

Opinions

Everybody has one...

T. Graham Brown

I don't know how many folks around here enjoy Country Music, but come Saturday, July 1, Country Music lovers are in for a treat.

It requires a drive to Hiawassee's Anderson Music Hall. There, you'll enjoy the music of legendary Country Music star, T. Graham Brown.

T. Graham called me last week to talk about his upcoming show with Jimmy Fortune.

He's excited about coming back to Georgia. You see, T. Graham is a native of South Georgia.

He rose to fame in the mid-1980s with hits like *I Tell It Like It Used To Be*, and *Hell and High Water*.

He's touring with Jimmy Fortune, formerly of the Statler Brothers. Fortune said that folks coming to Hiawassee will surely hear one of the most legendary voices ever to perform in Country Music - T. Graham Brown.

They also will hear more than 50 years worth of Gospel, Country and Rock 'n Roll. And, if you really want to get a feel for what to expect, just go to YouTube and type in the names T. Graham Brown, and Jimmy Fortune.

Fortune said that today's modern technology allows both he and T. Graham to remain prominent in the music industry.

It's true and the really pertinent fact is that you'll meet two truly down-to-earth entertainers. Both say the thrill of a crowd is the frenzy that makes them thrive. They also love to sign autographs.

And because of modern technology, both say they no longer chase media moguls or record labels.

"I'll tell you the truth, I'm having the time of my life," T. Graham said. "We're coming to Hiawassee and we're going to have an incredible time."

T. Graham said working with Jimmy Fortune is an incredible experience.

"We've been friends for years," he said. "Jimmy spent 21 years performing with the Statler Brothers. Believe me, he knows a thing or two about music."

Tickets are \$37 for Level 1 seating, and \$27 for Level 2. Call (706) 896-4191 for more details. You'll be glad you did.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Religious Liberty

Americans declaring independence from Great Britain was audacious. It launched a historic effort to apply the loftiest principals of self-government known to the world. Many who engaged the task are familiar names, some serving as President. But less known is the contribution of a Baptist minister, John Leland.

Leland was an influential Virginian in the 1780s during that post-war period prior to the adoption of the constitution. Fellow Virginian James Madison became known as the "Father of the Constitution" because he researched, wrote, and defended the proposed constitution more than any other person. Yet his election as a Virginia delegate to the constitutional convention was not always sure.

Baptists in England and the colonies had suffered government sanctioned ill-treatment as non-conformists, including confiscation of property and imprisonment for preaching. Leland demanded an end to it. He said, "The liberty I contend for is more than toleration. The very idea of toleration is despicable; it supposes that some have a pre-eminence above the rest to grant indulgence, whereas all should be equally free, Jews, Turks, Pagans and Christians."

Since the proposed constitution had no such protections, he opposed Madison's election. So Madison paid a visit to Leland, and gave his word that he would advance religious liberty and a full bill of rights in return for Leland's support, and both men kept the bargain. In 1787, the U.S. Constitution was signed in Philadelphia. The Bill of Rights followed in 1791.

Leland and Madison believed that the state should not force citizens to support a church in violation of their conscience. True liberty means the freedom to live according to your conscience, limited only by the rights of others. But the founders never envisioned the rights now conferred upon the citizenry that are in direct conflict with Americans' first freedom.

Religious liberty is now in the way of the sexual revolution and the new morality of personal preference. That is a danger to all. Al Mohler writes, "Religious liberty will not long survive if it is reduced to a private sphere with no public voice. The very

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. Why doesn't the county go ahead and build a new jail because our population has exploded from 10,000 people in 2000 and is estimated to be 30,000 population in 2020?

A. First, the population information in this "letter to the editor" was totally inaccurate. In 2000 our population was not 10,000 but was 17,289. In 2010 it was 21,356 or 1.9 percent growth per year. From 2010 to 2016 our population was estimated to be 22,928 (7 percent) or 1.2 percent per year growth. So even if our population growth was as much as 2 percent for the next four years, we would still be under 25,000 in population by 2020, which is a long way from 30,000.

Q. If our population growth continues at this reasonable pace of under 2 percent per year, will we still not have more people incarcerated in jail.

A. I spent a lot of time the past four weeks discussing the jail subject in this column. I feel like I covered just about every aspect of the jail issue. There is no way to accurately estimate the number of inmates in the future based on our population. They do not follow the population growth rate of the county, but usually the drug of choice or the economic indicators and job availability. We probably averaged 75 inmates per day back when the methamphetamine epidemic began several years ago and several times had over 90. We have recently been averaging only in the 60s occasionally dipping into the high 50s. It will continue to fluctuate and we will continue to evaluate it.

Q. Are there times when the jail is extremely overcrowded?

A. Yes and as I have discussed in my previous Q & A, there are always going to be short periods of extreme overcrowding, such as right after a drug bust or any sting operations. But it is much less expensive to send those temporary inmates to other county jails for short periods of time until they can be processed, because our cost is less sending them out. We certainly hope that the criminal element will be tired of being arrested by our active Sheriff's Department and decide to move to another county. With the improved economics and job options, and the emphasis state-

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Anti-Drug Coalition

If you are looking for advice on how to keep your kid's head from spinning off when you tell them you are implementing a home testing program, the only advice we can offer is to be honest. Be completely open about your fears, your hopes for their future, and their safety.

Even the "smaller" consequences of drug and alcohol use like a DUI charge can really mess up their lives.

How will they get to school or work if they lose their license or insurance? What if someone was hurt or killed because of driving under the influence. Talk to your kids about how many lives that can ruin. Make them tell you how they would feel if they were responsible for someone else's death. We were all teenagers, and hopefully we can remember what it was like to feel "bulletproof". Make them understand that you must protect them any way that you can until they acquire the common-sense of adulthood.

See Coalition, page 5A

The mission of the Union County Anti-Drug Coalition is to support an overall safe community by providing information, education and support services to children, families, and community toward prevention of illegal substance abuse. Visit and Like our Facebook page for additional articles and videos.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA!

Letters to the Editor

No respect

I would like to respond to the Commissioner's comments on 6-14-17 which were as follows regarding the treatment of inmates within the jail: **"Q: Does it bother you that the jail is overcrowded and prisoners are sleeping on the floor?"**

Commissioner's response: "Those in jail made a choice to violate the law. No one forced it on them. I do not feel bad if prisoners have to sleep on a mattress on the floor."

I would like to respond by saying that no one deserves to be treated like an animal or an inferior human being regardless of their criminal behavior or because they broke societies laws.

One day your Holier than Thou attitude may place circumstances in your path that re-

See Williams, page 5A

Fitting tribute

I was reflecting on the recent Memorial Day parade and ceremony. It was perfect. My dad would have been very proud. You see, he was a WWI Army veteran: Sergeant William Harold Schultz. Very often throughout his life he would suddenly be heard singing the songs made famous during that era, i.e. "Over There," "It's a Long Way to Tipperary," and "Pack Up Your Troubles," are examples.

The simple and moving way we here in the mountains pay our respects to those who sacrificed their lives for the benefit of our country would have made him very happy. Thank you very much.

Floyd Schultz
Blairsville

Attention all Pastors/Congregants

For the past several years, there's been a movement of Christian believers throughout the country that crosses all denominational lines, called Awake America. They meet once a month for an hour to pray fervently for safety for our firefighters, police, sheriffs, EMTs, service men and women, for discernment for all those in leadership positions in our schools and communities, and for integrity and wisdom for those in state and all federal positions. It has grown from just two nearby counties to seven that ring our area, including some in North Carolina and Tennessee.

Unlike the disruptive demonstrations and riots we have seen throughout the country, this is a peace-filled time of coming together with one desire, that God would provide protection

See Gray, page 5A

Fireworks

Although fireworks can be used anytime during the year, fireworks are used more on the Fourth of July.

This Independence Day will be no different and people will enjoy all sorts of outdoor activities including fireworks.

People will be going to the numerous fireworks shows or they may purchase and enjoy their own show.

Union County Fire Department would like for everyone to keep several things in mind when purchasing and using fireworks this year.

Safety is always first. Fireworks are fun and exciting but they can also be very dangerous.

The last thing that we want is to spend our holiday weekend in the emergency room or worse, in a burn center.

People need to respect the hazards that fireworks can present.

Here are a few tips when using fireworks. Never allow young children to handle fireworks and older children should only use fireworks under close adult supervision.

Use fireworks outdoors in a clear area away from flammable materials.

Light one device at a time and maintain safe distance after lighting.

Never hold fireworks in your hand and please do not make your own fireworks. Please keep these tips in mind.

They can help ensure that you and your family have a safe and enjoyable show.

Another consideration is the laws that apply to fireworks. There are too many elements of the law to be explained here.

The laws and ordinances cover things such as the minimum age to purchase fireworks, the time of day to ignite fireworks, the location, and the distances from certain areas.

It is a good practice to research the laws and to follow them. The laws and ordinances are designed for the safety and wellbeing of the people.

They are also designed for the consideration of the neighbors.

Union County Fire Department wants everyone to have a safe and enjoyable weekend and July 4th.

When it comes to fireworks please keep in mind the safety tips for using them and the laws that apply to fireworks.

Have a great Independence Day.
Union County Fire Department ~Our Family Protecting Your Family~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Mr. Newell

Old Man Newell was a little different. Some folks said he was a mite "quare" while others just said he was "turned funny". The bottom line was that he just didn't like young boys for some reason or another. He was always rough talking and short tempered when it came to the boys around Trapptown. No one knows the reason why, but Old Man Newell just didn't trust any of the local boys.

Paul and Bud Cummings grew up during the late 1940s and early 1950s. They ran with the likes of Tommy Trapp, William Shel-nutt, Jerry Cohen and Hubert Brooks. These boys grew up and did everything together. They had a code and it was enforced. None of the boys ever told on another one of the boys. You might not agree with what one of the boys was doing, but, you never told on your buddy.

One day during church the boys were all sitting together and Paul (my father) noticed that Tommy Trapp had something in his pockets that was causing them to bulge. When asked about the contents of his pockets Tommy pulled out a big nail and whispered, "I am getting even with Old Man Newell."

After church the gang of boys walked outside to Old Man Newell's log truck. Tommy walked around the front of the log truck and emptied his pockets of the nails. There must've been 2 pounds of 16 penny nails in front of the wheels of that truck.

Paul and his younger brother, Bud, felt sorry for Old Man Newell, so, after Tommy and the other boys left they began trying to kick the nails away from the front of the truck. At this point in time Old Man Newell came up and thought the boys had placed the nails in front of his wheels. The old man had a fit and screamed out "You boys are trying to give me a flat tire".

Papa ran up to the boys and whipped them in front of the whole crowd. Paul and Bud would not tell on their buddies. So, they took the whipping without a word. But, they vowed to take vengeance on Old Man Newell.

Three years later Old Man Newell's logging truck broke down and the old man was relegated to driving his little buggy back and forth to town. A plan was soon hatched among the boys. On a Saturday in early June Paul and Bud Cummings, Tommy Trapp, Jerry Cohen, William Shel-nutt, and Hubert Brooks went out to Old Man Newell's house

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Mummy berry

While some of us are watching our nice juicy blueberries ripen in the warm summer weather, others are inevitably watching their crop shrivel and drop. This disease is called mummy berry and is caused by the fungus *Monilinia vaccinii-corymbosi*.

Once it presents itself in a blueberry crop, there is no way to save it. However, there are many options for removing the infection after harvest and preventing it from establishing in your bushes next year.

Berries that are infected with the fungus were actually infected by dead berries (called mummies) from last year's crop. The mummies overwinter on the ground below bushes and break dormancy right around bud swell. About one month later, cup-like structures grow out of the mummies and produce infectious spores during cool, wet weather. The spores are carried on air currents up to the buds and infect new shoots. These infected shoots will produce leaves covered in secondary spores called "conidia." The next stage of infection occurs at bloom. Once the flowers open, air currents once again spread the conidia to the developing fruit within the flower, causing the shriveled berries we now see. Instead of turning a rich blue color, berries will begin to turn cream colored, shrivel up and immediately drop on the ground where they will overwinter as mummies and infect next year's crop.

Because mummy berry infections can ruin most of the berries on a bush, it is important to take four main steps to prevent the disease from establishing.

1. Keep it clean. After your winter pruning, make sure to remove all dead and cut wood surrounding the bush. Once the wood is removed, thoroughly rake under your blueberry bushes to remove any infected mummies remaining from last year. This will prevent any of the previous season's mummies from infecting the current year's shoots in the spring.

2. Cover it up. Once you have removed all potential sources of infection from your bushes, put down a thick layer of mulch to cover any small mummies or twigs that you may have missed. Pine bark mulch is usually recommended for blueberry bushes. Always make sure the mulched area is at least as wide as the crown of the bush. This way, anything that may have dropped from the plant is completely covered and cannot be transferred by the wind.

3. Protect your plants. There are multiple options for chemical treatments of blueberries. However, since there are two potential stages for infection, it is important to treat in the appropriate window of time. Captan is currently the most

See Mattee, page 5A

UGA Extension From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



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