

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Mother's Day

Thirty-five years ago, I kissed my dear sweet Mother goodbye. I can say this, no matter how old you are, you're never prepared to kiss your mother goodbye.

Each Mother's Day, I visit Duncan Cemetery. I can't help but tear up when I get there. My Momma died and my world was rocked. The foundation shook, I cried my eyes out. I still do this day.

I was just barely 18 years old. I knew early on I wouldn't have my mother for a real long time. She was a Type II diabetic in an age when the treatment was so far behind, the diagnosis was a death sentence.

My Momma treated me special. I was the youngest of her six children. When I was real young and hunting season rolled around, she would wake me up, just as she would my Daddy and my Brother. She made me a part of the deer hunting tradition. I didn't get to go hunting with them, but, she started me on a course for later years.

By the time I was old enough to go hunting, I was already prepared by tradition. I would wake to the smell of delicious bacon and sausage and hot biscuits. Of course there was gravy to be had as well.

It was a mountain breakfast that filled our stomachs and got us rolling out the door to go deer hunting. The same traditions were followed during trout season, and again, I was prepared when the time came for me to join Daddy and brother Jim.

Of course, my Momma prepared me for more than just deer season and trout season. She helped me with my school work. She was a teacher, and she taught at the Coosa School long before I was born.

She taught me about life, being respectful and trusting my elders. She taught me that Sunday mornings were reserved for attending Coosa United Methodist Church.

She taught me to love my siblings and everyone that was connected to my family, both sides. I loved the Reeces, Potts, Duncans, Whites, Hensons, Gillespies, Wilsons, Hambys, Fords, well, she taught me to love the Family Tree.

When folks would come to visit, she would explain which side of the family each person came from. It planted a seed in me that genealogy was important. To figure out where you are going in life, you must first learn where you came from.

This Mother's Day, take time to give your momma a hug. If she's in Heaven, like my Momma, take time to say a special thanks for everything she meant to you.

Mommas are special, and even if they've gone to be with Jesus, they're with us every day of our lives. Momma's voice is just as clear today, as it was 35 years ago.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Say That Again

Church bulletins, church newsletters and church publications in general are sometimes the most humorous reading material found anywhere. For example... One pastor was having a busy day and was about to rush out of his office when the church secretary asked him for his sermon titles for the Sunday bulletin. He said, "Oh, for Sunday morning just print 'The Pastor Speaks.'" For Sunday night I am preaching from Psalm 14, you just pick out a title." When folks read the bulletin, Sunday morning's title appeared, "The Pastor Speaks" and Sunday night's title was "What The Fool Said." Another bulletin printed the Sunday morning messages: "Jesus Walks On Water." Sunday night's message, "Searching For Jesus."

The following are excerpts from church bulletins nationwide:

At the evening service tonight the sermon topic will be "What Is Hell?" Come early and listen to the choir practice.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery.

Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community.

Bertha Belch, a missionary from Africa, will be speaking tonight. Come hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

Miss Charlene Mason sang "I Will Not Pass This Way Again" giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

The Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. Please use the back door.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 p.m. this evening. Please use the large double doors on the west entrance.

Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of the pastor's sermons.

Don't let worry kill you, let the church help. Irving Benson and Jesse Carter were married October 24, so ends a friendship that began in their school days.

The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement Friday.

See Parris, page 5A

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



Questions and Answers

Q. What is the Board of Elections and who appoints them?

A. The Board of Elections was created in 2001 by Georgia Legislature HB 798. The legislation requires that two appointments be made from each of the two major parties as determined by votes received in a presidential election. The County Commissioner also has one appointment. Board members serve staggered terms.

The Board of Elections is responsible for preparing all election materials, including the certification of qualified individuals, ballot preparation and the actual conduction of elections and certification of results.

Q. How many precincts does Union County have?

A. Union County has 11 Voting Precincts: Ivy Log, Dooly, Gum Log, Blairsville, Pat Colwell, Track Rock, Union, Coosa, Suches, Owtown and Choestoe. The Choestoe precinct (previously at the fire station) is now located in the Historic Choestoe Schoolhouse located at 1034 Collins Road.

Q. Can I still register to vote in the May 20th Primary Election?

A. No, it is now too late to register to vote for the May 20 Election however, you can still register to vote for the November election. I encourage everyone who is eligible to register to vote to do so. If you are unsure about who is running for which office you can view a sample ballot at the Registrar's Office.

Q. Who can vote in Georgia?

A. Only registered voters can vote in Georgia. You can register to vote if you meet all of the following qualifications:

- You're a U.S. citizen
- You're a resident of Georgia and of the county in which you wish to vote
- You'll be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- You're not serving a sentence for a felony conviction
- You haven't been declared by a court to be "mentally incompetent."

Q. What are the accepted forms of ID?

A. Georgia law requires all voters to show some form of photo identification before receiving a ballot. Accepted forms of ID include:

- A Georgia driver's license, even if expired, or a Georgia voter ID card

See Paris, page 5A

Spring Itinerary

The weather has warmed and the sun is shining over Blairsville-Union County. Spring is finally here! Are you ready to spend time in the great outdoors? Here are a few ideas for putting together a wonderful spring itinerary.

Venture out on one of our three lakes, Nottely, Winfield Scott, or Trahlyta, and choose your activity. Boating, fishing, skiing, kayaking or pedal boats make great lake activities. If waterfalls are more your style, we have plenty of those too. A waterfalls guide can be obtained in the Chamber's Welcome Center or requested online at www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com.

Are you ready to see Union County from a new perspective? Try taking in the views atop Brasstown Bald or exploring the lovely countryside while horseback riding. Many of the hiking trails that wind throughout the county offer incredible views that just might take your breath away.

If history is your cup of tea, Union County has a lot to offer. Have you ever toured the Historic Union County Courthouse or the Mountain Life Museum? Have you seen the Trackrock Petroglyphs up close? How about the Byron Herbert Reece Farm & Heritage Center or the CCC Museum at Vogel State Park? Here is one you might not have thought of.

See Williams, page 5A

A Berry Special Love Story

Once upon a time, in the late 18th century, a European explorer had traveled to the Americas South, about to embark on an adventure that would change the world in one sweet way. There in Chile, he met Fragaria Chilensis. He had never met something so tender, aromatic and delectable.

He brought her back to France, not for himself, but he introduced her to a male from North America, but of European ancestry, Fragaria Virginiana. There was a magical chemistry between the two. His ruggedness combined with her sugary qualities produced an offspring they named Fragaria Ananassa.

F. Ananassa was the perfect balance of both her parents. A hearty girl, like her forested ancestors who hailed from France in the 14th century, Ananassa was also pure sweetness, like her South American roots that were traced back to the Mapuche and Huilliche Indians in 1501. Everyone who met her remarked about her amazing fragrant quality, and her bright skin, despite her many freckles.

F. Ananassa also had a trait that made her unique. A stoloniferous, she could actually produce offspring without a mate. This amazing quality had her producing runners that produced other F. Ananassa's that had the same traits, who produced even more F. Ananassa's.

All of these offspring began to settle all over the world. They were nicknamed "strew-berige". It was an Old English word, "Strew" meaning straw, for the runners had a straw like quality. And the freckled, sweet and aromatic fruit of the runners had a berige or berry quality to it.

And today, to our delight, the strawberry lives happily ever after.

I'm crazy about strawberries. As a child, I would break out in a rash from overeating them the two or three weeks that they were available. When I was about 10 years old, my parents invested in a freezer for our basement. That year they made strawberry freezer jam. Every jar was like spreading fresh strawberries on your toast. On winter mornings it was a breath of summer to my taste buds.

In this way, my parents found a way

See Leone, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Letters to the Editor ...

Pure Pride

Dear Editor, Congratulations to the Union County High School Pride of the Mountains Band for the Superior rating it received Saturday, April 26, at the Marietta Performing Arts Center. At 8 a.m., on a Saturday morning, while many of their peers were sleeping, this talented group of young musicians performed flawlessly, giving their first-year band director his first SUPERIOR rating as a director.

Congratulations and thank you to band director Will Stafford and his assistants Doug Roberts, James Rhodes, Devin Ruff and Emily Stafford whose hard work throughout the school year made it possible for the band to receive a Superior rating.

On Tuesday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. at the Clegg Auditorium at Young Harris College, the band will be having its Spring Concert. It would be wonderful if the community would show its support and appreciation of these hard working young people by attending. There is no charge for admission.

Lisa and Duane Busse

Bloomberg an Independent

Dear Editor, I just had to respond to Mr. Cheves letter re: Michael Bloomberg. Apparently Mr. Cheves did not do any research on the ex-Mayor of New York because he would have found out that Bloomberg was a Democrat then became a Republican to run for Mayor. Then two years after his second election, dropped out of the Republican Party to run as an Independent for his third election. And Mr. Cheves did not mention the whole Second Amendment, only the part he can understand I guess. The whole Second Amendment says "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed". Mr. Cheves forgot to include the part about the 'right of the people'. A well regulated Militia were Citizen Soldiers during the revolutionary war and our forefathers intended America's Citizens to be able to protect themselves and the nation from enemies foreign or domestic.

Bill Kellerman

Light still needed

Dear Editor, Prior to the upgrading of the U.S. 129/Murphy Highway/Pat Colwell Intersection, there was a street light on the utility pole at this busy intersection. The need for it is obvious. Even though the upgrading of the intersection was a step in the right direction to improve traffic flow and reduce accidents there is a need to illuminate this intersection as the short turning lane (north bound on U.S. 129) onto Pat Colwell Road is very difficult to see at night.

For some reason, the Georgia DOT removed the light and it was never replaced. I have been told the yearly cost to replace the light is \$350.

This need to replace the light has been discussed with the county administration and I am told attempts are being made to have GDOT authorize the replacement of this light. However, it has been over three months since this oversight by GDOT was brought to the attention of the county with no results. The stock answer is, "we are working with the state on this."

It would seem that in our annual county budget of several million dollars, \$350 could be found to replace the light. It seems there is always money available for other programs that

See Madison, page 5A



Are you kidding?

Dear Editor, Am I the only person who is shocked to learn that a federal bureaucratic agency (Bureau of Land Management) has among its resources a militia of uniformed men armed with stun guns, assault weapons, armored vehicles, and helicopters? When did that happen? Did Congress authorize the funding for this? What other non-military agencies have this capability? I am astounded.

Carol McKechnie

Bloomberg again

Dear Editor, Re: George Mitchell's letter of April 23rd regarding "rabid Democrat" Michael Bloomberg, someone might want to inform Mr. Mitchell that, according to Wikipedia and numerous other sources, Mayor Bloomberg is a Republican. (Not sure whether that still makes him rabid or not.)

Marcia Hair

Double standard

Dear Editor, Essentially, Arnon Milchan is an Israeli citizen, although he holds dual Israeli-Monaco citizenship for tax purposes. He enters and exits the U.S. frequently and with impunity on an investor-class visa, as Chairman of the Los Angeles-based New Regency Productions, a film company that has produced more than 120 Hollywood movies since the 1970s, some starring Brad Pitt, Kevin Spacey and Robert DeNiro. On November 25, 2013, in an interview with Israel's Channel 2 television program Uvda, Milchan admitted to engaging in espionage against the U.S. for over 30 years; that he was controlled by LAKAM, the Israeli espionage agency that also ran convicted spy Jonathan Polloard. Milchan further admitted to operating 30 front companies in 17 countries for the purpose of acquiring weapons technology, for Israel, as well as helping Israel acquire uranium

See Ramsey, page 5A

Who didn't turn out the lights?

Dear Editor, BRMEMC. Prepare to be amazed. That's an old positive line from the advertising media. Well, to say the least, the BRMEMC has certainly amazed us. The unpaid (Chairman's) bill of nearly \$50,000 is not only amazing, it is highly despicable. The Chairman, Mr. Taylor, it is said, has not paid on his electric bill in over two years. Of course, I have to ask the question: What would happen to me if I went over two years without payment? Wouldn't it be known by management, that certainly a list of unpaid bills is prepared each month, and that these accounts/people are/should be contacted? I know, that I would be contacted, and if I could not pay

See Steed, page 5A

A Tough Nut

Some of my favorite memories include going fishing with relatives and friends. One memory was sometime around 1973. A man in our church took our youth group to Cooper's Creek. There must have been 20-30 of us boys and girls. Every one of us caught trout that Saturday. It was a great day, even if we got run out of camp by a bear at 2 in the morning. We camped out there at the Campground for two days. By the last day of fishing we were about to run out of food.

I will never forget Mike asking us, "Boys, what kind of food do you have left in your bags"? Troy had some Beef Stew. Nelson had some Beef Soup. Randy had some Vienna sausage while another kid had some sardines. I had some Tuna fish. We were told to bring everything we had to the camp fire. Mike opened each item and placed them in one big pot. The man grinned and said, "Tonight we are having what ya go stew." The name came from placing everything we had into the cook pot. The taste mattered not. We were boys and we were hungry. We ate everything down to the last crumb. I will add that I have never had heart burn as bad as I experienced that night at the campground in Cooper's Creek and to this day I cannot eat a Vienna sausage.

Another memory included a fishing trip to the Tennessee River with my dad when I was 10. There were a bunch of us boys from our neighborhood and we each caught 20-30 crappie. It was a great day. What made it better was the fact the fishing hole was in a cove of the Tennessee River. We parked at a pull off on the Will Cummings Highway not too far out of Chattanooga, TN. This place was like our own fishing hole and we went back year after year when the Crappie were running.

Another memory of which I am very fond is a fishing trip to a catfish lake on the farm of my uncle Rufus. Uncle Rufus was the brother of my grandmother and he was a hero to us boys. He was on a hunting trip to south Alabama with Uncle Olan when Uncle Olan was bitten by a Cottonmouth. Uncle Rufus saved Olan's life by sucking the poison from the bite and carrying Olan a couple of miles back to his truck. So, every time I got to go to the home of Rufus Baker it was a treat. This was especially true after Rufus built the 15-acre Catfish Lake.

My grandmother would take us to the pond and we would fish with chicken liver. We always caught enough fish for supper. On one particular day we were fishing with cane poles. I drew the bait on the pole toward my face and tried to cast the bait as far as I could. But, as I tried to make the cast I caught myself with the hook right in the lip. At first I was very quiet and tried to keep the event to myself. But, soon real-

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



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