	Paul Constantine Live - The Lodge at Copperhead
<b>Saturday, April 13</b>	
7 am	Volunteer Day At Vogel State Park
9 am	Trackrock Spring Hammer-In - Trackrock Campground & Cabins
9 am	Tour Misty Mountain Model Railroad-16 Misty Mountain Lane
7 pm	Modern Vinyl - The Lodge at Copperhead
<b>Monday, April 15</b>	
12 pm	Blairsville Kiwanis Club Monthly Meeting - Steve's Cookie Jar Restaurant
<b>Tuesday, April 16</b>	
8 am	Tri-State Business Women's Meeting - Cooks Country Restaurant
7 pm	American Legion Monthly Meeting - Haralson Memorial Civic Center
<b>Wednesday, April 17</b>	
2 pm	Friends of Union County Library Meeting - Community Room in U.C. Public Library
6 pm	Bingo - Union County Community Center View Grill

### Gold

My great grandfather, Clifford Hyde, was a Cherokee Indian and his family was originally from North Carolina. His family settled in Dawsonville prior to the Civil War. Later he migrated to North Alabama where he raised his family. My grandmother told me a story about his search for a Cherokee Gold mine.

Sometime during the 1920's an old Cherokee man showed up at the Hyde House in Phil Campbell. It was late in the evening just before dark. It was beginning to thunder and darkness was coming on the land. The family was just sitting down to a meal of corn bread and fresh vegetables. The family could not afford meat. The children were all bare footed. Clifford dreamt of the day he could afford to buy shoes and new clothes for his kids. Suddenly, there was a knock at the front door. This took everyone by surprise, because they rarely had visitors.

Clifford opened the door and there stood an ancient Cherokee Indian. He asked the family for some food and a place to spend the night. As the old man sat down to eat he began to tell the family his story. He figured his age to be 98 and he had walked all the way from Oklahoma. He came back the same way he had traveled as a young boy, on the Trail of Tears. He told Clifford that he wanted to see his home land in North Alabama one more time before he died. Somehow, he also knew that Clifford was Cherokee.

The next morning the family and the old man had a breakfast of eggs, biscuits and fresh blackberry jam. The old man told Clifford he was just a few miles short of his destination and he wanted to get started as quick as possible. But, he wanted to give Clifford something for his hospitality. He stated that 75 years earlier his people knew the soldiers were coming to force their departure to Oklahoma. They also knew they would not be allowed to take much with them. He said they had about 100 pounds of gold that had been hidden a few days before the soldiers arrived.

He said the gold had been hidden in a rock face above the Turkey's foot. This place was called the Turkey's foot because it was a place where 4 creeks came together. From the top of the rock face the place looked just like the track of a turkey. After he finished talking the old man left and the family never heard from him again.

Clifford and his sons looked for this gold for 40 years without ever finding an ounce of gold. Clifford went to his grave longing to find the Cherokee gold at the Turkey's foot. Granny would tell me this story many times during my

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#### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



### Frog Legs Over Canned Asparagus

Last week, when most folks were gnawing at chocolate bunny ears, I was wishing and hoping for a dish of rabbit stew. For breakfast on Easter morning, I had a venison sausage patty to accompany my two fried "chicken" eggs.

During a recent visit to Butler PA, I filleted and pan fried a delicious steelhead that one of my family caught in a tributary off Lake Erie. It was luscious. A few nights ago I fixed a small batch of pig's feet and chicken legs stewed for hours in a homemade tomato sauce that a dear friend had gifted me.

I have a penchant for chicken wings, turkey necks, beef liver and crustaceans in any shape or form. At the Asian buffet last night I "porked" out on seafood including mussels and crayfish.

I admit it. I'm a proteinaholic. If it has muscle, I'll chew it. If it swam for its life, I'll indulge in it. If it never made it past the embryonic stage, I'll poach, fry or scramble it. The bone marrow is a delicacy and the meat around the bone is never going to touch my dog's lips. That belongs to me!

I've eaten squirrel, but I prefer rabbit. I enjoy goat, but love, love, love lamb. I've indulged in duck, pheasant, goose, and squab. Two of my favorite "chicken of the seas" are octopus and squid (calamari). And out of the creek, I relish a plate of sautéed frog legs.

Those of you that get squeamish at the thought of frog legs have heard that they taste like chicken and you don't believe it. Well, they do....though there is a hint of seafood taste to them, as well. They are as delicate in flavor as they are in size.

I had the gang at my place for Easter this year. I settled on a smoked ham, because that was what everyone else wanted. If it was ham, I wanted it to be a fresh ham, where I could stuff pockets with garlic, parmesan cheese and fresh parsley. I wanted to serve a rack of lamb, too. Again, not enough takers. They wanted the makings of a ham sandwich the next day, and not a Gyro. That's OK, though. I have a lamb breast in the freezer that I'll cook in a few weeks and I'll keep it all to myself.

Many of you have stopped reading about now. It's probably been too graphic and unappetizing for those of you that eat your burgers well done and can recite the top ten best places to indulge in chicken tenders. When you limit your palette to just what you are used to,

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