

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Salute Seniors!

Earning a high school diploma is a lifetime achievement. However, rest assured, it won't be the last achievement of your lifetime. Today, we salute the Class of 2015, 166 seniors who will walk the aisle, have tassels turned, and venture out to meet life head-on. Some will become doctors, others lawyers. Some will become engineers, computer experts (if they aren't already), and many will spend much time trying to conquer a niche in life.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Not all will have a plan; they'll search and search, but still come up empty. But whatever you do, never give up the quest. Wondering aimlessly in search of a career passion is worth the wait.

The key word is passion; always search for your passion. Finding your niche could happen immediately for some. It may take a while for others. However, when you find it, pour your heart and soul into it.

Seniors, I congratulate you on an incredible lifetime achievement. You've worked very hard to be where you will be on graduation night at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

As you go out in life and continue to fulfill your dreams, always remember, the most important thing is to love what you do. Without passion, life is a lukewarm version of, well, just life. To ultimately enjoy life, you must love what you do professionally. A job is just that, a job, if you don't have passion for the profession.

This has been a very successful school year. It is hard to believe it is over, but what a successful year this has been – just ask the Mock Trial Team.

Our seniors have completed so many impressive achievements this year in so many different areas. They have certainly learned much and demonstrated a high level of achievement. They have performed great things in the areas of music and the arts, and have been a force to be reckoned with on the fields and courts of athletic competition. Also, our career, technical, and agricultural programs have thrived with achievements, with many students receiving industry credentials by state and national trade organizations providing the exams.

Many of these students are coming out of high school prepared for some high-paying trade opportunities. Overall, as school successes go, it just doesn't get much better than this.

Again, congratulations on a lifetime achievement you will always remember. And always remember, Panthers bleed Purple and Gold – forever.

Letters to the Editor ...

Daily Devotional

Dear Editor,

It is the day after the National Day of Prayer. I am so uplifted, so encouraged, and so hope-filled that there is still a remnant of people who deeply care about our Nation to cross denominational lines and join hands to pray for our country. Although the event in Union County lasted two hours, it seemed short, because it was so focused and heartfelt.

Seventeen different people spoke on separate categories—and when all were joined together, it formed a complete tapestry of soul-searching, petition, a call to repentance, and a rededication to fervent prayer individually and corporately. The 300-plus people in attendance received the shot of adrenaline they so needed to spark the hope that if we—and all those who participated throughout the country—take heed to the call for daily and fervent prayer, our Nation will indeed see a turning of morals, ethics, civility among our citizens, and the promise of freedom that is so ingrained in our Constitution.

God calls us to prayer, not as a suggestion but as a command. Whether we accept the challenge is our response. As for me and my house, I will not only serve the Lord, but have placed this call-to-action on every page of my calendar and ask the Lord to keep me faithful to my pledge. Whether or not you attended, if you are like-minded, you can sign up, too.

Respectfully submitted,

Arlene M. Gray

Get the lead out

Dear Editor,

Interesting to read about the Union 4-H Shotgun teams. Sounds like a fun competition.

However, it makes me wonder why every shotgun owner doesn't go to the airport range for practice instead of disturbing neighbors, pets, and wildlife when they shoot at targets in their backyards. I know Georgia law permits such behavior, but to me it's uncivilized, and can be dangerous. Can't Union County override the stupid state law, charge a minimum fee for using the airport range, and stop what I call "sound trespassing" on private property?

Wade Lowery

Reece Society Annual Meeting

Dear Editor,

Your presence is desired as the Reece Society assembles again in the pavilion of the Reece Farm and Heritage Center for its annual meeting. The date is Saturday, May 30, and the meeting begins at 10 a.m. Good walking shoes and a warm jacket are again recommended.

The cost for the day is \$18 per person, and this covers the registration fee and lunch. A \$5 registration fee applies to those who attend the meeting only.

Please stop by the registration desk at the pavilion entrance to check in for the day. If you enter through the second gate, there is parking in the area behind the pavilion for those who find walking difficult. Otherwise, ample parking should be available in the lot beyond the Welcome Center.

Our keynote speaker for this year's meeting is Prof. Ted Olson, a member of the Appalachian Studies Department at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City, Tenn. You won't want to miss his address, nor the opportunity to visit our gift shop and exhibits area. Also, following the luncheon we will gather by Wolf Creek to dedicate the Bettie Sellers Memorial Amphitheater.

We look forward to hearing from you soon and greeting you on Saturday, May 30.

Memorial Day

In 1983, on the 50th anniversary of John Craven's enlistment into the Marine Corps, Commandant General P. X. Kelley declared him a "Legend" who served with the Marines longer than any other chaplain in American history.

Born in 1916 in Missouri, Craven enlisted in 1933 at 17 and completed boot camp at Parris Island. While serving on the USS New Mexico at Pearl Harbor, he sensed a call to ministry. He left the Corps to earn academic degrees in theology. He returned to active duty in 1942 as a Southern Baptist chaplain.

He served in many high-casualty combat campaigns in WWII including Marshall Islands, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima. He accompanied Marines on amphibious landings through the Pacific and witnessed the raising of the American flag atop Mt. Suribachi at Iwo Jima. The Fourth Marine Division knew him as "John the Baptist." Four men accepted Christ on the boat before landing on Iwo Jima. He baptized them as soon as possible after they survived the bloody landing. The imagery of them being buried with Christ into death then raised to new life is captured in historic photos.

In Korea, he was with the Marines during the landing at Inchon, the battle for Seoul, and suffered severe frostbite while urging his Marines to endure the bloody retreat from the Chosin Reservoir.

Tom Brokaw in *The Greatest Generation Speaks* retells stories of Chaplain Craven praying with wounded Marines. Chaplain Craven believed that the Lord's Prayer is the most effective medicine for shell shock.

In 1963, he ministered to the grieving family of President John F. Kennedy at Bethesda Naval Hospital. He was Fleet Chaplain during Vietnam, and ended his active duty career at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, D.C. serving for five years as the Chaplain of the Marine Corps.

Chaplain Craven retired from active duty in 1974 after more than 30 years of military service, decorated with the Silver Star and Bronze Star. But he was not finished. He returned to

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Questions and Answers

Q. What is the purpose and primary function of the Union County Development Authority?

A. The Union County Development Authority is the primary economic development agency for Blairsville, Suches, and Union County. The Authority facilitates quality development that results in new job opportunities and capital investment. They assist the growth of existing businesses, try to attract new businesses to our area, and advance the economic goals of Union County.

Q. Who makes up the Development Authority?

A. The Development Authority is comprised of a Board with each member serving a four-year term. Members are appointed by the Union County Commissioner. The Board works closely with Georgia EMC Economic Development, Georgia Department of Economic Development, Tennessee Valley Authority – Economic Development, and the Southeast Industrial Development Association to attract jobs to Union County. You can visit their website at www.ucda.net for more information on what the Development Authority does for Union County.

Q. Who is the Director of the Development Authority and who hires him?

A. Mitch Kruger is Director of the Union County Development Authority. Mitch is hired by the Development Authority and most of the funding for the Authority is funded through the county budget.

Q. What makes Union County attractive to new businesses?

A. There are many things. Obviously we have to work much harder in attracting business to Union County than a large metropolitan county does. So it requires that we actively work on getting the word out to the world about what we have available here through many methods too numerous to mention here. UCDA concentrates on Industrial, Commercial and Retail business.

Q. We always hear about incentives that a county offers to businesses to move here. What are some of those incentives?

A. Union County has one of the lowest property tax mill-

See Paris, page 5A

Power Lunch features Frank Norton, Jr.

The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce along with our sponsor Community & Southern Bank is excited to announce that Frank Norton Jr. will be our guest speaker at our upcoming Power Lunch.

This year's topic will be "Five Big Ideas for North Georgia." The event will be held on Thursday, May 28 at 11:45 a.m. at the Union County Community Center. Registration is open through Friday, May 22 and the public is invited to attend.

Georgia native, Frank K. Norton, Jr. joined his family's business, The Norton Agency, in 1986 as manager of both Commercial and Residential Real Estate Divisions. Well recognized for his excellent marketing skills and keen business intuition, Frank has presented, for the past 28 years, an economic forecast outlining growth and business trends for Georgia and the Southeastern United States region. The report, based on a wealth of data collected by Norton's Native Intelligence Division, is a resource that guides many area companies and organizations in making their business decisions. He is a noted and colorful speaker on economic, demographic and real estate trends. His clients include The Atlanta Falcons, Northeast Georgia Medical Center, and The Longstreet Clinic.

The Chamber would like to express our sincere thanks to this year's Power Lunch sponsor.

See Williams, page 5A

A Sweet Potato Trumps Retirement

This morning I found myself putting hair shampoo instead of liquid body soap on my washcloth while taking a shower. There wasn't a good excuse for it. It wasn't like I stepped into the shower in a groggy state. I'd been up for about 90 minutes, running around doing morning chores. I was fully awake, but clearly not conscious.

A few minutes after washing the cobwebs from my cranial cavity, I walked into the laundry room with my towels and found a field mouse doing the doggy paddle in my Cubby's water bowl. He took his last stroke just as I approached him with the very elongated BBQ grill tongs, as I didn't want to get too close to the rodent when I extracted him from his makeshift swimming pool. So far it's been an interesting day.

I look at the calendar listing for the day on my phone and I realize that I'm slammed. There's more to do than actually fits in the little time slots. I like to be busy. I might even work most efficiently when I'm overwhelmed with responsibility. I never look at my work as a "job" I go to each day. I work in my head all day, seven days a week. TGIF has never been part of my vernacular. I also never think about retirement. Retire from what? There are too many things I want to do when I grow up.

Hal Crisp knows just what I'm talking about. Yesterday Hal planted 1,167 sweet potato plants in a few hours, all by himself. Hal has a 1952 8N Ford tractor, so he wasn't using one of those fancy, modern mechanical machines that essentially drops the plant in the ground while one steers from their air conditioned cab.

Three years after that very tractor exited the assembly line, Hal graduated high school and for the next two years he went to work for 50 cents an hour at the lumber yard in Murphy, NC. The next twenty-five years he worked from St. Louis to Blairsville, doing everything from delivering wholesale hardware to bookkeeping for a manufacturing plant. He finally settled at the Boot Factory in 1982. Twenty years to the day he went to work there, he retired from there, as that was the day the plant closed its doors.

See Leone, page 5A



Just a few of the things safer than texting and driving...

The Nature Conservancy Fire Learning Network

Fire is an essential force that has shaped life around the globe, but in many ecosystems today, the role of fire is severely out of balance.

This week, I am attending a Fire Learning Network (FLN) conference in Morganton, NC where fire professionals from all around the region learned about prescribed fire and its many uses and benefits. I also presented our Fire Adapted Communities and Firewise project at the conference. The conference was sponsored by the Nature Conservancy that is working to maintain fire's role where it benefits people and nature, and to keep fire out of places where it is destructive. Previous efforts include the TNC's Global Fire Initiative, initiated in 2002 to help combat the threats that too much, too little or the wrong kind of fire pose to biodiversity conservation.

The U.S. Fire Learning Network (USFLN) is engaging dozens of multi-agency, community-based projects in a process that accelerates the restoration of landscapes that depend on fire to sustain native plants and animals. By restoring this balance, the ecological, economic and social values of the landscapes can be maintained, and the threat of catastrophic wildfire can be reduced. Collaborative planning, implementation, adaptive management and the sharing of lessons learned are at the core of the FLN. Workshops, peer learning and innovative fire training are just a few of the mechanisms the network uses.

While FLN projects have often worked from the wildlands toward human communities, the new Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network—based on the FLN model—works from communities outward into the surrounding landscape. Participants in these complementary networks all have a common desire to learn, as well as to share their results and insights with one another to overcome barriers to sustainable and integrated ecological, economic and social solutions. The Fire Learning Network (FLN) process provides an integrated approach that establishes collaborative goals, guides actions and directs resources to gain conservation results. It is an iterative and adaptive approach that operates at multiple scales and has been employed successfully in diverse geographic and cultural settings. This approach allows sharing of experience and learning across geographies, and improves integrated fire management and conservation practices over time. FLN products facilitate NEPA preparation and fire management plan development, contribute to forest and land management plans and inform policy. The FLN's track record of success and the credibility of its products have allowed the partnership to positively affect management on more than 135 million acres to date.

See Riley, page 5A

Are those snake stories true?

One rainy summer day I went with my grandfather to Trapptown Store to get a cold Nehi. There was a bunch of old timers in the store that day and I listened to their tales as I enjoyed the Nehi grape and peanuts. The conversation turned to snakes and one of the old timers told us this tale.

"I was hoeing out my corn at the edge of the field and a wooded area. I heard this racket and looked up the hill and noticed a Hoop Snake had grabbed his tail in its mouth and was rolling down the hill at me. When it got close to me it tried to stab me with its sharp tail. I jumped out of the way and it hit a small tree instead. Instantly, that tree wilted and died." Paw Henry Shelnett shook his head. He said, "That ain't nothing, the other day I was in a field hoeing cotton and I seen a Hoop Snake rolling at me. You know them Hoop Snakes will grab their tail with their mouth and roll like a wheel at you. When they get close they will stab you with their tail and put poison in you. Well, I had nothing but a hoe between death and me. When that snake tried to stab me I stuck the hoe in front of that tail and the snake stobbed that old hoe handle. Immediately, the handle swelled up big as a log and I run it through a mill and had enough lumber to make a big kitchen table out of it. Later after the poison had gone out of the wood the table shrank down to a couple of tooth picks." I doubt these old timers' stories were truth. But, after I heard these old guys talk about snakes I had bad dreams for days. Let's take a look at the myth and reality of snakes.

You may have heard Rattlesnakes always add one rattle per year. This is false! Rattlesnakes add rattles each time they shed. And they may shed several times per year. Another myth is snakes must coil before striking. This is false. Snakes can strike or bite from any position. Coiling will improve the distance a snake can strike; however, the snake can strike from any position. You may have heard snakes go blind during the dog days of August. That is false! Snakes will have their vision impaired during their shedding time. But, just because it is August doesn't mean the snakes are blind.

So, what kinds of poisonous snakes do we have in Union County? Timber Rattlesnakes and Copperheads. So, how do you tell the difference in poison snakes and non-poisonous snakes? Pit vipers have large triangular shaped heads. But, so do water snakes. Pit vipers have elliptical pupils, whereas all harmless snakes in Union County have rounded pupils.

What can I put around my yard to repel snakes? Nothing. There are claims that mothballs will repel snakes. Snakes do not smell with their noses like humans. They detect odors by flicking their tongues and tasting the air. So, there is

See Cummings, page 5A

RC&D Executive Director

Frank Riley



Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

Website: www.nganews.com
E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com
Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514



Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m.

Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - 1 Year \$35.00. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987 at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. Advertising and subscriptions can be paid by cash, check or credit card.

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