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year's National Day of Prayer was "Wake Up America," with special attention being called to Isaiah 58:1 from the Bible, asking the millions across America to "Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet."

Music played an important role Thursday, as the House of Prayer Choir lifted

their voices like trumpets in celebration of and reverence for their creator. Under the direction of Minister of Music Mildred Leroy, the choir sang "Free to Worship" and "I Will Not Be Shaken."

Throughout the two-hour prayer session, area pastors led prayer over specified sectors of society, with those gathered

participating by raising their voices and their hands.

Chuck Honaker led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pastor Roy Watkins of Coosa United Methodist Church opened prayer with a prayer of thanks.

Dr. Fred Lodge, at home in First Baptist, prayed for the nation, while Pastor Jerry Helton of House of Prayer prayed for state officials.

Pastor George Cline of

Antioch Baptist Church prayed over local officials, adding that he felt "very blessed to live in a county where we have godly men and women serving as our local officials."

Terry Stuart, who leads Blairsville Church of Christ, prayed for law enforcement, the fire department, EMTs and all medical workers.

Pastor Don Parmely of New Life Family Church led prayer over the Armed Forces, offering special recognition and thanks to veterans and spouses of veterans in attendance that evening.

Pastor Emory Alexander of Faith Baptist Church prayed over businesses, and Pastor John Davis of Blairsville Church of God prayed for families.

Bill Schakat, pastor of Redeemer Baptist Church, chose to lead a prayer for the youth of Union County and beyond.

"We join together tonight, oh God, to lift up the youth in our community and nation," said Pastor Schakat. "They are now growing up in a nation that is more and more secular, a nation that does not acknowledge that your word is truth."

Pastor Tim Mason, leader of Shining Light Baptist



Richard and Sharon Morrison once again organized the local National Day of Prayer event at First Baptist Church of Blairsville.

Church, prayed over world missions, and Marty Duncan of Fellowship of the Hills prayed for Israel.

In closing, Pastor Mark Burgess of First Methodist Church prayed for pastors, the Body of Christ and lost souls.

"At the risk of stating the obvious, God is here," said Pastor Burgess. "The scripture that's spilling into and out of

my heart right now is a scripture that many of us will be encountering probably the week after this, as we enter into the celebration of Pentecost.

"But in Acts 2, whatever version of the Bible you have in your tradition, the words sound like this: 'And they all gathered together in one place.'"

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were picking them early this morning so they're very fresh. We brought about 50 gallons of them," said Sparks.

Thrilled to have the opportunity to take some of the sweet fruit home, market attendees bought all 50 gallons before noon hit.

Many who wouldn't have had the opportunity to get berries otherwise went home with a basketful, ready to make cobbler, pie and countless other treats.

Despite the low yield of berries, the market was booming with more than 40 vendors to showcase their crafts, whether it be homegrown produce or homemade goods.

And for folks worn out by all the shopping and browsing, massage therapist David Wolf set up shop right in the center of the market, doling out his free massages.

Many were in for a great surprise to find one of the vendors to be none other than the Blue Ridge Mountain Cattlemen's Association, there to celebrate Beef Day.

Donning their "I Love Beef" aprons and stickers, Paula Myers, Teresa Hamilton and Joe and Sue McGinnis ran the booth in style, passing out free samples of steak and hamburger.



Farmers Market patrons loved the strawberry shortcake.

The table was lined with free beef literature and everything from recipe books to butchering guides to coloring books. Every question about beef had an answer.

"Our association includes North Carolina, Georgia, Cherokee County, Union, Fannin and Towns," said McGinnis of Deerfoot Farms. "Our beef is from Brasstown Farms in Brasstown, North

Carolina. We do this once a year and everything is always free."

With the Farmers Market opening just around the corner on June 4, everyone is bustling with excitement for this year's season. The days are getting warmer and brighter, and everyone's Saturdays are about to get just a little bit fuller.

Candidates Meet/Greet voters at UCGOP and Union/Towns County Tea Party Freedom Forum

Voters walked away well-fed and well-informed at the close of the recent Freedom Forum and Cookout sponsored by the UCGOP and Union/Towns County Tea Party. The event was held on Saturday, April 30 at the Haralson Memorial Civic Center in Blairsville. An amazing patriotic mood was set by red, white and blue balloons along with streamers filling the room where attendees enjoyed their lunch and the Forum. Those who were lucky walked away with door prizes contributed by generous local businesses.

UCGOP Chairman Dale Allison said, "So many people have expressed gratitude to us for sponsoring this second Forum. They say they feel much better prepared to vote this month! Basically, that's what we hoped to achieve, and we're so pleased the Union/Towns County Tea Party co-sponsored this event with us!"

The Forum was conducted in three rounds to accommodate the State House, U.S. House and Senate candidates participating.

In each round, each Forum participant made an opening statement. Each randomly selected a question drafted by the UCGOP and Union/Towns County Tea Party and responded to it. Questions challenged them to share their views on any number of topics critical to local voters.

Examples of questions posed in Round 1 to State Senate candidates included: What

is your position concerning the National Popular Vote Bill? What is the role of Georgia with regard to immigration? How do you feel Georgia's infrastructure needs should be addressed?

The second panel comprised of U.S. House candidates responded to questions such as: How would you approach the concern over "Two Georgia's," meaning how laws may affect Atlanta and non-metro areas differently?

Are you in favor of legalizing marijuana?

The same protocol was followed in Round 3 with U.S. Senate candidates responding to questions, such as: What are the top three issues facing the United States? Why do you think you're the best candidate for the job?

Submitted by
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UCHS Class of 1956 Reunion

The Union County High School graduating Class of 1956 will hold its 60th reunion at Steve's Cookie Jar Restaurant in Blairsville on Saturday, June 4, 2016. Registration will begin at 4 p.m. All classmates and friends are invited to attend. Reservations to attend should be made by May 10th with The Twins, phone 706-781-6587 or email olas2@windstream.net.