

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## A helping hand

There's a group of students that need your help. Access Explorers is a group of Union County High School students with a variety of learning disabilities. As their teacher, Shannon Hogsed explained to the Union County Board of Education last week, most of these students have never traveled outside of Union County in their lifetimes.

That's why she wants to take them on a trip of a lifetime, Chicago, Ill.

Union County Schools Superintendent Gary Steppe has approved the field trip, giving these students an opportunity to travel before they graduate.

The trip is slated for April 10-15. Hogsed, paraprofessional Sondra George, and Parent Mentor Becky Tracy have raised more than \$9,000 of the needed \$13,000 for the trip.

The group needs another \$3,800 to make the trip a success for these UCHS Special Needs students. They need some help in raising the final amount necessary for the trip for the Access Explorers.

If you are financially able to make a donation or have questions, please contact Hogsed at Union County High School. Hogsed's contact information is Shannon Hogsed, 153 Panther Circle, Blairsville, GA 30512, (706) 994-9668.

The help couldn't come at a more convenient time. March is Random Acts of Kindness Month. There couldn't be a more Random Act of Kindness than sending these students on the trip of a lifetime.

I remember my first trip outside of Union County. It was to Young Harris to the Taste-Freez where I was treated to a Chicken Box. Young Harris was my first big trip to the theater as Young Harris College's Drama Team performed for countless Union County students each year while I was in elementary school.

I crossed the state line into North Carolina when I was 13, and then, that was to rubberneck with my folks at the incredible damage left behind in the aftermath of a tornado in Murphy, NC.

I was 28 years old when I first flew on a plane. It was a work-related trip to Minneapolis, Minn.

Living in the mountains of North Georgia, our young people are rarely exposed to the outside world. I'm living proof.

If we pull together as a community, we can help these young people experience something that many of us will never experience.

It truly would be a Random Act of Kindness to pitch in and help make this dream a reality for these young people.

For those that can help, Hogsed says "thank you so much for supporting the Special Needs students at Union County High School."

Let's do what we can. Let's make a young person's dream come true.

## Letters to the Editor ...

One more for Mr. Smith

Dear Editor

I would like to respond to the letter written by Bill Smith and the so-called advertisement by George Burch in the February 26th issue of NGN.

We have lived in Blairsville for 14 years. The last names of our family members are Myers, and Moore and Jones. Sorry if they are hard to pronounce.

My husband is retired from a business where he had payroll to meet for over 30 years. Our sons will have employees with payrolls to meet and none of us have ever asked for handouts from the government.

We have volunteered with several Union County charitable organizations as well as national ones and have donated to the local food bank and Meals on Wheels.

I certainly wouldn't be bragging about how RED this state or county is when you consider the fact the Republicans stated from the very beginning of President Obama's election that they intended to block every piece of legislation he sent to them with no concern whatsoever for what the effects would be on the American people! Stopping passage of the benefits bill for our veterans, cutting the food stamps for families that are struggling to make ends meet, wanting less regulation on polluting companies, refusing to pass background checks for gun purchases and limiting the sales of military style weapons. Now

See Jones, page 5A

### Just the facts

Dear Editor,

In response to Don Allen's letter in the March 12 issue about "Australian Gun Laws," readers should know this misinformation is over 10 years old, and has been debunked by numerous legitimate news outlets and unbiased fact-checking sources.

The list of lies and half-truths purportedly written by an Australian police officer has been exposed as false countless times since it first appeared as an email forward nearly 15 years ago. Gun laws down under were changed in 1997, not "12 months" ago.

Marcia Hair, Blairsville

### Thanks to an Angel

Dear Editor,

A couple of weeks ago, I was in Walmart, behind a lady, who was checking out. Her grandson whipped up behind me and added an article to the counter. I started to put my groceries on the counter, when the grandson grabbed my hotdogs. I said those were mine and the grandmother said "he is helping you to unload your cart." He was just so sweet and cute and busy. I never did thank him correctly. What a wonderful way to help an old lady. What a wonderful grandmother to teach him such manners. I continued to check out and left the store. I unloaded the top of the cart, but forgot in my hurry to unload the bottom. I returned the cart to the cart park and didn't realize I had left my toilet tissue and swifter in the bottom of the cart. I feel that the nice young man made my day and I am sure I made someone else their day. God works in mysterious ways. Thank you young man, you are such an angel.

Lee Turner

## Where Do You Fit?

During the last 53 years I have served several Baptist churches. The first church I served as a bivocational pastor. In the next church I was a student pastor and the third was a seminary pastorate. These were relatively short pastorates and smaller churches. The fourth church I pastored was right out of seminary. It was a rather short pastorate in South Georgia. It was short mainly because I never learned to blow gnats and walk on sand. From 1975 to 2004 when I retired I served two churches. Since 2004 I have been blessed to serve as interim for four churches. In all of these churches my experience has been one of great joy. It has been a tremendous privilege to meet godly men and women. My life and ministry has been blessed by the prayers and stayers. Those who encouraged, loved, forgave, and held me up. At the same time I have encountered those who made me sad. In every church I have served there is a category of people that I refer to as poppers. They "pop in", "pop off", and then "pop out." You just never know where they will "pop up" next. They are sporadic. They are like popcorn. If you can't put a lid over them they get scattered to the four winds. There is a second group that I call the hoppers. These individuals are very restless. They have difficulty making and maintaining long-term commitments. They get bored very easily. If things are not "hopping" around them, they start "hopping." They "hop over" to the next church where things are more exciting or the fire seems to be the brightest. There is another category that I call the knockers. They are habitually complaining and criticizing. They knock the preacher, the program and the pew. Nothing is ever good enough. They don't ever offer solutions, they just knock. Occasionally I have met the stoppers. Their mission is to see that nothing ever changes. Any kind of progress is bad. The stoppers may slow things down, but they are the only thing that stops. Everything else just goes on without them. Then there are the parkers. They park beside some experience and never go on to perfection. It may have been a good experience like Peter, who on the Mount of Transfiguration wanted to build three taber-

See Parris, page 5A

### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



## Questions and Answers

### Q. What property tax exemptions are available to Georgia and Union County residents?

A. There are three main property tax exemptions which are related to homestead, school, and disabled veterans. Applications for exemptions are accepted year round by the Tax Assessor's office. Applications for the current year must be made prior to April 1 of the year the application is being sought. Once you have applied for an exemption, you do not need to reapply unless you move to another location.

### Q. Can you please explain the three different exemptions and who is covered?

A. Standard Exemption (Homestead): \$2,000 off the 40% assessed value. Applicable to all homeowners who live in their homes and claim exemptions at NO other location. (April 1 deadline)

Elderly School Tax: Exemption up to \$10,000 off the school tax portion of the 40 percent assessed value. Available to homeowners 62 or older with net total family income less than \$10,000, excluding Social Security and Retirement. (April 1 deadline)

Elderly Double County Exemption: Additional \$2,000 off the 40 percent assessed value. Available to homeowners 65 or older with net income of applicant and spouse is less than \$10,000, excludes social Security and Retirement. (April 1 deadline)

State Exemption: Available to all homeowners age 65 that otherwise qualify for Standard Exemption. Exempts the State portion of the tax bill off of the primary residence and up to 5 acres.

Disabled Veterans: Exemption up to \$67,555 off the 40% assessed value. Available to veterans with 100 percent service-connected disabilities. Must provide a "letter of proof" from the Veteran's Administration. This exemption is extended to the unremarried surviving spouse or to minor children.

Homestead Exemption for Un-remarried Surviving Spouse: The surviving spouse of a member of the armed forces who was killed in any war or armed conflict will be granted a homestead exemption from all ad valorem taxes for state, county, municipi-

See Paris, page 5A

### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



"Wow! With this tax refund I can..."



"...pay some bills."



### Too good to refuse

Dear Editor,

How does \$59.99 equal \$88.77?

Here's how. Recently, a promotion piece from Windstream arrived in the mail, promising a "lifetime price guarantee" of \$59.99 for High-Speed Internet and unlimited phone. Knowing that my bill for "High-Speed Internet and unlimited phone" usually ran about \$90 per month, this sounded like an offer I couldn't refuse, so I checked it out. And here's what I discovered. I'm already paying "ONLY" \$59.99 for High-Speed Internet and unlimited phone; however, I'm also paying "Windstream" charges of \$6.50 for Access Charge per FCC Order, plus \$1 for Access Recovery Charge, plus \$1.50 for 911 Service, plus \$1.23 for Federal

See Esposito, page 5A

### Remembering Iwo Jima

Dear Editor,

Grateful thanks for your front page story of Feb. 26 about the Iwo Jima survivors. I appreciate the opportunity to have learned a bit about the experiences of Bud Johnson, Phil Gamache and Todd Kimsey. Also, more recently, those of Mr. de Lorimier from his daughter, Carolyn Gay.

I am privileged to have heard about Iwo Jima first-hand from my Dad, as he was among the U.S. Marines who went ashore via Higgins boat on Feb. 19, 1945.

It always gives me chills to hear of how it felt, after five days of hell, to see the American flag go up on Mt. Suribachi. And how the airstrip was barely ready when the first bomber came in under enemy gunfire.

Dad, now living in Florida, still carries shrapnel in his hip from Iwo Jima, but is blessed to be counted among the survivors. As a baby boomer, it is impossible for me to fully understand what it was like on Iwo Jima or in any WWII battle. But, I know enough to be so very grateful for the heroic efforts of those who were there.

Beverly Behn Chaussy

### Hardworking Tag Office

Dear Editor,

I think the ladies at the tag office should be recognized for the exceptional work they do. They always assist you in solving your problem in any way they can. They go out of

See Brassel, page 5A

### Do you have Internet access?

Dear Editor,

This is a link to Snopes.com, concerning the "Letter to the Editor," regarding guns in Australia from Don Allen.

It appears that this letter first surfaced in 2001, and the analysis is pretty detailed on the web site. See it here: <http://www.snopes.com/crime/statistics/ausguns.asp>

See Stallings, page 5A

### Good People

A family lived down the road from my grandparents by the name of Kory. The Kory's were a large family and farmed rented property. I asked my father if Mr. Kory was a hard worker. Dad responded that Mr. Kory wouldn't lift a stick to kill a snake if it were about to bite him. This made my grandfather laugh and he told me the following story.

When the Kory family moved to the community it was spring time and everyone was preparing for the spring planting season. Pretty soon one of the young Kory boys showed up and told Papa that the whole family was sick and could not plant their cotton. The boy said, "Daddy Kory looks like he is on his death bed." Word made it around the community and the next day every able bodied man and boy in Trapptown showed up at the Kory Place to plant 15 acres of cotton. After the Kory cotton was planted everyone went to their own fields to plant their crops.

After the weeds began to grow Mr. Kory asked Papa if he could cultivate the cotton for him. But, a strange thing happened at lay by time. The whole family, including Mr. Kory, made a miraculous recovery. Instead of coming to church revival the family left for a week long camping and fishing trip. Pretty soon it was time to pick the cotton and you guessed it. Mr. Kory and his family were sick once again. The whole community showed up to pick their cotton. Again, Mr. Kory was too sick to take the crop to the gin, so, it was taken for him.

Mr. Kory was also too sick to make his own garden. So, Granny gave the family enough canned goods from her garden to help them through the winter. Papa finished the story by telling me this was common practice of the Kory family and everyone in the community knew it. So, I asked Papa why everyone continued to do the work for Mr. Kory. He told me this was the right thing to do. He also said the Kory kids would never have survived if not for those farmers and families in Trapptown. The people of Trapptown were and still are good people.

When I was a little boy I always looked forward to attending revival services and dinner on the ground at Union Hill Church with my grandfather. I can also remember a man named Tulon Thomas leading the singing. Tulon kept time and led songs like *Just A Little Talk with Jesus* and *I'll Fly Away*. I can remember people like Russell Hutchison, Alton Cagle and Curtis Taylor preaching the word from the pulpit. There was no air conditioning but, we didn't mind. The only form of comfort was the ceiling fans. And the old floor was tongue and groove pine.

See Cummings, page 5A

### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



## Random Acts of Kindness

I've always been a big fan of Random Acts of Kindness. I've witnessed people in my life give so generously with no expectation of return. From surprise goodie bags and gifts for no reason to buying a stranger's meal in a restaurant and handing a child \$5 while they are standing in the grocery store line begging for candy, I've witnessed it all. I'll never forget the first time I was the recipient of the generosity of a stranger's participation in the "Drive Thru Difference." You know, where the mystery person in front of you pays for your meal, and when you get to the window the employee tells you that your bill has been paid. What an awesome feeling. Yes, I smiled for a long time after that. But you know what is even greater about Random Acts of Kindness? They inspire more Random Acts of Kindness! You better believe the next time I was in the drive thru, I wanted the person behind me to experience the same happiness that I had experienced through the small gesture of an unknown person.

Why do I write to you this week about Random Acts of Kindness? Because there is a new platform for sharing these wonderful stories and expressing public appreciation for the good that others are doing. As a community service project through the Leadership Union

See Williams, page 5A

## Join the Family

The vendors, organizers and volunteers of the Union County Farmers Market recently had family dinner together. It was a great reunion, after several months of all of us having gone our own ways in the "off season". We are family, though. And even when our lives all go in different directions, when we gather, it is "old home week".

The camaraderie of this group has been one of the main ingredients of the Market's success. If there is any competition between vendors, it is only evident when we have a watermelon seed spitting contest or they pit up against each other to see who can husk the most ears of corn in 3 minutes, flat.

This family is the heartbeat of the Market, and starting this week you have an opportunity to be considered for marriage into the family. That's right. We are taking vendor applications for the 2014 season at the Union County Farmers Market.

Before I share the details of application, let me tell you what I think our needs are at the market. This is just my personal opinion, more from a consumer standpoint than from my being a member of "the family".

Sometimes, good ideas land in a place before their time. That's what happened when we had folks selling homemade vinegars, cut herbs, fancy colored carrots/beets and peppers, artisan breads and cut flowers in our infancy. We need these folks back with us. Organic meat, fancy dip mixes, trout products, homemade cheese and dairy and every kind of weird variety lettuce and tomato known to mankind will be welcome additions.

I never took advantage of crepes by the industrious and creative lady that came to make those on the gas driven, giant crepe wheel. But others did, and they loved them. We need more food vendors. Our crowds are getting larger after 10 a.m., and we will have a breakfast and a lunch crowd, and dinner on Tuesdays, if there is good food at fair prices who consistently (that's the key) show up every Tuesday afternoon/evening and Saturdays.

We've grown dramatically over the past

See Leone, page 5A

### Farmers Market Moment

JorAnne Leone



## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West  
Owner / Publisher

Charles Duncan  
Editor

Joe Collins  
Advertising Director

Todd Forrest  
Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson  
Photographer

Website: [www.nganews.com](http://www.nganews.com)  
E-mail: [northgeorgianews@hotmail.com](mailto:northgeorgianews@hotmail.com)  
Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514



Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m.

Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - 1 Year \$35.00. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$3. All subscriptions must be paid in advance. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is published weekly by NGN/TCH, Inc., 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, Georgia, 30512. Entered as Second Class Matter as of Dec. 10, 1987 at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. Advertising and subscriptions can be paid by cash, check or credit card.

Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 \* P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514