# Opinions

## Help make an impact

This week, I hand my column over to the Friends of Tricia Spear.

On Valentine's Day, the No Greater LOVE 5K and 1-mile Walk will be held at Meeks Park. It's all about Tricia Spear, Humane Society Thrift Shop Manager.

Tricia has been in the Neurological ICU of Erlanger Medical Center since the beginning of January. She is a great friend to our community and not many have gone untouched by her compassion. Whether volunteering for events, giving up her days off to help at



the Union County Farmers Market, saving a stray animal or help ing with the needs of families displaced by a fire, Tricia has always been the one who steps up time and time again to offer assistance to anyone and everyone.

Now it's our turn. We (Friends of Tricia Spear) are hosting the No Greater LOVE 5K and 1-mile Walk on Valentine's Day, Saturday, February 14th at Meeks Park. The money we raise will go towards a Recovery Fund that will pay bills and expenses while she is unable to work. Please consider sponsoring our event and helping us make sure the only thing Tricia needs to think about is getting better.

There are several ways you can help.

First, become a sponsor for the event by contacting Colleen Urbaniuk at colleen-1969@hotmail.com or stop by the Seasons Inn Motel or The Humane Society Thrift Shop (both in Downtown Blairsville) to get a sponsorship form.

Second, register to participate in either the 5K or the 1 mile walk. Registration forms are available at the Seasons Inn Motel, The Humane Society Thrift Shop or online at active.com. You can also register the day of the race. Registration begins at 9 a.m. and the race starts at 10 a.m. Entry fees are \$25 for the 5K and \$20 for the 1 mile walk. Registration includes an event t-shirt for all those who pre-register for the event.

Third, volunteer to help for the event. Please contact Colleen Urbaniuk at Seasons Inn, (706) 745-1631.

Fourth, make a donation to The Tricia Spear Recovery Fund at United Community Bank.

Fifth, prayers, prayers, and more prayers for Tricia's full recovery and her vibrant return to the things she loves.

## Everybody has one...

## **Trustworthy Source**

As he approached the rim, he began to smell the smoke. The terrain and rocks under his feet were a color and texture foreign to his experience. Suddenly he was there, and his gaze fell deep into the crater toward the glow

of fire in what the locals call, "The Mouth of Hell," the Masaya Volcano in Nicaragua. Wrestling with his sense of danger, it helped to recall inspecting the eerie confines of a witch doctor in Haiti and braving the murderous streets of Ciudad Juarez.



This could begin the fictional, fanciful tale of an unful filled adventurer. But it could be a true story with witnesses still alive that could authenticate the details.

A fabricated story widely published as true wouldn't take long to unravel. That's what happened in 2003 when Jason Blair lost his job with the New York Times over made-up stories. Perhaps worse, journalist Janet Cooke had to return a Pulitzer Prize for a story she fabricated. Late in 2014, the false Sabrina Erdely story in Rolling Stones magazine did great harm to the University of Virginia. In these cases people read the stories and knew they were not true, and made noise about it.

This idea forms one of the reasons you can believe the Bible. It is not a collection of philosophical musings or arbitrary morality. It is a narrative that contains specific details of places, times, and people while revealing truth about God and people. Wouldn't it make sense that if God were to reveal truth via the written word, He would include historical, verifiable details about real people so it would be plausible? Indeed, at the times the various books of the New Testament were written, the people in the stories were still alive! The books were copied and distributed far and wide with no fear that someone in the story would show up and declare, "Hey, that didn't happen!"

Paul makes that point himself, writing about all the people who witnessed the resurrected Christ, "He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now" (1Cor 15:6). He was using their experiences and living witness as proof of truth. Besides, why would Christians maintain

#### See Fowler, page 5A

## **Questions and Answers**

Part 1: For the next few weeks we will be doing a series of questions on Union County Codes and Ordinances. We will touch briefly on some of the ordinances.

Q. How can I find out what ordinances Union County has?

A. You can find our ordinances on our website at www.unioncountyga.gov. Go to the "government" tab, select "Commissioner" and look on the left-hand side for "Codes and Ordinances." You can also come by the Commissioner's Office and ask to see the Code Book.



#### Q. What exactly is an ordinance?

A. In order to perform its various functions, a county governing authority enacts its own legislation, usually in the form of an ordinance. An ordinance is a permanent rule of conduct. It is more formal than a resolution. It is a law or legislative act of the commissioner. Some areas in which counties have been expressly given the authority to regulate through ordinance include, building codes, signs, dangerous dogs, soil erosion and sedimentation control, litter, etc.

#### Q. How do you decide to enact an ordinance?

A. We really try NOT to adopt ordinances unless absolutely necessary. Adopting ordinances are hard decisions to make and require hours and hours of research, reading, and legal advice. However, in a growing community, sometimes they are necessary. One example is the billboard ordinance adopted in 2006. This ordinance came about as a result of the proliferation of billboards being erected along Hwy. 515. A similar issue involved RV Parks. RV Parks were being built with little consideration for how they would impact a neighborhood and thereby negatively affecting property values.

#### Q. How is an ordinance adopted in Union County?

A. There is a "first reading" held at a regular county meeting. This is the first public notice. Then at the next county meeting there is a "second reading" and no, we do not stand up and actually read the entire ordinance. In between the two readings we hold a public hearing and advertise this hearing in the newspaper. The second reading would include any changes made since the first

#### See **Paris**, page 5A •

## An Evening with the STARS

It is with great pleasure that I announce the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce upcoming event, An Evening with the STARS sponsored by Woodmen of the World.

The event will be held on Tuesday, February 10th at 6 p.m. at the Union County Community Center and unlike any other Chamber event! The evening



will be filled with food and fun in an amazing atmosphere on the red carpet.

Attendees can look forward to our annual Chamber update which will highlight the top accomplishments of 2014 as well as exciting announcements for 2015. We will also recognize many of Blairsville-Union County's shining stars in business, leadership, and community roles. Musical entertainment throughout the evening will be provided by Shannon York who was the 2011 winner of the Mountain Idol Contest and has opened for numerous artists including Travis Tritt. Joining Shannon on stage will be Rob Harper. An exquisite dinner will be catered by Copperhead Lodge.

The Chamber is also proud to be the local sponsor of the STAR Student/Teacher program. At this year's event we will recognize the local STAR students and teachers from Union County High School and Mountain Education Charter

### See Williams, page 6A

## the Editor ...

Letters to

## **Food For Thought**

#### Dear Editor,

Remember the game hide and seek when we were young kids, one kid would hide his eyes against a tree or the side of a barn and count to 50 and then he would say: Ready or not, here I come. Well there is coming a day soon when God is going to give His Son, Jesus a command from heaven to go gather His children to Himself. Ready or not it's going to take place.

My question to you is: Are you sure that you know, that you know, that when Jesus Christ comes suddenly without any warning, that you are prepared to meet Him in the air and forever be with Him in eternity. This is a decision that every human being ever born onto this earth will have to make. You may think this is not going to happen to you, that when you die, that's it, but the Bible is clear that this old sinful body shall die, but the soul of man and woman, boy and girl shall live on into eternity.

Where we live is the question. Heaven and Hell are mentioned many times in the Bible and both places are real, not some mystical dream or fantasy, but an actual place of harmony and peace with God in Heaven or completely forever separated from God in Hell.

Yes, the choice is yours to make, not even God can make it for you. Amen Frank F. Combs





"Oh, no! The highlight of my year is Opening Day!"

#### Theories Dear Editor,

I am sure that the "Fossil Lady" is a very nice person who means well in all she does for students. But when it comes to "science," most Christians who also believe in factual science (including me) have a serious issue with an assertion which appeared in the article on page 12A of your Jan. 21, 2015 edition. The sentence states that "Some of her {fossil} samples are as old as 3.4 billion years." However, my assertion, as well as that of many prominent and respected (honest) scientists, would say that the over 200 students of UCMS were unscientifically informed as to the age of "some ... samples." True scientists know that accurate dating of the distant past is not open to the normal processes of experimental science, that is, repeatable experiments in the present. Because of so many anomalies, honest archaeologists would not and cannot regard current dating methods as absolute. In reality, all scientific dating methods, including those that point to a younger Earth, rely on improvable assumptions. When it comes to dating methods and evolution, even the atheistic evolutionist W.B. Provine admitted: "Most of what I learned of the field [evolutionary biology] in graduate (1964-68) school is either wrong or significantly changed." Yes, I am coming from a Christian Biblical perspective; I proudly admit it and am ready to defend it any time. It is offensive to me that anyone would consciously make any "age-offossil" or age-of-earth statement to students as if it is absolute "science" when they should know better. When they do not know better, then the students throughout Georgia and elsewhere are being misled, and as far as I'm concerned, brain-

My father, Paul, was a senior at Phil Campbell High School in the spring of 1956. His cousin, Junior and his good friend, Billy Ray were his lab partners in a chemistry class. They were always kidding around with Mr. Steele, their Chemistry teacher, about wanting to learn

Around shine. Billy Ray was eager to learn this process. Mr. Steele would always laugh Mickey and tell the boys "Someday we will Cummings learn to make moonshine in this class".

The Farm

\*\*

Junior

about making moon-



## Dear Editor,

It seems to me that it is in fashion today to claim your elected official did not follow "the will of the people" when they cast a vote with which you disagree. As the leader of a political party, special interest group, third party, lobbying group, fringe group or any organization you serve as the spokesperson for your constituency (real or imagined). However, no matter how much you believe the world revolves around you, you do not speak for the people.

Every elected official represents every citizen in their political jurisdiction. That includes those citizens who didn't vote for that official plus everyone who didn't vote at all. I think it is safe to say that you don't speak for either of those groups

Now consider the 50 percent plus 1 or more who did vote for that elected official. I think it would be reasonable to say that some within that group of supporters do not believe the vote with which you disagree was necessarily a bad vote.

This process goes on effectively eliminating more and more who agree with you until you are left with a small but vocal minority that you actually represent.

So standing up and saying your elected official did not follow the "will of the people" is silly only surpassed by an individual who agrees with their elected official on 99 percent of the issues but runs against them because they disagree with a single vote or on a single issue. Patrick Malone

#### Tax rate in question

Dear Editor,

There are 159 counties in the State of Georgia. These 84 have lower tax rates than Union County. These 2015 figures are based on the average property taxes for a \$165,000 single family home. In spite of what has been repeatedly and publicly stated in one of the regular by-lines in the North Georgia News, Union County does not have one of the four or five "lowest tax rates" in Georgia.

Far from it. (http://www.tax-rates.org/ georgia/property-tax) Sample: Clay County \$496; Fannin County \$633; Gilmer County \$749; Greene County \$847; Habersham County \$886; Polk County \$780; Rabun County \$822; Towns County \$677; Walker County \$696; and Union County \$902. George Mitchell

See **Braddy**, page 5A

### Separation of church and state **Dear Editor**,

Last week Don Allen and Georgia Mitchell provided the comics section of the North Georgia News with their absurd, silly comments. Allen, advocating unlimited freedom to carry whatever weapon you like where ever you like, proclaimed that "During World War II the Japanese decided not to invade America because they knew Americans were armed."

You are very convincing, Don. You've convinced me that you are abysmally ignorant of the history of WWII in the Pacific. George Mitchell's contribution is his ludicrous opinion that progressive/liberal/Democrat hungry curs want to eliminate Christianity from the US. What we proud progressive liberal curs hunger for is exactly the same thing Thomas Jefferson and James Madison wanted: Keep your church and your religious beliefs out of the government of our country. Don't use my tax money to promote your religion. Believe whatever you want, and live by your religious principles, so long as your beliefs are not destructive or dangerous. Charles Cheves

One day the Chemistry class was conducting laboratory experiment. The experiment was designed to teach students the process whereby alcohol was distilled. Billy Ray was late for class because he was being disciplined by one of the teachers for misbehaving. So, Junior and Dad decided to have a little fun at Billy Ray's expense

When Billy Ray finally made it to class the experiment had already begun and he wanted to know what was happening. As Dad wrote down the boiling point of alcohol Junior explained to Billy Ray that Mr. Steele had finally decided to show the students how to distill alcohol. Junior further explained that the jar over the Bunsen burner was actually a little still and the glass tube was very similar to a copper worm that ran out of a still. So, it was just like making whiskey.

Billy Ray didn't believe Junior, so, he grabbed the lab manual from my Dad's hands and read the words, "alcohol's boiling point". After reading those words Billy Ray licked his lips and before anyone could stop him he grabbed the distilled alcohol and took a swallow. He really didn't realize he was drinking rubbing alcohol. I guess Junior and Dad didn't realize that drinking this stuff would pose a problem for Billy Ray. But then his face began to turn red and he began gasping for breath. Junior began smacking him on the back and Dad ran to the RC drink machine. Billy Ray drank 7 bottles of RC Cola before he could catch his breath.

At this point Mr. Steele came rushing to the boys and demanded to know the reason for their behavior. Junior told Mr. Steele that somehow Billy Ray got the idea the class was making whiskey and he decided to try the product. I guess Billy Ray learned a good lesson about being late for class. Especially, since he had to make a trip to the hospital in Haleyville.

Junior also liked to prank his teachers. Mrs. Underwood was the best loved teacher at Phil Campbell High School. She taught literature, she was very nice and was always dressed prim and proper. One day Junior caught a field mouse and placed it in a match box. This match box was huge and it had contained those wooden matches with the sulfur heads. Junior took the matchbox to school and after lunch he placed the match box on Mrs. Underwood's desk.

See Cummings, page 5A



"I'm strong to the finich, cause I eat my spinach". Those of us raised in the 50s and 60s knew those lyrics before we even learned "Twinkle, twinkle little star". Popeye was the cartoon sailor man that was always encounter-

ing trouble on his way to save the day for his girlfriend, Olive Oyl. When Popeye had no more wherewithal to logistically solve his problems, he turned



to a can of spinach, squeezed it open and sucked it down. He used this spurt of nutritionally induced brawn to upend his opponent. He thus won the affection and attention of Olive Oyl, who usually just walked in a mild stupor, with her nephew, SweetPea crawling along side of her, dodging her incredibly enormous feet.

Today I'm thinking of spinach. Not the canned stuff. (Oh, isn't that just the most awful slimy, disgusting excuse for a vegetable?) And I'm not thinking fresh spinach; though I do love it fixed a myriad of ways. It's just that fresh spinach seems only affordable in its raw form. A bag of raw spinach will easily make 4-6 entrée size Spinach, Bacon and Blues Cheese salads, one of my favorite lunch or dinner meals. If I steam or sauté that same bag of greens, I'll end up with two small side servings. No where on the bag does it indicate that it will disappear when heated. Rachel Ray often makes the point that one of the best bargains in your grocery store is frozen spinach. I couldn't agree with her more.

While in Sicily in 2013, I attended a cooking workshop taught by the beautifully soulful chef, Fabrizia Lanza. Wild fennel in the Sicilian hills, grows prolifically. Unlike domestically grown fennel, the wild leafy wisps above ground are thicker and are used much like spinach in Sicilian recipes. That day, Fabrizia concocted a fritter that was mouth watering, and served with a nice semi dry white wine from the Lanza family winery. It would take too many store bought fennel bulbs to supply us with what we need for this recipe, but frozen spinach will make it quick, easy and nearly as delectable. You can serve this as an appetizer with a cheese selection or it will serve well as a side dish to a light seafood dinner.

See *Leone*, page 5A

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