

Opinions

Everybody has one

Let's pitch in

Times are hard, we all know that.

However, there's a chance for all of us to make a difference in the life of a local child.

How many of us remember waking up Christmas morning to an empty Christmas tree?

I'm sure there are a few of us out there. But, I don't remember a Christmas when I didn't get something.

Heck, I remember my Granny Potts fixing me up with a gift bag of fruit and candy every Christmas.

And yes, Mom and Dad, clothes count as Christmas presents. Of course, toys do too. Well, back to the point.

There's a chance that several hundred children in our community will be without a Christmas present on Christmas morning.

No, there's no evil Grinch stealing presents from the children. Unfortunately, this wretched economy has left many parents with decisions of eating, heating, or buying Christmas.

The first two take priority. The third, well, if the money doesn't reach, there's nothing under the Christmas tree.

Fortunately, there are several programs that reach the children most likely to be without a Christmas gift under the tree. Shop With a Cop, Give-A-Gift, Towns and Union Foster Children's Christmas Program, Marine Corp League, the Lions Club, and many other programs.

The key ingredient here is your help.

Blairsville Assistant Police Chief Michael "Bear" Baxter tells us that local businesses and residents have been very supportive of the Shop With a Cop program this year.

Approximately 40 children ages 11-17 will benefit from this program. They'd like to help more.

Union County Sheriff's Office spokesman C.J. Warden said the department hopes to continue the tradition of helping make the faces of more than 200 children ages 1-12 keep smiling. Toys and money are accepted.

Of course, the Foster Children's Christmas Program also makes a difference. They get some vital help from the United Community Bank Junior Board of Directors.

Then, there's us and the difference that we can make. Shop With a Cop still needs money, Give-A-Gift needs toys or money.

There's a lot of needy folks out there this year and somehow, we need to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and try and help.

Drop in and see Bear and Chief Johnny Carroll at the Blairsville Police Department, C.J. at the Union County Sheriff's Office, and check in with Richard Paolillo - (706) 781-5045 - with the Foster Children's Christmas Program.

There are a number of other groups accepting donations. Please send us a contact number so we can get those in the newspaper.

It's been a tough year financially for several folks. Let's do what we can to make a difference if we can. Now is a perfect time to pull together and help those in need this holiday season.

Having grown up here, I know how tight knit this community really is during the holiday season.

If there's some one out there that isn't going to have a good holiday season because of this economy, let's pull together and try and make a difference. You'll be more than happy that you did.

I thank you one and all for the kindness you have shown me in my first year as editor of the North Georgia News.

Once again, Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours. May it be blessed. Let us count our blessings, one and all.

Neighborhood Recycling

Q. Does the county still operate the Neighborhood Recycling Program?

A. Yes, we do. In fact, today as I am writing this, we are having a luncheon for the volunteers with the program. We have about 26 to 30 volunteers who do a tremendous job of staffing the fire stations on Wednesday mornings to accept recycled materials. They are a very dedicated group who are there in the heat and cold, snow and rain, fair weather and bad. Some of them have been volunteering in the program since its inception in 2006 and others have been there four and five years. They are passionate about recycling and it shows by their faithfulness.

Also, Nov. 15 was America Recycles Day and I have done a Recycling Proclamation. We encourage everyone to reduce waste by reusing, recycling, and buying recycled products. You will be hearing more in the weeks and months ahead about recycling in Union County.

Q. Please tell us more about the Neighborhood Recycling Program.

A. The idea for the Neighborhood Recycling Program came from a former employee of the Commissioner's Office. In 2005, Elizabeth Patton came up with an idea to address the need for recycling in Union County. Since Union County is rural and mountainous, recycling opportunities are not readily available to all citizens. Some residents in Suches had to drive many miles to get to an area where they could recycle. A plan was proposed where the county would use existing government facilities located throughout the county (fire stations) to double as recycling stations one day a week. Thus the Neighborhood Recycling Program was born.

Q. How was this program funded?

A. With the help of Leslie George, Executive Director of the North Georgia Resource Management Authority, an application



Straight Shooting



Thanksgiving Blessings

The tradition of giving thanks is far older than the national holiday.

Thanksgiving has its roots in the Holy Scriptures. There are many things for which to be thankful.

Charles Lowery, a minister, writer and counselor said, "If you can't find anything to be thankful for, be thankful for your nose. Be thankful God put it on right side up. What if God had put it on upside down? If it rained you would drown and if you sneezed you would blow your thankless head off."

One little boy said he was thankful for his glasses, "They keep little girls from kissing me and big boys from hitting me."

Paul said, "In everything give thanks: For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thess. 5:18).

David was in the second grade and having a really bad day. As he got on the bus he was bumped and suffered a scratch on the side of his face. At recess he collided with another boy and knocked loose two of his teeth. At lunchtime, while sliding on ice, he fell and broke his wrist. This time the school called David's father, who took him to the hospital. On the way to the hospital, his father noticed David was clutching something in his hand. "What do you have in your hand," his father asked. David said, "This is a quarter. I found it on the ground when I fell and broke my wrist. This is the first quarter I have ever found. Boy, is this my lucky day!"

Of all the peoples of the world, Americans have the most for which to be thankful. I personally thank God for my Spiritual heritage. I thank God that He sent a personal Savior who paid my sin debt on a cruel cross and through His sacrifice I possess everlasting life. I thank God that He has given me a Song in my heart: "Joy to the world the Lord has come." I thank God that He has given me a Star to follow: "I am the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). I thank God for Scriptures we can trust and not one word or promise will ever fail. I thank God for the Spirit of God that has been sent into our hearts that we can obey. I thank God for Saints we can love. I thank God that He has given us a Story to tell to our neighbors and to our nation and to the entire world. I thank God for my Spouse of 53 years. I thank God that He has blessed our marriage with a son, Mike, a daughter, Michele, and a son-in-law, Tim, and five grandchildren: Kristi, Kelli, Brooke, Stephanie, and Richard. I thank God for the church where I am a member. I thank God to be an American.

While there is much which could be improved in America, we still have the best of everything in the world. We have Almighty God to thank!

We need to turn to Him and thank Him for His bounty of blessings upon America. I am especially grateful for the Georgia Bull-

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Small Business Advertising

When it comes to advertising, many small businesses find themselves lost in the whirlwind of opportunities available. Gone are the days of choosing between only a handful of options. In today's business world, the possibilities are almost endless. Therefore, the need for a basic understanding of marketing principles and a true understanding of your customer base is more important than ever.

This week's article will discuss common advertising budgets, determining where to spend your dollars, and how to measure return on investment.

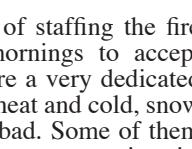
According to Meredith Munger, who is a small business guest blogger for the Phoenix Business Journal located at www.bizjournals.com, the common thought, "It takes money to make money" is true."

An advertising budget is a necessary expense for increased sales and should be considered an investment in your future. Making potential customers aware of your product, consistently being front of mind, and moving them to purchase is all part of the advertising process. The Small Business Administration (SBA) recommends that small businesses (under \$5 million in annual revenue) allocate 7-8 percent of their budget to marketing. Some business segments such as heavily consumer-focused industries can spend up to 20 percent on marketing. Primarily food manufacturing companies spend up to 35 percent of their budgets on marketing.

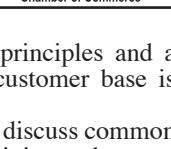
Once you understand the need for advertising and have determined your budget, the next question becomes, "Where are my advertising dollars best spent?"

Placing advertisements here and there is probably not the best strategy. Everyone knows that failing to place the message in front of the best potential audience is like casting stones in a pond.

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Paris Q & A



BUCC

Blairsville - Union County Chamber of Commerce

Jack

The first dog I can remember was a female Black and Tan, Blue Tick cross coon hound. Her name was Lou and by the time I came along she was well past her prime.

Back in the day she was one of the best coon hounds in North Alabama. Folks came from all around just to hear her run a coon. But, she was also a fair hand on the farm. Papa used her to help him round up both the hogs and cattle on his farm.

Cattle on his farm. She almost died in her youth due to an encounter with painter (panther). But, she lived long enough to become much attached to me. She bit my father when I was small because he was trying to spank me for talking back to my grandmother. She was a great coon hound and protector, but, she was only a dog.

By the time I was 10 someone gave us the ugliest dog I ever owned. Spot was a mix between Beagle and Basset Hound. The dog also had the biggest ego in the world. Spot thought he could lick any dog in the neighborhood. He once took on a Bulldog and as a result spent the rest of his life with a crooked neck. He too was just a dog.

As a young county agent I acquired a Black and Tan Coon Hound puppy. His registration paper official name was the Georgia Cracker. He was the sorriest coon dog that ever lived. He would back track a coon track away from a tree until the trail petered out and then the dog would go looking for a deer to chase.

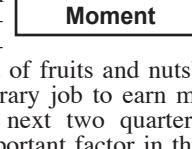
But, his favorite past time was killing chickens. My neighbor had a bunch of laying hens and this dog would dig into the chicken pen and grab a hen. The dog was so proud of his accomplishment he would bring the chicken home to me. I tied the chicken to the back of the dog in hopes of breaking the dog from killing my neighbor's chickens. The plan didn't work. I finally gave the dog to an Alabama deer hunter. Cracker was very entertaining and he was a chicken thief. But, he was just a dog.

About the time I got rid of Cracker I was given a beagle we called Festus. Festus wasn't used to hunt he was a family pet. The dog loved our family. Festus loved to wrestle with me. He would come running through the house and I would sweep his feet from under him. As a result Festus would trip and go sliding across our hardwood floor. He also loved to run across the room and jump onto the couch.

When Festus was about 3 years old our oldest son was born. The dog was patient with Will. I can still see Will trying to ride Festus like a horse. Our son used the dog's ears like a bridle. Festus tolerated Will and never offered to bite our son. But, Festus was only a dog.

We first met Jack in 1997. He was a beautiful Black Lab puppy and our family fell in love with this dog from the first time we met him. Jack was a rambunctious dog that loved chasing tennis balls. I once spent 3 hours throwing tennis balls to Jack. The first time I saw the dog swim I laughed until I cried. His head was

See Cummings, page 5A



Farmers Market Moment

Letters

To the Editor

Must we settle for less?

Dear Editor,

Mitt Romney was not the only loser on Election Day; all Americans were, when we were once again faced with the choice of voting for the lesser of two evils.

For many of us, another affront to our moral sensibilities was just too much, which probably accounted for the reduction in the national vote count.

When are we Americans going to have a presidential candidate truly worthy of our precious vote? Instead, as the media often assures us, Americans want a president they can be comfortable with, someone just like that total ignoramus George W. Bush; and look at what he got us into.

Barack Obama may play basketball with his friends, but he certainly does not inspire me.

There surely must be someone in this country who is intelligent, well-educated, urbane and well-mannered, of good moral background (not necessarily religious), well-traveled and accepting of other cultures, and brave enough to make his own decisions without being influenced by advisers who have ulterior motives. (An example of which being not what is best for the United States, but what is best for the state of Israel. The American public, of course, not being permitted to see this as an act of foreign espionage.)

Anyone with such qualifications, however, would surely be well aware of what he would have to go through just to become a successful candidate, to say nothing of what he would be subjected to throughout his term in office.

Why would any sensible individual wish to place himself and his family in such a position, no matter how willing he might be to serve the American people?

Alas, we will continue to muddle through with choices that cause eyebrows to raise ("is this the best the boastful Americans can do?"), and inevitably the answer will always be "yes."

Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey

Set the record straight

Dear Editor,

Two letters to the editor in your November 14 edition contain gross factual errors.

One person said "most of the Southern states had outlawed slavery long before 1860."

That is not true. None of them had outlawed slavery, and the Confederate Constitution specifically made slavery legal.

He said the cause of the Civil War was "economic aggression by the industrial North," and "political fracture of the autonomy of the states," whatever than means. Seeking to save the Union, Lincoln mobilized and invaded the Confederacy because the southern states had seceded.

Incidentally, Union County voted against Georgia's secession. Historians debate whether "states rights" or slavery was the underlying cause of the war, but slavery was the primary states rights issue. The writer says General Sherman massacred blacks, but in a lifetime (I'm 80) studying Civil War histories, including Freeman's "Robert E Lee" and "Lee's Lieutenants," Sandburg's "Lincoln," and Lloyd Lewis's biography of Sherman, I've never heard that story before.

Another writer is distressed because Barack Obama was re-elected. "He'll push for more gun laws." Obama hasn't pushed for "gun laws" and,

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Thank You

Dear Editor,

Thank West Newspapers and Co. for its gift to the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Your gift will help the college expand our programs and enrich our extraordinary curriculum.

We appreciate that you make the College's important mission of teaching, research and extension a priority in your list of charitable causes.

On behalf of CAES students, faculty and staff who will benefit from your generous gift, thank you.

J. Scott Angle,

Dean and Director

A thanks from 'The Run'

Dear Editor,

Thank you for all of your help with this year's Run Above The Clouds.

The success of this year's race is due in no small part to the support we've received from you and the North Georgia News. Thanks for your excellent work.

Willard Arbour

Compromise

Dear Editor,

Every time Senator Chambliss uses the word, "compromise," the Democrats gain ground and we Conservatives retreat from our core principles rooted in self-sufficiency.

I've asked our two Senators, Chambliss and Isakson, to explain where, in the Constitution, they derive authority for the Department of Education and its \$100 billion 2012 Budget. (The DoE Budget for 2011 was \$55 billion; the 2010 Budget was \$50 billion.)

No answer.

I've asked Senator Isakson to explain why Egypt continues to receive "foreign aid" now that the Muslim Brotherhood has gained ascendancy.

No answer.

I've asked Senator Chambliss to explain