

Early Voting

Beginning June 30, we approach the middle leg of our 2014 election journey.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



The races include State School Superintendent, both parties, and the GOP U.S. Senate runoff to fill the vacancy of retiring U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss.

On the GOP side of the Senate race, hopefuls David Perdue, and U.S. Rep. Jack Kingston were scheduled to visit Union County.

No word on why neither candidate showed up, though they did have representation at the meeting.

However, that meeting served as a chance to get to know the candidates hoping to fill the vacancy of District 5 BOE Representative Julie Barton, who did not seek reelection in 2014.

In a recent conversation with Barton, she told me the one thing she loved about serving on the Board of Education was trying to make a difference in the lives of our young people.

That should be the main objective of any candidate seeking to serve on the Board of Education.

Basically, there were 15 candidates from both parties, nine Republicans and six Democrats.

Of course, with no clear cut choice, meaning no candidate with enough name recognition to claim victory in the May 20 Primary, four finalists emerged.

On the GOP ticket, Mike Buck squares off against Richard Wood; on the Democratic ticket, Valerie Wilson faces Alisha Thomas Morgan.

We still don't know who these folks are, but, hopefully, we'll guess which one serves us best.

Letters to the Editor ...

News and more news

Dear Editor,

The front page of The North Georgia News was filled with all of the activities happening in our wonderful area.

A record crowd at the Scottish Festival is good news. It does however imply an increase in traffic.

This area has grown over the years and will continue on that path. The article on the Harrah's casino in Murphy to possibly be completed by mid 2015 will add employment to the region with as many as 900 employees.

We as a community must begin now to address the impending traffic situations that will result of all those visitors.

We call upon our County Commissioner, Lamar Paris, to take a leading role in taking the steps to protect our local part and full time residents by taking a proactive role in addressing the current and impending traffic issues.

There have been numerous accidents at that intersection with at least 1 recent death. With the huge new development on Pat Colwell Road, I believe it is called Northshore, there already has been a dramatic increase of construction vehicle traffic at that intersection and so far only 1 out of more than 100 homes has been built at that new subdivision.

Add to that, the thought of a massive casino pulling hundreds of thousands of visitors, a great many of which will take Hwy 515 to Murphy Highway 129 and returning will make the Pat Colwell intersection life threatening unless we as a community start to put the plans in place now to install a proper traffic signal.

See Rashid, page 5A

Say something nice

Dear Editor

Here, here! Finally someone else agrees with me, and has stepped up to say something about it as well. I am regarding the previous LTTE regarding these letters each and every week being nothing but political backlash and trash. It is getting almost as bad as were the viewpoints... which I am forever thankful that area has been terminated once and for all! Can't we every once in awhile send in a thank you to someone for doing a kind-hearted deed, or just being thankful for a change of pace, or saying how much you appreciate and love some one?

Mrs. D. Barnes

Full Circle

It has been a little over ten years since I retired (changed gears). What all retirees told me has come to pass: "You will be busier than you have ever been!" How true! In these ten years I have served as interim to five other churches. Now life has brought me full circle.

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



Now, at the age of seventy-five, I have accepted a call to return as their interim pastor. As someone has said, "Life is queer with its twists and turns as every one of us sometimes learn."

One of the quick things that I thank God for is that I can get my receipt at the pump and I don't have to go inside and line up behind all of those people buying lottery tickets.

See Parris, page 5A

Questions and Answers

Q. When our new jail was built why was it not built larger?

A. That is a good question. When I took office on Jan. 1 of 2001, the property for the jail was already purchased, the grading was completed, the bid had been let and the footers were already poured.

The problem was that the budget had already been set for the joint jail at \$4 million (\$2 million each county). So when the argument between the two counties settled out, someone thought if a regular jail for two counties could be built for \$4 million, then Union County could build our own jail for \$2 million.

Q. I seem to remember that you had to spend a lot of money to do more grading on the jail site. Is that correct?

A. Absolutely. The back side of the mountain, in order to save money, was graded so close to the footings and future edge of the building, that with the first large rain, the embankment fell off into the footings behind the jail.

Q. What do you plan on doing about the jail and the overcrowding?

See Paris, page 5A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



How May We Assist

Summer is officially here and that means outdoor fun and family time. As you plan for your summer activities, the Chamber is here to help.

Hot Deals - Hot Deals are submitted by our member businesses.

Hot Deals can be found on our website at VisitBlairsvilleGA.com or even better, subscribe to our Hot Deals e-newsletter which sends you an announcement each time a new deal is posted!

Blairsville - Union County Chamber. Cindy Williams

e-Newsletter Subscriptions - Did you know that the Chamber offers a variety of e-newsletter subscriptions to keep you informed of community happenings?

See Williams, page 5A

Are you a Barbedude?

Since moving to Georgia, I realized that a BBQ is totally different to a Northerner than a Southerner. Yankees do not use the phrase "cook-out."

Yankees refer to the process of grilling non-BBQ items as "cooking out". Yankees host "barbecues," which are gatherings that feature items cooked on a grill.

Pig BBQ is an art here in the North Georgia Mountains. And a man (I'm sorry, but few women take this as seriously as men) who lives and dies by the heat of the charcoal, the dryness of the hardwood and the price tag on his green egg, he's called a Barbedude.

As we prepare for the July 4th celebrations, barbecue is foremost in the minds of the Barbedudes. This year, at the Union County Farmers Market, we are giving these smoke lovin' backyard chefs a chance to strut their stuff.

So here are the categories in which you can compete. First category will be BBQ Ribs. I prefer mine, falling off the bone, tender. The smokiness isn't as important.

See Leone, page 5A



A helping limb



Dear Editor,

I noticed this week that one of your readers requested more positive articles written to you which is a great idea.

I am sitting on my porch enjoying the surrounding scenery from my glider and I see a sight in front of me that I just have to share.

We bought an acre of land with a house three months ago here in Blairsville and we are so pleased with it. Along with the house we were blessed with a mature apple tree and about 25 feet from the apple tree is a mature hickory tree.

The apple tree is so heavy with new apples the limbs are bowing because of the weight.

Here is the crux of this article. The hickory tree has most likely talked to the apple tree and told the branches of the apple tree to rest on the hickory trees' branches as his burden is light and his branches can carry the weight of the apples until they mature.

Oh how we can learn from nature how to love and support each other. I am sending you a picture to go with this editorial so you can see the "canopy of togetherness."

Sincerely, Barbara Ziegenbein

Not a Cheves fan

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank Arlene M. Gray for her letter to the Editor, North Georgia News, June 18th.

Which brings me to mention Charles Cheves' letter... "The right to bear arms." He definitely has the right to state his opinions...

See Holsapple, page 5A

Uncle Bud and Retus

When Uncle Bud was a senior in high school he turned down a football scholarship to play college ball at Auburn for Shug Jordan.

So, upon graduation Uncle Bud landed a job with the Tennessee River Paper Company.

Bud worked all over North Alabama, northern Mississippi and western Tennessee planting pine trees and managing pine forests.

Just a few years after he was hired Bud was promoted to Wood Yard Manager at the Delmar Wood Yard.

Retus was a friendly enough fellow. He was quiet and reserved. But, he was all business and worked 10-12 hours per day.

The first Friday after Retus and Uncle Bud had met was strange. Bud noticed a change in the behavior of Retus from earlier in the week.

Bud said, "At first the drinking of Retus didn't bother me. But, over the years I noticed a change in Retus. The sipping of a little moonshine soon turned to drinking a lot of moonshine."

See Cummings, page 5A

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Kenneth West Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan Editor

Joe Collins Advertising Director

Todd Forrest Staff Writer

Lowell Nicholson Photographer

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E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com

Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

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