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Q. Why don't we just simply vote this TSPLOST down and force the Legislature to go back to the drawing board and come up with another idea to pay for transportation in Georgia?

A. Let's get real. It took the Governor and Legislature four years to come up with a compromise for road funding. If we wait on another four years, we will be so far behind in Georgia, we may never catch up on our road program. You have voted all of our statewide leaders into office and those leaders have chosen this TSPLOST method to fund transportation in Georgia by a large majority. They would not make the vote themselves and instead put the vote to the public, plain and simple, because they did not want to be forcing a tax increase on the public knowing the political fallout. Despite a few who speak against it, most do not. Governor Nathan Deal, Speaker of the House, David Ralston, the Lt. Governor, Casey Cagle, and Chairmen of the Transportation Committee in the House and Senate, along with many other legislators are actively supporting the adoption of the TSPLOST as the best way to fund transportation in our future.

Q. Are you telling us we should vote for the TSPLOST?

A. No, but I want you to know the facts before casting your vote. The Georgia Legislature left the final decision in your hands and so do I. I just want you to know that if it passes it will be good for Union County. But at the same time, if you simply are against any kind of tax increase, then that is your decision to make as well.

I am voting for it because the political reality is that finding another solution to fund transportation in the future will be extremely difficult and we can make a big difference in the quality and safety of roads in Union County, our region and the entire state with this TSPLOST – and after all, insuring we have a safe and adequate county road system is a large part of my job.

Q. Why is Georgia getting behind in transportation?

A. When I was growing up in Union County you could always tell when crossing the North Carolina line because the pavement was rough and you could feel and hear the difference. Georgia roads were always better. That was in the old days and now Georgia spends the least per capita on roads than almost any state in the nation. That is because the funding is from gasoline tax (one of lowest in the nation) and as vehicles become more fuel efficient, the amount of gas tax collected is reduced. This WILL impact our economic development future and if you really look at it, is there any method of raising more taxes that the public will agree to or like? We know sales tax works. It has worked for our county with all of our many excellent SPLOST projects, as well as giving us some of the best school facilities around. It saves our taxpayers several million dollars in property taxes each year. It can also work for roads.

To see all the questions on TSPLOST, go to our website at www.unioncountytga.gov. Click on Commissioner and then click on "TSPLOST QUESTIONS". To be continued next week.

Cummings...continued from Page 4A

Medicinal Herbs.” “Small Fruit Production,” and other items related to country living. Also, on July 21 Allison McGraw will be conducting Pressure Canner checks at the Farmers Market until noon. If you have a pressure canner please bring the canner with you to the Farmers Market to have it checked. If something is wrong with the canner Allison can tell you what to do to make sure it is in good working order in order to preserve your food safely and properly. Many of you have called our office to ask about the status of the Union County Canning Plant. We expect the boiler to be delivered to the plant in

about one week. It will then take about a week for the contractor to get it installed.

After the boiler is installed, the Canning Plant will have to be inspected by the Department of Agriculture and then we will be able to open for business. So, we hope to open for business sometime in mid-August. We will be making announcements in the *North Georgia News* about our schedule and opening very soon.

For more details about any of your canning needs please call the Cooperative Extension Office in Blairsville at (706) 439-6030.

See you at The Market!

Parris...continued from Page 4A

but that still does not keep me from being embarrassed for the drivers of those cars. It indicates very poor taste and expresses a lack of good judgment on the part of the drivers. Most probably it reveals the kind of person behind the wheel.

There is a word of caution to all of us who read billboards and bumper stickers. Do not become so distracted by the message that you endanger your life or the lives of others. The prophet, Habakkuk penned these words long ago, The Lord said, “Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it” (2:2). Did you know that we are a living billboard? Everyone is reading us. What kind of message do you convey on the billboard of your life? For this world that is on the run, can they catch a glimpse of Jesus as they glance at your life? Few

people stop and talk theology with us. Therefore, we must proclaim in big, bold print the clear message of Jesus on the billboard of our life for this world on the run.

While reading the messages of others, don't forget to make your statement about Jesus!

Blood drive

Blood Assurance will have a blood drive at Union General Hospital on Friday, July 20 from 12 to 5 p.m.

All blood types are needed at this time. Blood Assurance is the sole provider of blood products to Union General Hospital. Donors must be at least 17 years old (16 years old with parental consent) and weigh at least 110 pounds.

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Garner...continued from Page 4A

our thanks to the Fireworks Committee composed of Luke Colwell with Colwell Construction Company, Joey Swanson with Woodmen of the World, Robert Henderson of State Farm Insurance, and Cindy Williams with the Chamber. The Board of Directors and several key volunteers worked hard to support the effort. They included Erik Brinke, Luke Colwell, Jim Conley, Marcie Culpepper, Joe Garner, Mitch Griggs, Rita Gunter, Amy Harper, Janet Hartman, Robert Hender-

son, Brad Hutson, Bob Land-er, JoAnne Leone, Patrick Malone, Laura Mowell, Lamar Paris, Steve Rowe, Tony Stewart, Kristen Stroud, Adina Swanson and Joey Swanson and the Chamber Staff.

Please take a moment to visit our Web site at www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com for an up to date list of Chamber members and upcoming events. Additional information is available by calling (706) 745-5789. I can be reached any time at Chair@BlairsvilleChamber.com.

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through also contribute.

So I would support voting “yes” for the TSPLOST sales tax – providing safer transportation and more and better jobs in our future. The money collected in our region stays in our region. In addition, 25 percent of the funds received will go to local

counties. In the case of Union County, it will increase their Road Department budget from \$85,000 to nearly \$3 million dollars a year for 10 years. Our highways and roads and our children and grandchildren need your “yes” vote to support TSPLOST.

Bud Akins

Chamber of Commerce events	
For details and future events see events calendar at www.VisitBlairsvilleGA.com	
Wednesday, July 18	
2pm	Tour Misty Mountain Model Railroad
2pm	Friends of Union County Library Meeting – Union County Library
Thursday, July 19	
12pm	Rotary Club of Union County – St. Francis of Assisi Church
6:30pm	Shape Note Singing – Historic Union County Court House
Friday, July 20	
8am	Union County Farmers Market - Trash To Treasure Sale
10am	Ribbon Cutting for G-n-G Bakery & Cafe
7pm	Friday Night Concert, Don Byers - Historic Union County Court House
7pm	You can be the Star Karaoke – Lodge at Copperhead
Saturday, July 21	
7am	Union County Farmer's Market
10am	14th Annual Butternut Creek Festival – Meeks Park
4pm	Cruise-In On The Square – Downtown Blairsville
7pm	3rd Annual Mountain Idol Finale – Red Banks Room next to The Oaks Restaurant
Sunday, July 22	
10am	14th Annual Butternut Creek Festival – Meeks Park
Monday, July 23	
9am	Garden tour – GA Mt. Research & Education Center
11am	Summer Reading Program - Union County Public Library
12pm	Blairsville Kiwanis Club Monthly Meeting – Steve's Cookie Jar Restaurant
6pm	Free Texas Hold 'em Tournament – Lodge at Copperhead
Tuesday, July 24	
8am	Tri-State Business Women's weekly meeting – Cooks Restaurant
10am	Ribbon Cutting for Joan Shaw - Coldwell Banker – Union County Community Center
12:30pm	Misty Mountain Quilt Guild - First United Methodist Church of Blairsville
3pm	Union County Farmer's Market

UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Every Monday:		
Garden Tours	GMREC	9 am - 1 pm
Boy Scouts #101	United Methodist Ch	7 pm
Children's Story Time	Union County Library	Noon
Kiwanis Club	Steve's Steakhouse	Noon
Civil Air Patrol	Blairsville Airport	6:30 pm
Every Tuesday:		
Mtn. Woodcarvers	Senior Center	6 pm
Sweet Adelines	United Methodist Ch	6:30 pm
Every Thursday:		
Masonic Luncheon	Cooks Restaurant	11:30 am
Butternut Ladies Golf	Golf Course (Apr-Oct)	8:30 am
Rotary Club	St. Francis of Assisi	Noon
Fourth Monday of each month:		
Misty Mtn Quilt Guild	Blairsville	12:30-1 pm
Fourth Tuesday of each month:		
Cub Scouts Trp. #101	UC Elementary School	7 pm
Eastern Star #304	Location not listed	7:30 pm
VFW Post #7394	Old Nursing Home	11:30 am
Compassionate Friends	Grinds & Glazes	Noon
Fourth Wednesday of each month:		
No activities listed		
Fourth Thursday of each month:		
UT Homebuilders	YH College	7 pm
Lions Club	Steve's Cookie Jar	6 pm
Cruisers Club Meeting	Sr. Center pavilion	6 pm
Fourth Friday of each month		
Eastern Star #471	Location not listed	7:30 pm
Fourth Saturday of each month:		
Youngcane Lodge #597	Lodge Hall	7:30 pm

Leone

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leading experts on food preservation will be conducting seminars, testing your equipment and answering your canning questions. Bring the kids, too. I know from years of experience that you can disguise the canning process as a summer party, and everyone, of all ages, will have fun.

Always visit us at www.UCFarmersMarket.com for updates and a list of all our special events. See you at the market!

Esposito

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federal government routinely violate the Constitution with impunity (because We The People let them get away with it), and examples abound.

We need look no further than the treaty the U.S. signed to become a member of the United Nations. Because membership in the U.N. makes the U.S. inferior to the U.N., U.S. membership in the U.N. is unconstitutional, forbidden, of no effect, and thus null and void. Likewise for the World Court and the New World Order. Nevertheless, the US carries on business in the U.N. every day, as if the treaty were perfectly legal, totally ignoring the fact that by signing it, the president (who had sworn an oath of office to “preserve, protect and defend” the Constitution), and every concurring member of the Senate (who had sworn a similar oath of office to “support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic”), committed a felony (an impeachable offense).

But, that treaty was signed almost 70 years ago, why bring this up now? Well, because our president, and the democratically controlled senate, are about to do it to us again. Just a few days from now, on July 27, 2012, the U.N. will vote on the Arms Trade Treaty - a treaty that could ban every rifle, pistol and shotgun you own - a treaty that could turn our God-given Right to Keep and Bear Arms into a unregulated privilege - a treaty that has the full support of President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. It's too late to try to persuade either of them to abide by their oath of office to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, but it's not too late to get to your senators to make sure they do. And by the way, as a reminder, all of us who were or are in the U.S. military swore a similar oath, and neither discharge nor retirement releases us from that oath.

“A patriot must always be ready to defend his country against its government.” Edward Abbey

Chuck Esposito

Fitzgerald

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local economy stayed here. Please, please don't tell me Republicans are fine with state-level socialism; just not federal! This Republican-led state needs to halt this redistribution of wealth.

Jim Fitzgerald