

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Local Grown and Local Farmers Markets

One of my favorite things has always been growing things, whether its trees, corn, soybeans, or any other kinds of plant where I can put a seed in the ground and watch it grow into something we can eat or sell. Of course this takes some of my favorite other things, tractors and all kinds of equipment to prepare the ground and plant the crops for the bears and other critters to eat before we do, but I never was one to use a hoe or something simple like that when a 100 hp, 4WD tractor was available.



Executive Director of RC&D
Frank Riley

We always plant more than we can ever eat or give away and we can't waste it, and if we figured out how much those vegetables that we plant actually cost we would just go to the farmers market and buy our vegetables already picked and ready to prepare, but that's not near as much fun as growing it ourselves. We need a place to sell our crops and that is where our local farmers markets come in where we can sell what we grow and try to recoup our investment.

Farmers Markets are a throwback to earlier days when our ancestors grew their own food and brought what they could not use to town to sell to the community. Today Farmers Markets are gaining popularity all across the country from the metro cities to the most rural of our towns. Local Farmers Markets have become popular community events that are drawing people together on Saturday mornings and other days of the week all over the country. These markets give us a place to meet and greet our neighbors and also take home local grown produce that is much better for us and a lot tastier than those products that are grown somewhere over the horizon.

Buying local also keeps our money in the community and helps turn us back toward at least a partial self-sustaining life style. It is a lot more fun, not to mention rewarding to plant and harvest our own gardens or buy our neighbor's excess garden grown vegetables than it is to drive to the grocery store to buy stuff that we have no clue as to where it came from, how it was grown, what it has been treated with, or how long it has been since it was harvested.

Each generation that passes moves further away from the days when our ancestors had to grow their own food or go hungry and now most of our children have no clue as to where their food comes from. The State of Georgia is blessed to have a large number of thriving community farmers markets scattered all over the state. The Georgia Department of Agriculture oversees these community farmers markets and also administers nine State Farmers Markets which form the network for sales of fruits and vegetables throughout Georgia and the Southeast.

These state facilities maintain a viable market for Georgia farmers and farm products in the communities where they are located. The large State Farmers Markets are responsible for over one billion dollars in sales each year. Most local farmers markets are often operated by non-profits or local governments and serve

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Letters to the Editor ...

Dear Editor,
It seems nowadays, anyone who publicly disagrees with opinions or beliefs of certain religious or social extremist groups or other left leaning minorities is wrong and must be either silenced and/or eliminated. This is particularly noted in the number of complaints and lawsuits filed against anything Christian. Any Christian slogan must be silenced. Any artifact must be removed from public display. Any hint of public Christian prayer must be decisively squelched. But, recently while waiting for my flight at Atlanta airport, an individual dressed in African garb unrolled his prayer rug, spread it on the floor for all to see and walk around, knelt down facing the east and proceeded to say his Muslim morning prayers. Nobody objected. He proceeded unencumbered.

This brings up a specific insult. There is an artifact, destined for the National September 11 Memorial Museum. It is two pieces of structural steel from the World Trade Center that took its shape after one of the buildings was destroyed by the suicide attack. A group called "American Atheists" is suing to have its installation in the museum blocked because it resembles the principal symbol of Christianity, the cross. The presiding judge has ordered the plaintiffs to provide additional briefs that more convincingly demonstrate "constitutional injury" before he will allow the suit to proceed. Following his ruling, the statement from one

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Farmers Market

Dear Editor
Sing with me... "Oh what fun it is to stroll in a one lane open air!"

That's how I feel every Tuesday at our local farmer's market. Come and stroll, and I mean stroll, take your time, and meet the vendors who are so friendly. They have worked hard to bring us such wonderful fresh veggies, fruits, flowers and eggs. Also the homemade crafts make wonderful gifts for any occasion.

My husband and I are first year residents here in this wonderful mountainous community and we are so enjoying all the activities both here and in the surrounding towns. At 70 and 80 years old we are very active with our gardens and fixing up our one acre "lil' Eden, and visiting the thrift shops, festivals, restaurants, parks, and it goes on and on.

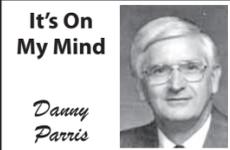
Thank you Blairsville leaders for giving us such a wonderful town to live in during our "senior years". You are partly responsible for keeping us young because you have so much for us to see and do and enjoy.

Oh yes, while you're strolling thru the market, there is also a hotdog and bratwurst booth and baked goodies if you get hungry. My hubby and I actually have our Tuesday supper there, he loves bratwurst and I love hotdogs, and watch out if they have brownies, we'll buy them before you, we'll maybe not all of them, but, ok, ok, we'll leave you some.

Barbara Ziegenbein

Reasons for Worry

Some years ago a Peanuts comic strip depicted Charlie Brown walking around with a placard that read, "You don't have to worry!" Lucy comes by and with her sarcastic look says, "And why Charlie Brown?" Charlie Brown turned the placard to the other side which read: "Because I worry enough for everyone!" A large portion of our society would identify with Charlie Brown. Worry is not a very pleasant activity to engage in. A famous preacher was once asked, "Do you ever worry?" He replied, "Of course not. Worry is sin. If I'm gonna sin I pick something a lot more fun than worry!" If worry is not a lot of fun, why do people worry? Well, some people worry because they have misplaced values. Jesus said that life is more than material. He said, "Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat; neither for the body, what you shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment" (Luke 12:22-23). Certainly, this does not condone laziness, lack of planning nor being good stewards of the opportunities of life. But it does teach us that God, as our great shepherd will provide for His sheep. He illustrates this by saying, "Consider the ravens (vultures): for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them; how much more are you better than the fowls?" (Luke 12:24).



It's On My Mind
Danny Parris

Many of us probably have committed to memory the following little verse:
"Said the robin to the sparrow,
I'd surely like to know,
Why these anxious human beings
Rush about and worry so!
Said the sparrow to the robin
Friend I think it must be,
That they have no heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me."

A second reason for worry is a mistaken view of life. Too many of us view life from the human side and not from the divine side of life. The Bible teaches us that to live we must die; that to be free we must become slaves; to be full we must

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Questions and Answers

Courthouse Security part II

Q. "This morning I experienced, first hand, the new security policy which you've put in place at the courthouse. After being told to return to my vehicle and leave my small pocket knife, I gathered up my belongings and left. I refuse to be treated like a suspect."

A. I totally sympathize with you and feel your pain. I was one of the last commissioners in the state to succumb to this courthouse security inspection. If you read my Q & A last week, I told you I went along kicking and screaming. However there are lots of people involved with this decision to begin the security checkpoint besides just me. The Governor, the Legislature, the Judges, the Sheriff's office, NRA, Georgia Carry, the idiots who illegally use guns and shoot people, those who will not adequately fund the discovery and treatment of mental illness often leaving them in local jails, those who think we should revert to a western culture of the 1800s when everyone should carry a gun on their hip and instead of using reason to settle disagreements, use gunfire instead. I could go on and on, but bottom line sir, I am very sorry and no one hates that it has come to this more than me.

Q. Has everyone been negative about the new security checkpoint at the courthouse?

A. No, in fact most have seemed to be okay with it, but that does not mean that those who are upset should not receive our ear as well, because they all have a valid point. How foolish was it for almost every courthouse in the State of Georgia to spend millions and millions of dollars on this new courthouse security back in 2005, because at the time there had only been one shooting in one courthouse in Fulton County in their history, and it came from a deputy's own gun and did not involve bringing weapons into a courthouse.

However, on the other hand, we all have to admit that there have been lots of new mass shootings in the years since that shooting and we do seem to live in a country filled with more hatred.

Q. How safe is safe enough today?

A. Common sense seems to have taken a back seat lately. How safe is too safe and can we protect against all danger in any

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



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Friendly Help

Dear Editor,
I am convinced there is a unique type of heart that beats in the chest of a public servant. Those feelings were enforced on Thursday afternoon, June 26th, when my front tire went flat, on Highway 515, a few miles west of Walmart.

As I stood there with the hot sun beating down on me, I was beginning to despair of help. I contemplated walking but I felt that would leave me too vulnerable and at least if need be, I could retreat into a locked (very hot) car!

Before I had the chance to reduce myself to tears, (we women do that sometimes) here came a vehicle slowing down from a long ways off. They were going west and at the next turn around, came back. He is a firefighter and I am so sorry I didn't get his name. Within the next minute here came another vehicle with many flashing lights. He also was heading west, then did a turn around. He is a Sheriff's Deputy - got his name - Tim. And before the firefighter was able to pull away (after securing help) the next car that stopped was a Minister - Terry.

As I stated in the first sentence... "There is a unique heart that beats in the chest of a servant."

Those that passed me up, I feel certain had a good reason, but I can't give enough "Thanks" for the Firefighter, the Sheriff's Deputy and the Minister of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you and your fellow servants!

Jean Holsapple

Open Letter to Commissioner Paris

Dear Editor,
This morning, I experienced, first hand, the new security policy which you've put in place at the courthouse. After I was told to return to my truck and leave my 2" pocket knife there, I gathered up my belongings and left. I refused to be treated like a suspect and said as much to the two deputies.

I fully appreciate your stated opinion in yesterday's paper but, over the years, your feelings regarding the First Amendment have been well documented. Rather than guarding the entrances to the courthouse, are there not more important, more immediate, duties to which those deputies could be assigned?

How will the patrol time to which those deputies are normally assigned be recouped, re-allocated, recovered? Would not a sign prohibiting armed entrance into the courthouse — similar to the sign which was in place for many years — be sufficient?

How is the Union County courthouse any different than a private business in posting signs forbidding weapons? Are there not laws in place in Georgia forbidding the harming of another human being by any method — except in limited instances of necessary self-defense?

If that is the case, why, then, the sudden

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Uncle Johnny

Uncle Johnny and Aunt Ruth were elderly fixtures of the Traptown Community. The couple had lost their home for reasons that have been long forgotten.

Their daughter, Moley, was a neighbor to my Papa. For some unknown reason their children were unable to help them during their time of need. Papa was very fond of the elderly couple and offered to give them an acre of land and to build a house on the land. Uncle Johnny and Aunt Ruth were told they could live in this house for the remaining years of their lives. However, upon their deaths the land and house would revert back to papa and Granny.

Uncle Johnny was very pleased with this arrangement and showed his affection towards my grandparents and his family. When my dad and Uncle Bud were small Uncle Johnny looked upon them as his own grandchildren. The two families were exceedingly close.

My grandparents each had a brother that was well loved as long as they were sober. But, when they were drinking people didn't like to be around them because of their unruly behavior. Granny's brother, Dennis, was big and strong as an ox. Pogy was Papa's brother and was the baby of the family. Pogy and Dennis would never harm anyone intentionally. But, when the pair became intoxicated they were always bent on having fun and would stop at nothing for a good laugh. Dennis and Pogy showed up at Papa's house one evening and yes the pair were drinking and laughing.

Dennis had a knack for knowing when Granny had a fresh baked coconut cake. So, upon entering the house he ransacked the kitchen until he found Granny's new cake. He consumed about half of it at one sitting. Meanwhile, Pogy went to the barn where Papa was milking Dancing Betty. He began to beg Papa, "Coon, let me milk the cow". Papa knew Pogy was drunk, so, he told him to leave. But, Pogy just kept up his begging. Dennis walked out the house and heard Pogy begging. So, Dennis walked up to the barn. He picked Papa up and placed him down on the ground. Dennis then sat on Papa preventing him from getting up. Pogy then began milking the cow.

The cow was called Dancing Betty because she would not stand still to be milked for anyone except Papa. The cow danced all over the stall of the barn while Pogy staggered and chased her around the barn. Eventually he cornered her and tried to squeeze her utter. Dancing Betty had enough and stood on Pogy's big toe. You could hear Pogy scream all the way to Union Hill Church House. Instead of helping his buddy Dennis just sat on Papa and laughed

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Around The Farm
Mickey Cummings

And She's Off!

Less than two months in her new position and Tourism Director Tobie Chandler is leading Union County's growing tourism industry in a big way. Because tourism brings people and their money to our county to support our local businesses and sustain jobs, the efforts of the Chamber to promote this leading industry are vital. Here are a few exciting things happening on the tourism front.

Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



Hop along the History Trail. The Chamber is working with a number of county partners including the Union County Historical Society and the Georgia Mountain Research & Education Center Community Council to compile a list of historical assets in Union County and organize them into a visitor friendly trail. Historical businesses, cemeteries, attractions, and structures will all be included.

Homegrown and Handmade can mean only one thing. The second edition of the North Georgia Farm Trail pocket guide to agritourism will hit the stands this week. The Chambers of Commerce in Towns, Union, Fannin, Gilmer, and Pickens counties have just released the second edition of our ultra popular guide to farms, orchards, wineries, and all things agritourism along the Georgia Mountain Parkway. The just released second edition now includes even more places to experience our authentic mountain treats including retail outlets that primarily offer

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Weapons of Mass Destruction

I'm not sure what I dislike more about paper shredding. The shredder or the fact that we need shredders.

It disturbs me that we have gotten to a point in our highly civilized society that it has become necessary to shred any evidence that we exist, in order to insure that our identity will not be stolen from us. If a thief has the where withal to find your trash in the middle of the dump, go through the wet coffee grounds and sticky eggshells long enough to recover your bank statement, how come they don't have a decent job? I'd hire someone that tenacious. (For those of you that compost your scraps for your gardens, feel smug because your garbage is cleaner than mine.)

If they then are bright enough to utilize the hieroglyphics on the bank statement to ascertain your financial footprint, I vote we give them some of the Georgia Lotto money and send them to college. I can't even figure out what my full account number is on my bank statement.

Then there's the shredder themselves. I had one and used it once. It was noisy. Very noisy. Irritatingly noisy. Worse than someone eating potato chips with their mouth open, sitting three feet from you, during the month of March, when you've given up potato chips for Lent.

This super villain, disguised as a trash can, is designed to chew up and spit out fingers. I'm not willing to sacrifice mine to protect my identity. I also discovered that you can't move a paper shredder. After you assemble it, it has to stay where you put it, because it is engineered so that it is ridiculously top heavy. Any movement will cause it to tip, with the top crashing to the floor where it smashes your toes (another digit sacrificed) and then leaves a nasty gouge in your hardwood floors.

Then there is the electrical cord. The cord on my father's electric shaver was longer than the one attached to this weapon of mass destruction. Why does this machine have to be located within inches of the outlet?

I'm not the only one who feels this way.

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