Opinions

Everybody has one...

All Things

New

When Evil Becomes Glorified

On Oct. 7, 2024, a date which will live in infamy (thank you Franklin D. Roosevelt), HAMAS terrorists launched an attack on Israel, rampaging through a music festival and numerous Israeli towns, killing at least 1,400 people and taking captive 240 others. These statistics include 32 Americans killed and 10 taken hostage. This was the deadliest attack on Jews since the Holocaust. Babies were slaughtered, women raped and

whole families burned alive

WHAT DID ISRAEL DO?

They did what any country would do when their borders have been penetrated and their citizens slaughtered; they retaliated. The war was on. For more than 70 years, Israel

Editorial Gary W. Meier

Guest

has been America's closest and most trusted ally, surviving in a region where surrounding countries were intent on driving this tiny nation into the sea. In this time of travail, America naturally jumped to Israel's aid, supplying weapons and encouragement from all sectors of the country. Our president met with their prime minister to coordinate the war and relief efforts.

WHAT DID AMERICA DO?

Liberal kooks took action and opted for evil. As war escalated in the mid-east, so too did war erupt on university campuses nationwide. Students and outside agitators went on a rampage against Israel, American higher education and America itself. Liberals call it protests but war is the proper terminology.

These people are pro-HAMAS and pro-Palestinian. Actually, those two groups are one and the same. Hamas is an arm of the Palestinian people, emerging in 1987 as an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood. Their aim is to physically and brutally drive Jews from their land and create an Islamic Palestinian state in Israel's place. Brutally is a vain, weak attempt to describe what these people are really like.

To begin, the U.S. State Department has designated Hamas as a foreign terrorist organization. That means they are an archenemy of America. To achieve their objectives they use improvised explosive devices, short- and long-range rockets and mortars, small arms, kidnapping operations, rocket-propelled grenades, man-portable air defense systems, antitank missiles and unmanned aircraft

See Meier, page 5A

Flooded by Love

I didn't expect to see that. I was with a team in southern Brazil looking for churches we could help respond to the devastating floods. We stepped inside a small church building. Instead of chairs, the room was wall to wall with cots and mattresses. They had converted it into a shelter for people chased from their homes by the rising waters of the Taquari and Cai Rivers. Church members volunteered to cook, clean,

and serve people they did not know - until now. They also collected and distributed relief supplies to the broader community. Their Sunday gatherings were in the homes of var-

ious members. This scene - worship buildings turned into shelters - is repeated over and over across the affected region. Brazil is known to be rather secular, particularly in this part of the country. The churches realize this is an opportunity to show God's love to displaced people who, once the waters recede, may discover they are homeless. It's also become the

motivation for churches across denominations to be more united

Here are some takeaways to ponder. The Brazilian Christians have set their priorities. Showing love to people in distress is more important than their own comfort and convenience. They share their resources with all, not just with friends and fellow believers. That requires sacrifice.

They are adaptable. To respond to the situation, something had to change. The usual routines, meetings, and methods would no longer do. They forged new cooperative relationships with like-minded Jesus followers. Something far greater than disaster relief is under way. Anyone can choose to do good, but only believers do it in Jesus' name.

They know their identity. A church is not a building or a Sunday meeting. The church is people who identify with Christ in a life-changing way. "If anyone wishes to come after Me," Jesus said, "he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). To identify with Christ is not for the faint of heart. It is a joyful life of courage, sacrifice, and re-

Peter and John were going to an afternoon prayer service

See Fowler, page 5A

Commissioner's Questions

Meeks Park (Part 3 of 3)

This week's questions talk about Meeks Park II and the

Q. What is the story on the outside exercise equipment? I've never heard of exercise equipment that is permanently installed for outside use.

A. The exercise equipment at Meeks Park II consists of various pieces of low impact exercise machines for use by the public, including exercise bikes, rowers, air walkers, a lat pull down machine, a chest press, and several more pieces. Some of this equipment is also wheelchair

from Union County Commissioner Paris

accessible. So there really is something for everyone. Most of the equipment utilizes your body weight to determine the difficulty.

Q. Does this equipment have to be reserved or can I just show up to use it?

A. The exercise equipment at Meeks Park II is first come/ first served when it comes to usage. It is not uncommon to find couples and even their children working out together on the equipment. As a matter of fact, many trail walkers take a breather at this spot to work upper arms and abs and then they continue their

Q. How does the kayak/canoe ramp work? Where do I go if I paddle upstream versus downstream?

A. This side of the park is carved out by the Nottely River that flows past the Meeks Park Kayak/Canoe Ramp. The ramp is a concrete slant that ends in the Nottely river and it is located between the adult exercise equipment and the Tate Grist Mill. Any non-motorized boats can use the ramp. Non-Motorized Boats include kayaks, canoes, paddle boards, small sailboats, and even crew rowing boats. Of these, you will primarily see folks unloading and paddling in kayaks. If you paddle upstream, you will float up the Nottely River. If you paddle downstream, you will float towards Lake Nottely. Paddling towards Lake Nottely will take you under State Hwy 515, and shortly thereafter, you will see a gazebo that extends over the water. This lagoon backs up to the Meeks Park Dog Park. As you can see, the beautiful flow between the parks is seen not only in walking trails, but also by water flow

See Paris, page 5A

Jacob II

Jacob was heading to the library where it was quiet. The most beautiful girl he had ever laid eyes on was heading to the auditorium. Just as Jacob and she were parallel to each other, the calamity happened. Running smack into her path, Jacob and the girl collided. The notebook papers

of the gorgeous girl the crowded hallway, her books became like military weapons, and her notebooks looked like NASA missiles



Jacob bent down to help the attractive classmate pick up the scattered paraphernalia. His heart began suddenly palpitating. His legs felt weak, and he felt his entire body was mildly shaking. His mouth went dry as he looked up at the petite girl, and he murmured, "Let me help you." "What else can I do?" He was mesmerized by her beauty, charm, and friendliness. He found it hard to put a sentence together. With a contagious smile, she answered, "Nothing at all." "But I want to show my appreciation." "Are you busy after

See Ashurst, page 5A

Re: "Divisive & Dishonest"

ing letter comes down on Congressman Clyde or

any conservative considerations, they rarely pro-

been a more obvious Democrat administration

unsupported by anything and costing us a tril-

lion dollars (with a "T") in interest, yes, just in

interest, every three months. Unsustainable, ob-

al land has been stopped. The federal government

owns and limits use of 28% of America's land. So

that's a big deal y'all. Obviously.

an open border policy. Obviously.

winnable by the Ukrainians.

Dear Editor,

duce "receipts," no specifics, just accusation

than Joe Biden's.

Have you all noticed that when a left-lean-

Never before since at least FDR has there

Obvious inflation due to printing money

New clean energy gas exploration on feder-

We're the only country in the world with

We are obviously dragging on a war un-

We are dragging on the war in Gaza by

We moved to Blairsville last year from a

impeding Israel's eventual rout of some 15,000

See **Tarter**, page 5A

Enough Already

large city. Before you commence to grumbling,

our house was built in 1991 and the previous

occupants passed away, so we simply replaced

them with no negative impact on Union County.

I adore the small-town vibe here, and my fellow

citizens are some of the kindest and friendliest

people. However, the harsh political division

here is troubling. I know this is the tone through-

out the country, but feels more intense in this

area since we do live in a small conservative

community. Reading the vitriol and discontent in

the letters to the editor would lead you to believe

that the sky is falling! The warped and oft times

untruths written by Anti-Biden Andrew Clyde

and printed almost weekly only fuels the fire. No

wonder one side of the aisle feels incensed. Is

it really that horrible? No, of course not, much

is political theater meant to frighten and rile up

the party who is against the current administra-

tion because their guy lost in 2020. If you want

an honest and unbiased news source, check out the

Christian Science Monitor. Just the news, no left or

joying the rewards from a President you didn't

vote for. You don't have to oppose everything he

does because he is a Democrat and you're not.

There is no rule that says you have to be against

all he is trying to do to make our lives better, but

See **LeGros**, page 5A

There is no shame in appreciating and en-

right slants or opinions.

Letters to the Editor Letters to the Editor

Barbarians at the Gate

TO HELER PORTON COM

PUTTING THINGS INTO

PERSPECTIVE AFTER

RECENT GUILTY VERDICTS

While the country is flapping their gums, beating their chests, hanging their flags upside down and obsessing over Trump and Biden, few have considered that where we are today as a nation and where we will be in the future rests with Congress. Both houses, both parties. We think presidents hold the power for change. Congress holds the ultimate power and always has: the ability to create change, pass legislation that helps the average American, override a presidential veto, cleanse itself of corruption or

Every four years we hear the same question: "Are you better off than four years ago?" Of course we aren't, and never will be. Why? Not because of presidents but because of Congress. What has Congress done in the last eight years that has any value or substance for the aver-

See **Reo**, page 5A

Dog Park Vandalism

Dear Editor,

Recently a group of regular users of the Blairsville Farmers Barket Dog Park started an open, public Facebook group for the park to celebrate our shared joy and love of dogs, "The Farmers Barket Dog Park Friends." During the afternoons, with the warmer weather here, some members have purchased small, plastic children's pools to let the dogs cool off after running and playing at the park, as dogs do not have sweat glands and can get easily overheated.

Unfortunately, when left at the park overnight, on multiple occasions, the pools were repeatedly slashed with a knife, or other sharp instrument, rendering them unusable, even when emptied and placed over the fence for use the next day.

It's unclear why other park users, appar-

See Bilinski, page 5A

Happy Father's Day Dear Editor.

Hats off to all dads who exemplify character, honesty and integrity in their household and who respect their wife, kids and grandparents and who love to spend time with their families. My brother Richard and I were honored with such a dad. We never remembered calling dad our father, and he never questioned why. His full name was Richard Raymond Combs, but everyone called him Ray.

Our family moved to Bradenton, Florida, in 1947, where our dad took over a drive-in theater because our mom's dad wanted to retire. Dad ran the theater for 13 years before selling

See Combs, page 5A

New Math...

New Math and Higher Education

Aunt Mabel, Papa's older sister, started to high school in Phil Campbell in 1927. She enjoyed getting away from the tiny community of Trapptown and visiting the bigger town. After all, Phil Campbell had a railroad depot. Any-

way, Aunt Mabel especially enjoyed math class, and she was one of the top students. Her math teacher, Mr. Isom, was enjoying his



first year out of college. He was really a great teacher and had a firm grasp of the world of mathematics. His one weakness was arrogance. Mr. Isom had graduated at the top of his class from the University of

Alabama and was proud of himself. Roughly halfway through the second semester of school, the class began to study algebraic simultaneous equations. Mr. Isom's custom was to demonstrate the method of problem solving to his class and then assign a list of problems to be worked out during class. After solving the problems, the students could then check their answers in the back of the book. The last problem of the exercise was particularly difficult. Aunt Mabel and the other students worked through the problem and all concluded the same answer. However, when checking the answer, the book did not agree with their conclusions, and they asked their teacher to work through the problem with them.

Mr. Isom worked through the problem and found the same answer as the class. He worked through the problem three other times and came to the same conclusion each time. Both he and the class were consumed with this math word problem for three days. Finally, Aunt Mabel asked Mr. Isom if she could take the book home to show the problem to her father, Lon Cummings. He asked where Lon had attended school. Aunt Mabel proudly proclaimed that her father had attended school at the Hallman School House and had finished school after the third grade in 1899. He smiled at the naivety of Mabel but agreed to her request. Although Lon had only a third-grade education, he owned and operated a sawmill and blacksmith shop as well as 300-acre farm. He had traveled as far away as Missouri to solve bookkeeping problems at his father's sawmill. What he lacked in education he made up in

The next day Aunt Mabel brought the book and the solved problem, written down on paper, back to her teacher in the Math Class. She demonstrated on the blackboard how her daddy solved the problem and the answer agreed with the answer in the book. Mr. Isom sat in his chair

See Cummings, page 5A

Chamber of Commerce It seems like this time of year we hear

more comments than usual about the growth in the county. It may be that there is more traffic. a longer line at a restaurant, or more people using someone's favorite hiking trail, but people love to come to the mountains this time of year. temperatures

cooler (most days), the creeks feel better and the people are friendlier. Many that have been in Union County for a while

County Chambei Steve Rowe



can remember having to go to Murphy to shop at Wal-Mart or driving to another county to eat at the steakhouse. Do you remember when business was so slow that many of the shops had to close each year from January to March? Now we almost take it for granted when we go through the list of great restaurants and shops in Union County as we plan for an evening out. We have also noticed that many of the graduates of Union County High School are now able to stay here in the town they grew up in and work, or they

See Chamber, page 5A

Moles and Voles

Moles and voles can be very damaging to your yard. Moles can dig up long tunnels through your yard, and voles make a meal out of the plant roots. This can leave your yard with a lumpy look and wilted dying plants. The key to treating these issues is figuring out whether you have moles or voles

in your yard.

Understanding some of the differences between moles and voles is important to decide how to treat them.



Technically speaking voles are rodents, but moles are not. Moles are carnivorous animals that eat insects and grubs that they find underground. If you look at a picture of a mole they have very large front feet. They're able to use these big, meaty claws to 'swim' through the soil creating the tunnels in your yard. They are looking for insects to eat in the soil. They won't eat the roots of plants, as those aren't in their diet.

Voles are smaller in size than a mole, looking similar to a mouse. The easiest way to tell the difference between a vole and a mouse is that a mouse's tail is about the same length as its body. A vole has a much shorter tail. Voles are herbivores, meaning that they feed on plants. Bulb plants are often a particular favorite of voles. Voles have much smaller front paws than moles do. This means that voles are not nearly as adept at digging tunnels through the ground. Voles will often use tunnels that have been left

behind by moles. Because moles and voles have different diets and behavior they must be treated differently for control. There are a couple of different methods for mole control. The first one is to use a granular insecticide to get rid of all the insects and grubs in your yard. Once the food source is removed the moles will move on to find a new food source. A second way of removing moles is by placing a trap in their main tunnel. Go out into your yard and tamp down all the tunnels that you can find. Wherever the ground has popped back up the next day is the main tunnel. Repeated trapping may be necessary because a single yard could be host to several moles. Some of the grubs that moles eat, such as earthworms. are a sign of healthy soil. Moles also like moist soil because it is easier for digging. This means that if you do a good job taking care of your garden you will also inadvertently be encouraging moles to tunnel!

Voles can also be trapped. Place a mouse trap with peanut butter near an active site to catch the voles. If you are able to get rid of the moles in your yard oftentimes the voles will also leave because they can't do a good job of digging

See Williams, page 5A

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Paris... continued from Page 4A

on the Nottely.

Q. I've seen a Grist Mill. Sometimes the wheel moves and sometimes it doesn't. What is the story behind this unique building?

A. According to records, the original Old Tate Gristmill was built by Andrew Jackson Hughes in the late 1800's. It changed hands several times. and the mill was operated by several different families. It was last owned as an operating gristmill by the Ocean Tate family until the mid-1960's. The two-story mill was powered by a 14 ft. overshot wheel. The lower level held the corn shelling machine and the mills. The upper level held hoppers for the grains and a bolt to sift wheat and rye. The mill was in operation for possibly 100 years according to the families who used it to grind corn. It was dismantled in December 2008 and reconstructed in Meeks Park II. The waterwheel on the gristmill begins turning sometime in the Spring each year, and it turns until just after the Sorghum Festival. During the festival, visitors can

tour the inside of the dwelling and view the mechanisms that capture the water that make the

Q. What do we need to know about the dog park next to the Senior Center? Can we let our dogs run without a leash?

A. You can park in the rear Senior Center parking lot and walk your dog across the street to the dog park trails; however, dogs must be on a leash. Once inside the park, you will see a fenced-in area where you can unleash your dog – allowing him/her to run. While walking through the dog park, you might see a disc golf tournament going on as this dog park also serves as a disc golf course.

We ask that all pet owners behave responsively when it comes to pet waste and that all trails be kept clean for others to enjoy. Visitors will find a pleasant surprise at the back of the dog park, where a dock and gazebo provide a beautiful view of kayakers making their way down the Nottely river to the mouth of Lake Nottely.

Meier... continued from Page 4A

systems in their incessant attacks against Israel and their

Those are the people our president and university students are supporting... against our ally and the only democratic nation in that part of the world, Israel. Their support of this evil has resulted in the most widespread and vicious campus unrest since the restless 1960s. University campuses were taken captive, pro-Palestinian tent encampments as war zone control centers were set up in public places, clashes with police became the norm, burning and looting was not uncommon. Mayhem increased as almost to a person, university presidents and other school leaders refused to address the situation. University officials and the police lost control.

Even more nefarious, antisemitism began to raise its ugly head in a big way. Jews were threatened and Jewish students were not allowed to attend classes. University officials refused to protect their Jewish students. Some students felt threatened enough they took off their yarmulkes or Stars of David to avoid being harassed. Suddenly, because these students couldn't express their faith without fear, America lost its status as being a country protecting religious

As we gazed at our TV sets, we became inundated with 24/7 news coverage of the demonstrations and riots. We saw the warmongers wave signs proclaiming "mercy for the martyrs," "pride for Gaza," "from sea to sea, Palestine will be Arab," "boycott Israel," "sweep the Jews into the sea," "f--- Zionism," Zionism=Nazism, "from the river to the sea" and "get rid of the genocide." High-decibel chants pierced the air, one of their favorites being "There is only one solution, Intifada, The chants of these peo-

ple (and I use the term loosely) were calling for the complete destruction of Israel. Intifada is an Arabic word meaning uprising, shaking off and rebellion. To HAMAS it means murder, rape, mayhem, violence and armed terrorism. During the 2000 bloody intifada, over 1,000 Israelis died, most as a result of suicide bombings. To the Jew, Intifada means racial bias and antisemitism, hatred

Meanwhile, most Americans sat on their hands, doing

and bloodshed.

nothing. However, the outcry from Christians has been deafening as this group, seeing religious freedom disappear before their eyes, rallied the forces to confront and physically combat the evil they saw rising from a flickering match into a blazing inferno.

Wrong!!!

These rebels are taking direct aim at God's chosen people, the Jews, glorifying terrorism and the Devil's agenda. Christians, observing the mayhem and evil being perpetuated upon them and the Jews, simply joined the rest of America in thinking to themselves and proclaiming in their discussions, "someone ought to do something about this." Because of this attitude, Christians for decades have sat in their padded pews on Sundays, content with the status quo and refusing to take a stand and confront evil. As a result, abortion is running rampant throughout the nation killing off millions upon millions of babies, schools are teaching LGBTQ+ values, the Bible was taken out of our schools, the WOKE agenda has infiltrated the schools and now antisemitism is making a comeback.

Pastors are experts at pontificating from the pulpit about how the Devil is taking control of America. We must pray, they emphasize. And that's what Christians around the land began doing... praying for the Jews. And doing nothing else. Saying "Let's pray about it" is disingenuous, at best. That's not what the Bible teaches. Prayer must be accompanied by action. In rebuilding the gates of Jerusalem, Nehemia and the house of Judah not only prayed to their God but they also did something about their perilous situation. They sat a guard as protection (Neh. 4:9). Half the people guarded, half built the wall. The job was completed in

52 days (6:15). When Christians see injustices taking place, they need to mobilize into action. Evil cannot be condoned by inaction. Martin Luther King said it best, "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetuate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it."

When that happens and Christians don't step forward and take action, evil eventually becomes the new norm. Evil becomes glorified.

Tarter... continued from Page 4A

terrorist doobies still hiding and firing rockets at civilian Israeli targets from Rafah schools, hospitals and other illegal cowardly locations.

The list goes on infinitum. Obviously.

But instead of addressing these issues, the left continues to harass Trump and has concocted numerous legal cases running in Democrat plantation cities just so they can call the former president a "felon" (which, by the way, technically,

What sad little people we are to be moaning about all of this when we have a Secretary of Defense actually discussing worldwide nuclear war as if it was a sane option.

You can sure tell he wasn't in my "hide under your school desk" generation. There are several Yid-

dish words appropriate to this that I can't use in a quality newspaper.

Orémus (a Latin word) Y'all, **Murray Tarter**

Ashurst... continued from Page 4A

school today?" "Uh, no, but you don't have to do anything for me." Her response was quick and sincere. "Let's meet at Lu Ann's Soda Shop for a treat."

Trembling with excitement, Jacob was fast on the draw. "Okay. It's a date. I mean meeting." With a grin, she replied, "Okay. By the way, my name is Rose Mary." As she began to leave, over her shoulder, she

said with a grin, "See you soon." Jacob was in LaLa Land and was clueless as to what happened the rest of the day. Jacob began a jour-

ney that would take him from obscurity into a "land of meaning, purpose, and friendship" because of a girl named Rose Mary.

"True friends are never apart, maybe in distance but never in heart.

LeGros...continued from Page 4A

Andrew Clyde and the extreme members of the Republican party want you to do just that. "Revenge" politics will only benefit one person, so be careful what you wish for.

While I disagree with how the current administration has handled some issues, I feel confident that the President has our best interests at heart in the long run, for all of us, Democrats and Republicans. I try to focus on the good things, of which there are many. Here's one: The S&P 500, which tracks the stock performance of 500 of the biggest companies on U.S. stock exchanges, closed recently at a new record high of 5,354. The Nasdaq Composite, which is weighted toward the information technology sector, also closed at a record high of 17,187. The Dow Jones Industrial Average was also up, but not to a new record. It closed at 38,807. Even if you don't have stocks, this news is indicative of a healthy economy, and we should all be encouraged by these figures.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 272,000 in May, and the unemployment rate changed little at 4%. The better the country does, the bet-

Williams... continued from Page 4A

their own tunnels. If you're unsure if you have voles or moles take a slice of apple and tie a piece of string around it. Place it in the hole and let it sit for a couple of days. When you pull it back out, if the apple is gone you have voles (herbivores), if the apple is still there you have moles (carnivores).

If you have questions about vole and mole control please contact your local Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.

Fowler... continued from Page 4A

at the temple. On the way, their plans changed. A lame man needed help. In that moment, they prioritized love over routine, service over convenience. They engaged, not with silver or gold, but in the name of Jesus. And what a conversation they started! (Acts 3)

What about you and your church? What are your priorities? Are you adaptable? What does it mean to follow Christ? Do you serve in ways that stir up conversations about God's love, faith, and the gift of eternal life?

We can learn something from the Brazilian Christians. Join me in praying for them and the displaced people they serve. May God flood their and our hearts with His love.

Bilinski...

continued from Page 4A

ently during the morning hours, would do such a thing? We can only speculate, e.g. they don't want their dogs getting muddy, etc., rather than just emptying the pool.

It's a sad commentary on a community of dog park users that someone is the Dog Park Pool Slasher! The police were even called to investigate. To this day, the guilty party remains at large. Now, the regular afternoon crowd of park users has to bring the pools and take them back home after use, instead of just leaving them at the park. Shame on the so-called dog lovers who are engaged in such disgraceful conduct!

Sincerely, Jerry Bilinski

Reo... continued from Page 4A

age American? In my opinion, nothing. Consider just some of the issues that are not or refuse to be addressed: border security, federal debt, public education, infrastructure, federal minimum wage, healthcare, poverty, drug prices, Supreme Court ethics, and on and on. It's time for us, as Americans, to focus on the real issues facing this country. Congress must be the start.

The barbarians are at the gate. Let us make certain they don't get to go through it. Peter J. Reo

Free GED Classes

If you never graduated from High School, now is your chance to accomplish your goal. Come see us at the North Georgia Technical College Adult Education Center and finally get it done! We offer in- person classes to prepare you for the GED test and beyond. Come by 38 Blalock Street in Blairsville or call us at (706) 439- 6342 to register and get your real life started!

ter we do. It is time to cheer on prosperity for all of us, not just

one party or the other. Enough already of the Us v. Them mentality! I will admit to thinking the same from time to time; A guy with a Trump 2024 sticker on his truck, no way I'm letting him in; A Republican-owned business, no way they are getting my money! What good comes from these huge flags with crude slogans about our President, or such antagonistic attitudes just looking for a confrontation? It could go on and on, but to what end? We are better than this.

While I am diametrically

opposed to the extremist beliefs seen today, some of which are actually dangerous to my own community, they have just as much a right to their opinions as I do, even if I don't agree. I have decided to pick my battles and set boundaries. I won't shun an establishment just because it is Republicanowned. Will I go to a business that has MAGA plastered all over it? Nope, but I will help the guy at Ingles find the pistachio pudding even though he was wearing a T-shirt I did not agree with. He thanked me, we both smiled and went about our day. No one's head exploded.

While the struggle is real, I am making a conscious effort to try to overlook the crude flags and "Brandon" slogans, and embrace my fellow residents in sharing this beautiful town we get to call home. Heck, I'll even let that truck in front of me next time. The truth is we all want the same thing, we just believe in different paths and ideals that will lead us to our happiness.

I will choose my path at the voting booth. Trish LeGros

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

are returning to Blairsville to raise their children. Did you know that Union General Hospital had a record in deliveries and Union County High School had one of the largest graduating classes? Based on the most recent stats from Explore Georgia, tourists spent \$98.2 million while visiting Union County, resulting in 837 jobs and \$19.9 million in labor income. This means that those shops that used to close during the slower winter months can now stay open and we can spend our money here in Union County rather than having to go outside of the county to get things we need. Our next generation can find good paying jobs without having to leave home.

The Chamber's objective is to help our local businesses grow and thrive while preserving our culture and heritage. We appreciate the opportunity to work with the City and County, the Union County Historical Society, Union County Schools and Union General Health Systems to provide the services needed to make this a great place to live. If we all work together, we can provide those needed jobs and services while preserving our heritage.

Help make Life Better in Blairsville.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

and was stunned that he was bested by a sawmill operator. But, he was also wise enough to realize that he had been wrong. His lesson to his students that day was that even educated people can learn new things if they will open their minds.

The same year that my

great-grandfather Lon finished school at the Hallman School House in 1899, the Union County Courthouse was rebuilt after it had burned. This year, 2024, the Union County Courthouse celebrates 125 years of service to this community. Throughout this time our courthouse has been the center of political, judicial and social life in this community. Did you know the courthouse was slated for demolition in the 1980s? A group of people intervened and raised funds to restore the courthouse to its past grandeur. This group of people also formed the Union County Historical Society, which also raised funds to restore the clock tower in the 1990s.

a grand history, and as a result of its long history and 125th birthday, the Union County Historical Society will celebrate with a birthday party on Saturday, July 13th, by having a BBQ on the Courthouse lawn at 11:30 a.m. Clayton Reeves will be cooking the BBQ meal. You can purchase a ticket from the Union County Historical Society for \$12. The proceeds from this BBQ will be used to help the Historical Society re-build a cabin donated to us by the F.C. Collins family. After the meal we will be having some guest speakers talk about the history of the Old Union County Courthouse. Our guest speakers for this event will be Jack Lance on why the courthouse needed to be rebuilt, Bud Akins on the last murder trial in the courthouse, and Lamar Paris on saving the courthouse from demolition. You can come by the Union County Historical Society Office in the Old Courthouse to purchase a ticket.

Our Old Courthouse has

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it, then spent 10 years in the insurance business. But his heart was in having his own gas station because he loved working with his hands, and a door opened for him to have his own station by the grace of

My brother and I used to go to the station in the summertime to help dad clean customers' windows, gas up vehicles and even put air in the tires when gas was around 70 cents a gallon. Dad was a gentle, tall drink of water, and he was always on call for his customers. I remember folks would call him in the wee hours of the morning to tell him that their vehicle wouldn't start, and he would get dressed and drive miles to help those in need. Dad's business flourished because he showed his love and honesty toward others in all the years he had the station. I never heard my dad complain others. He always treated folks with honesty. Our dad loved playing

about anyone or talk bad about

golf, and he found at a yard sale a set of left-handed clubs, which back in the '50s was hard to come by, and seeing his boys were left-handed as well he would spend his off days teaching us to play golf. He was truly a businessman, but foremost a family man. One Christmas morning my brother and I found two sets of clubs under the tree, and what joy filled our hearts that our dad

Thank you, God, for a dad who loved life, loved people and loved his family with all his heart. Again, hats off to all dads who love God first, then love their family. It is a gift from our heavenly Father who blesses us with all good things. Amen.

Frank F. Combs