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Department of Education and the Federal Govt. In the late 1940s, the government helped rural schools with funding for canneries because at the time there was a very limited supply of super markets for commercial foods in many rural counties in Georgia and the US. The school systems made it a part of their curriculum.

Q. I have never been in a canning plant. What kind of equipment does a cannery have?

A. Food processing centers (canneries) often feature equipment that would not be possible for most homeowners to keep and use. Some canning plants have large pea sheller machines. These machines can shell 2 bushels of peas or beans in about 6 minutes. In tomato country, a large juicer (usually industrial grade) is essential. Also, large cooking kettles are used to cook juices, soups, stews, and sauces, in great amounts. Smaller cooking kettles are available to do the same in lesser amounts. They are also popular for making jams and jellies.

Q. What special equipment does our canning plant have?

A. According to Mickey Cummings, our plant has a peach peeler, an apple-sauce maker (takes the seeds and skins out and grinds the cooked apples into apple-sauce), a tomato juicer, and blanchers (blanches the food product before putting into

jars). The plant has four retorts (a standard piece of equipment in a canning plant. Basically it is a large pressure cooker but much larger than the home pressure cookers you may be familiar with. These are usually capable of cooking 100 quart jars at a time) and three water baths. Some food products have to be processed in a pressure cooker and some food products can be processed in a water bath. If you do not know anything about what has to be done to what, the staff at our canning plant will be there to help you. All you have to do is bring yourself, your food product, and your jars and lids.

Q. How do canning plants work?

A. Most canning plants are steam driven. That is, they have a large boiler that produces the steam to power the various cooking devices and steam lines. (The boiler was the piece of equipment that had to be specially designed for our plant and which took so long to get.)

One of the great aspects of a canning plant is the convenience. A family can literally preserve all they will use in a year of a specific food in a day at a canning plant. Working in the canning plant keeps the heat of cooking out of the home during the summer.

Finally, at the end of the day, the canning plant staff can rinse away the mess with a water hose.

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the trials and tribulations of keeping bees and answering all your questions beginning at 4 p.m.

On Tuesday, Oct. 15, we will be having our second "Foodie Night." This night will be feature soups, stews and chili. As before, you'll have an opportunity to purchase 5 tickets for \$5. Then you'll use these tickets to get healthy samplings from our vendors for 1 or 2 tickets. Our first Foodie Night was a wonderful success, but it was just the tip of the iceberg. We look forward to your feedback as we make plans to expand this concept next season.

Each Saturday in October is an event. On Oct. 6, we will be celebrating "Apple Dumplin' Day." See the big copper pot make apple butter the old fashion way. On Oct. 13, we salute Appalachian Sweetness, where we feature Union County's unique sorghum crop, as well as honey producers. Oct. 20 we will have a Beans and Greens Cook-off and corn bread competition. Oct. 27 will be a Great Butternut Creek Pumpkin Party complete with costume competition.

So gear up for a "Fall Fantasy" at The Farmers Market. I'll see you there!

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ship, ISI broadened the field beyond college students to include American adults (both private citizens and elected officials), ranging from those with no high school diplomas to those with advanced degrees. Some "no surprise" findings from that survey:

Seventy-one percent of Americans failed the test, with an overall average score of 49 percent, or an "F."

Fewer than half of all Americans can name all three branches of government, a minimal requirement for understanding America's constitutional system. Only 24 percent of college graduates know the First Amendment prohibits establishing an official religion for the United States.

Earning a college degree does little to increase knowledge of America's history, key texts, and institutions. In fact, college educators themselves scored only 55 percent.

Only 54 percent of college graduates can correctly identify a basic description of the free enterprise system, in which all Americans participate.

Elected officials typically have less civic knowledge than the general public. On average, they score 44

percent, five percentage points lower than non-officeholders.

Thirty percent of elected officials do not know that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" are the inalienable rights referred to in the Declaration of Independence.

Seventy-one percent of the population failed the ISI basic civic literacy test because they do not understand the historical, economic, political, and ethical values upon which our republic was built, and they do not understand the principles and documents on which our freedom stands. As Thomas Jefferson warned, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

And THAT, is what explains those high marks for Obama in the polls: 71 percent of the people out there lack the understanding which is central to informed participation in civic life. And yet, they participate. Forget the imbroglia over the requirement to provide picture IDs to qualify for voting: what we need is a requirement to provide proof of civic literacy to qualify for voting.

Cordially,

Chuck Esposito, Suches, GA

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the teacher. We now expect students to take responsibility for their learning. Learning is fluid, working like a well-oiled machine, beginning with the teacher in mind then transitioning to self-motivation, awareness, and work ethic. When we hear "teacher" it is often of the classroom teacher but we must think about and give credit to all who contribute to the learning of a child: educators, parents, peers, and mentors.

This school year is the most stressful since the introduction of accountability. Teachers are dealing with a new curriculum and schools are dealing with a new accountability system. As the year of transitions begin, it is important to reflect on the successes of last year.

Test scores are extremely critical in today's education environment and results are used to determine if students are learning Georgia's standards. Whether you agree or disagree with the emphasis on test scores, they provide a gauge for schools, parents, communities, and future businesses. The team of educators in Union County should be applauded for their continued success on Georgia's Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) in grades 3-8 and End-of-Course Tests (EOCT) in grades 9-12. On the CRCT, Reading, Language Arts, Math-

ematics, Science, and Social Studies are assessed annually. EOCTs assessed during the 2011-2012 school year were 9th Grade Literature, American Literature, Mathematics I, Mathematics II, Physical Science, Biology, United States History, and Economics. Based on the spring administration, Union County Schools exceeded well above the state average and outpaced the majority of Georgia's 180 school districts.

Out of 38 subjects, 30 were in the Top 25 passing rates and 20 were in the Top 10. Out of All Subjects at each grade, 3 were in the Top 5 passing rates while 3rd grade was #1 in Georgia.

For us to continue the success, we must think beyond the test scores and focus on expanding services to students. We must replace chronological age with content mastery. We must integrate flexibility and personalized educational experiences. We must expand partnerships with businesses and our community. We must prepare students for a world we cannot currently comprehend. We must have faith that we are providing the foundation necessary for tomorrow's leaders. Those leaders are our students.

Dr. Jeremy Williams
Assistant Superintendent
Union County Schools

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minor squabbles but really, we remain almost inseparable. But you know even this morning I had to have a "come to Jesus meeting" with my mind. I intended to call someone and do you know my mind snuck in grabbed that name and phone number and refused to return it until after lunch. I believe the reason my mind did that was

because I had been daydreaming and my mind had gotten jealous. As I get older I must remember to give my mind more attention. Isaiah solved the problem long ago when he said, "Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isaiah 26:3)

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a bottle to the Food Science Department at UGA to have it analyzed. A few days later I received a phone call from a friend. I answered the call and she was laughing. She said, "Mickey, you have made some really good Tomato Wine".

The Union County Canning Plant is operating at full capacity. The season is getting late and gardens are running out of steam. Next week, we will be open for our regular schedule of Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 AM until noon. But, we will also be open on the first 3 Mondays in October during the evenings from 3 PM until 7 PM to accommodate those of you which work during the day. After the first week of October we will close on Thursdays. Finally, we will open a couple of days in November and in December for "Meat Days" at the Canning Plant. So, if you wish to can some chili or chicken noodle soup or any product containing meat or even some greens watch the paper for our schedule of "Meat Days at the Canning Plant"

Please be advised that

the Farmers Market will be open until the last Saturday in October. On Tuesday, October 16, we will have another "Food Night" at the Farmers Market. That evening we will emphasize soups. So, come out to the Farmers Market to try some good vegetable soup and cornbread. I expect we'll have vegetable soup, chowders, chili, chicken noodle soup and many other types of soup for your enjoyment.

One other announcement concerning the Farmers Market is we will be having our local Tractor Show and Parade on October 20th. If you have any type of tractor you can enter it in our show and parade. The tractors can be new or antique. Please arrive by 9 a.m. and the judging will take place at 9:30 a.m. The parade will begin at 10 a.m. Each participant will be given a Farmers Market T-Shirt. We will recognize the best restoration, oldest, and the newest tractor at the event. This event is sponsored by the Union County Georgia Farm Bureau. So, please come and be with us at the Farmers Market.

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We rely on foreign entities for loans. Hope they don't notice our down grade - they may hike our interest rate. Interest is about \$16 Billion a week. Forget the rich, they haven't got enough. Maybe Hollywood. Better still the rich could outsmart us, and leave the country. It's reported a French billionaire has already applied for citizenship in another

country because of their tax proposal on the wealthy. This country's bill is coming due! My HOPE is we CHANGE. We desperately need someone who understands business (free enterprise) and how it operates. God bless the USA.

Edwina Ginn
Morganton, GA

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crickets holler and then the temperature will rise. A distance described "as the crow flies" means a straight line from here to there. If something was really ugly it would "scare haints in a thicket."

Our local lore is a treasure we should invite into our daily conversations. It is a part of our culture that should be embraced and shared. The Chamber is proud to represent our local community and the

wonderful traditions that are part of Union County. We invite you to join our efforts through membership in the Chamber. Our online presence can be viewed at www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com. Please visit us often to stay informed of businesses and events in this community. Please call (706) 745-5789 for additional information. I may be reached anytime at Chair@BlairsvilleChamber.com.

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should be the ultimate (and only) goal for our public schools: that they produce students who can compete at least on a par with with students in the rest of the world; where perhaps the "essential services" Dr. Barge referred to are not seen as being so "essential." Americans boast about our "exceptionalism" - event with regard to our educational standards - without feeling the need to refer to actual statistics. The United States recently placed twenty-fourth out of twenty-nine in the International Student Assessment tests. This is an "ex-

ceptionalism" Americans have no reason to boast about.

American public schools - and that includes those in Georgia - should concern themselves less with the "un-essentials," and more with the real "essentials," such as the quality of teachers.

We could end up with an educational system that might truly be called "exceptional." Otherwise, we will just continue to dither, the world passing us by and snickering while doing so.

Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey
Blairsville, GA