

Opinions

Everybody has one

Forgive Me

My Daddy always told me that one of the treasured traits of a good man was to admit when he was wrong. I'm here to tell you that in last week's edition we had some omissions, mistaken inclusions, and miscommunication with some of our sources.

First, I want to apologize to the Union County Fire Department, Union County Emergency Management Agency and Union County Ambulance Services. In writing the story about the drowning of 18-year-old Jamie Ian Worley, I left those three agencies out of my story. It wasn't intentional however.

At the 11th hour, with the initial story on Page 1A and on Page 6A, I made contact with Jamie's mother. She didn't want to be left out of the story. She wanted to tell our readers about her son, the young man that Emergency crews spent almost three days trying to recover from Lake Nottely during the holiday weekend.

I promptly pulled the original pages, rewrote the story to include Shannon Ashe, and in the process, inadvertently left three vital agencies out of the story.

I've already apologized to Charles Worden, who oversees Fire Services, EMA and 911. I just wanted to let you, our readers, know that they indeed were there at this tragic occurrence and played a major role in the recovery operation.

In fact, I was a witness to one of the best organized crisis management events I've ever seen.

Eighty-one people were involved in the attempt to recover Jamie from Lake Nottely. There were members of our Emergency Management Agency, sheriff's office, fire department, Ambulance Services, DNR, U.S. Forest Service, Union County Commissioners Office, the Union County Dive Team, Dawson County Sheriff's Office Dive Team, Georgia State Patrol Dive Team, Alpha Search and Rescue, American Red Cross, Commerce Police Department, Demorest Fire Department, and the Hart County Emergency Management Agency.

If I left anyone out, you know it was not intentional.

I'll say this and then I'll move on, we have much to be proud of here in Union County regarding our public servants. From top to bottom, they care and they are dedicated to serving the public interests of the people of Union County.

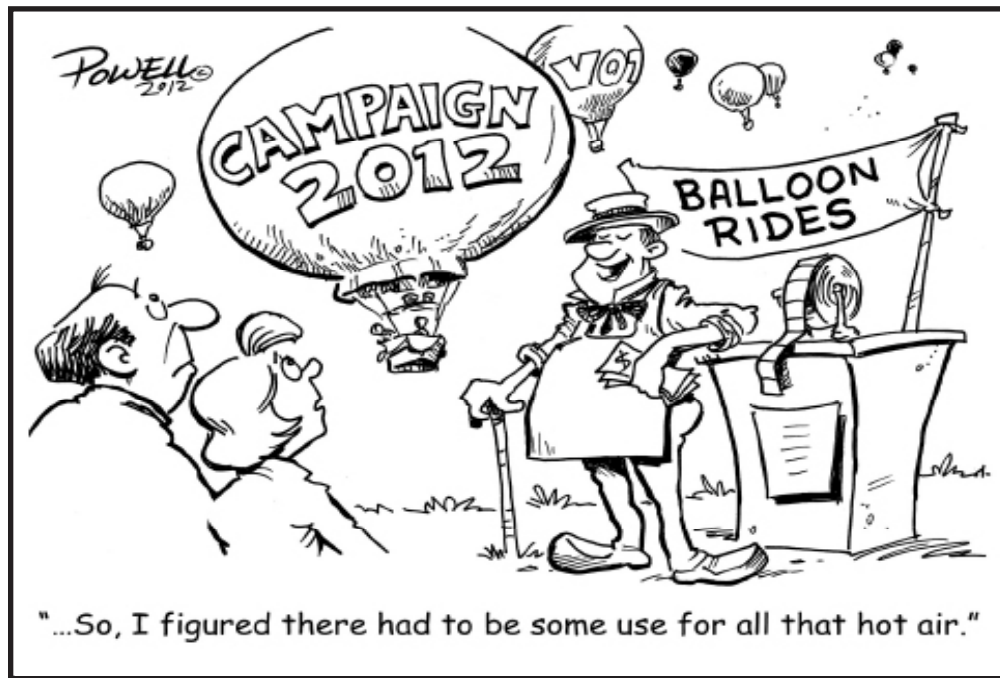
Next on my please forgive me list, Ray Ashurst was mentioned as being at the Woody Gap Graduation. He was not there.

See Duncan, page 5A



Charles Duncan

Straight Shooting



Lon Steele

Daddy (Paul) and his brother (Bud) owned a pair of outstanding coon hounds during the 1950's. Daddy was about 14 years old when they traded for the pair of Black and Tan hounds.

Papa and his sons trained the hounds on Squirrels and Raccoons. The family enjoyed squirrel dumplings while a boy could sell the hides from the coons for a little money.

Old Sam and Lou hit their stride around 1956-57 when they treed more than 100 coons during the fall and winter. The pair of dogs became widely known and everyone wanted to hunt with that fine pair of coon hounds owned by the Cummings' boys.

Daddy was particular about who he would let go hunting with his dogs. So, he never let anyone borrow them. However, anyone could go hunting with him and his dogs.

One day Daddy was stopped in town by Lon Steele who asked if he could borrow Daddy's dogs. Daddy explained that Lon could come and hunt with Daddy and his dogs anytime. But, the dogs could not be borrowed by anybody. So, Lon told Daddy that he and Hoover Baggett would meet him at the Mon Dye bottoms on Saturday evening.

Dad met them at the old bridge over Turkey Creek. Dad said as he was releasing his dogs he knew there would be trouble because Lon took a swig from a flask located in his pocket.

The dogs struck a trail and treed a coon in 30 minutes. Hoover and Lon celebrated by passing around the bottle.

By the time the men reached the dogs at the next tree Hoover Baggett and Lon Steele were in high spirits. This time the dogs had treed a big old boar coon. The

See Cummings, page 5A



Mickey Cummings

Around The Farm

Scottish Festival

June starts the official summer vacation and outdoor activity season! With the end of school, opportunities for community events are certain to please. Summer weather is here and many outdoor festivals and events are on the horizon.

Take a moment this year to try a new festival or event to share with your family. Consider creating a new family tradition by attending a community event this weekend.

The Blairsville Scottish Festival has been entertaining crowds from around the world for nine great years. Yearning for the sound of bagpipes? They've got them. Interested in watching traditional Scottish games performed by competitive athletes? It's there. Looking for unique, Scottish inspired gifts or delicious Scottish inspired food? There are vendors galore.

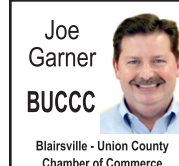
Are you ready to experience a designated Top 20 event? You won't be disappointed by attending this highly regarded event as selected by the Southeast Tourism Society.

Kids also love this one of a kind event particularly for the children's athletic games competition and numerous animal demonstrations. The Blairsville Scottish Festival and Highland Games are just the ticket for incredible entertainment, great food and fun for the whole family.

Gates will be open on Saturday and Sunday June 9th and 10th from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Meeks Park. Admission is \$10 per day, \$15 for both days, kids under 12 years old get in free. Complete details are available by visiting Blairsville Scottish Festival on the Web. If interested in being a festival volunteer call (706) 745-2161.

The Chamber is proud of our festivals, shows, rodeos, concerts and so much more that fill in the gaps between community and quality family time. Our online events calendar can be viewed on the Web, just go to Google and type Visit BlairsvilleGA in the search engine. Please visit when wanting to stay informed for the events in June or phone the chamber at (706) 745-5789 for additional information.

I may be reached anytime at Chair@BlairsvilleChamber.com.



Joe Garner

BUCC

Blairsville - Union County Chamber of Commerce

Weddings

June is the traditional month for marriages. I am not sure why, but it is the month that most couples plan their weddings.

Before I marry a couple, I require them to attend several counseling sessions. One of the first questions I ask a couple is, "Why have you decided to get married?" Almost without exception the answer is, "We are in love!" That is the answer I hope to receive.

Then, I ask that mystifying question of the ages, "Tell me what love is?" The couple looks at each other and they both say to each other, "You go first."

They're already nervous and when you're nervous is not a good time to define love.

After the couple has done their best to define love (most of the time they describe rather than define) I have the privilege to share the Bible's instruction about love. I know the bible is old, but it is more up to date than this newspaper you are reading.

A lot of things are old, but we still need them in this rip-roaring, revved up world. The sun is pretty old, but I don't believe we want to discard it.

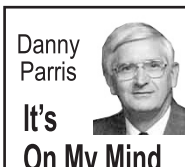
Well, what is love anyway? Is it just a four letter word made up of two consonants, L and V, and two vowels O and E, and two fools, you and me?

Or, is it like someone has said, "Life is one fool thing after another, and love is two fools after each other?"

Is love just a romantic idea perpetrated on us by Hollywood? No, love is a gift from God revealed in His Holy Word.

Forget Hollywood, read the Holy Word. Hollywood talks about reel love which is based on lust. The Holy Word reveals real love based on a commitment between two people who pledge themselves to each other - no matter what happens in

See Parris, page 5A



Danny Parris

It's On My Mind

More Letters

Ban on politicians

Dear Editor,

I think the Memorial Day Parade and ceremony at the Veterans Park were successful. Most of the beautiful floats were well received by attendees along the parade route. I am glad there are so many patriotic people in this area. We do indeed need to honor our Veterans and especially those that gave their all.

Someone once said, "I disagree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it." Now I will have my say. I do not defend politicians showing off and garnering votes in parades. I am positive that those politicians in the parade were not there to honor Veterans. That were there to solicit votes. Their main purpose was to advertise their run for office. My opinion, and several others that commented along the route, there should be a ban on politicians advertising in parades.

Charles Sowers

Politicians beware

Dear Editor,

Charles Rich, in announcing (NGN, May 16) his candidacy for Union County Commissioner on the Republican ticket, assures us that he is "not a politician." However, anyone running for public office as a member of a political party is - ipso facto - a "politician." One can understand, though, why he would wish to disassociate himself from those "rascals."

By calling attention to his family connections (which included a Baptist preacher), Mr. Rich might have endeared himself to the Old Guard, but it gave evidence that he is unaware that the status quo in Union County (and, indeed, all of North Georgia) is "a-changing." There is a continuing influx of newcomers from all over the United States. They are of differing backgrounds, ethnicity and religion; and bring with them their own family lines, along with perhaps a differing interpretation of what is seen as "morality." (The results of the alcohol referendums being a case in point.)

Any candidate for political office who choose to ignore (or fails to take into consideration) this ongoing change in demographics does so at his or her peril.

Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey

Letters

To the Editor

Give God His Glory

I love to hear great old church hymns and praise songs sung with excitement and in spirit and truth.

It lifts your spirits up to get ready to hear what God wants to say to His people and what better way then a pastor standing in the pulpit led by the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord for pastors who are not afraid to speak the truth of God's anointing word, pastors who will stand up against issues that would destroy the truth of God's church. Pastors who are not fearful to speak up about the Cross of Calvary. Speak about the shed blood of Jesus for mankind's sins, for God's forgiveness and His salvation plan for those who believe on His Name.

Sadly a lot of churches have become like country clubs or social events in order to please the congregation so as not to rock the boat of compliance or offend anyone that believes differently.

If the bible is the inspired word of God and I know this to be true, then it is the responsibility of the pastor elders, deacons and the lay people of the church to stand up and let the voice of God be heard.

Let your Yes be Yes and your No be No for the cause of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Frank Combs, Murphy, NC

Kudos to new Judges

To the Editor:

On behalf of the State Bar of Georgia, I offer congratulations to Georgia Prosecuting Attorneys' Council Executive Director Stan Gunter and Dahlonega attorney Raymond Georgia on their respective appointments by Gov. Nathan Deal as new Superior Court judges in the Enotah Judicial Circuit, which includes Lumpkin, Towns, Union and White counties.

Judge Gunter served 12 years as district attorney in the Enotah Circuit, and Judge George is a former chief assistant district attorney in the Northeastern Judicial Circuit. Georgia's Superior Court judges fulfill a vital responsibility in the administration of justice in our state. We wish Judge George and Judge Gunter well in their new positions of public service.

Kenneth Shigley, President

Missing the Big Picture

Dear Editor,

The campaign announcement, May 16 issue of Charles Rich for Union County Commissioner is nothing short of incredible.

His statements show he must have been living on another planet than the rest of Union County residents and property owners in the three years since he bought a piece of property here.

What "much needed change" is there?

The county already has one of the lowest property tax rates in the state and many infrastructure improvements developed under the strong leadership and service of Commissioner Paris.

He says he wants to "bring back the pride the citizens of Union County have in their homes and community" and "restore the very important public trust in our Union County government."

The problem for Mr. Rich is that they have never gone away. It's like the preacher who asked his congregation why people had so much trouble finding God.

The answers was, "...because he ain't lost."

Neither is Union County.

Harry Nolan, Blairsville

Remember Veterans

Dear Editor,

I am long-since retired from 36 years of teaching and instructing.

If I had my way, I'd eliminate Social Studies and Civics "courses" and replace them with legitimate, substantive, courses in American History taught by Historians rather than "teachers."

If I had my way, I'd eliminate 3/4 of all public school administrative positions, eliminate the federal Department of Education and take 1/50th of the \$100,000,000,000 DoE budget to finance a mandatory, yearly trip to Normandy for all graduating Georgia high school seniors.

I'd have those students walk the American Cemetery at Colleville sur Mere. I'd have them walk the bluffs above Pointe du Hoc; I'd have them walk alongside the

See George Mitchell Letter, page 5A

Myths about TSPLOST

Dear Editor,

I noticed that the TSPLOST myths have once again emerged to cloud the discussion prior to the July 31 vote.

Myth No. 1: There is no connection between transportation infrastructure and economic development. So Wal-Mart would have opened a store in Blairsville without the 4 lane?

Myth No. 2: Union County will only receive 60-65 percent of the

See Patrick Malone Letter, page 5A

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Kenneth West
Owner / Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Janice Boling
Staff Writer

Justin Owenby
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest
Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer

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



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Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830; Location: 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, GA