

# Opinions

Everybody has one

## Do me a favor

It's that time of year again, a time to give thanks to the service men and women who have so unselfishly given their all to make sure America stays free.



Charles Duncan  
**Straight Shooting**

I shared some conversation last week with some gentlemen who have been a force to attempt to get some recognition for our county's veterans.

Veterans Phil Nichols, Eric England, Pat Phillips and James Jones have worked hard to put together a remembrance to our county's veterans. Thanks to Sharon and Sam at the Blairsville Restaurant, that has been achieved.

More than 330 photographs of Union County Armed Forces Veterans grace the back room wall at the BR (Blairsville Restaurant).

The requirements for veterans to have their picture on the walls are simple. Be from Union County, and the veteran in the picture must be in uniform - dress or fatigues.

The reason only Union veterans are allowed on the wall, well, that one is easy - space constraints.

Remaining space is limited and there's only room for a few more veterans, but the idea remains the same.

It's about paying tribute to those who served. Without the sacrifices of those who served, well, we might be speaking German, Japanese or Russian right now.

I come from a long line of veterans, from my Great Granddaddy Quiller Frank Reese, my Great Granddaddy William Rufus Duncan, my Daddy Robert Duncan to all my uncles, including Uncle Harlan Duncan, many of my cousins and, well needless to say, there were a few vets in my family.

I'm most proud of my cousin Woodrow Wilson, who is the namesake of the local DAV chapter. He was like a brother to my Daddy and Uncle Harlan. He was Killed In Action Dec. 16, 1944 at the Battle of the Bulge.

So, enough rambling, let me get to the point. Veterans Day is just around the corner. On Monday, Nov. 12th, there will be a ceremony to dedicate the Iraq War Pedestal at 10 a.m.

Today, Nov. 7, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley will dedicate Veterans Memorial Drive, formerly School Street.

Let's turn out and show our veterans that Union County supports each and every one of them.

As for the newspaper, we salute three veterans, Leon Davenport, Evan Legg and Larry Prather. The latter has gone to be with his maker. Lord, bless Bird's soul.

These three individuals are the most decorated veterans ever to serve out of Union County, Ga. I'm honored to know each one individually.

As for the favor I asked about in the headline of this column, when you meet a veteran, stop and tell them how much you appreciate them and what they do or did for our country.

I had the opportunity to do that recently in McCarran International Airport. A group of soldiers were arriving home from a tour of duty. We passed each other, and I saluted as they passed. They acknowledged the gesture with smiles.

They fight the frontline battles, they put their lives on the line for freedom, they are the reason we can speak our minds so freely.

The mission in Iraq is over, more than 4,400 paid the ultimate sacrifice during that nine-year military commitment.

The time has come to properly recognize that nine years of sacrifice. We hope to see you at Union County War Memorial Park on Nov. 12th. Please do me a favor and be there.

You've helped pay for the Pedestal, come join in the dedication.

## Election

**Q. Are you glad the election is over?**

A. I am not only glad my election is over but I am glad every election is over. Since I am completing this Q & A on Thursday, the polls seem to be in a virtual tie for the Presidential election. I only hope that no matter who wins, the other party will at least spend a year trying to work for the American people and not work just for political advantages.

The most serious immediate concern will be the Sequestration vote. Without going into detail, if the two political parties in Washington, DC do not come to some agreement on the budget prior to January 2, huge military cuts would occur which could cripple our military and further damage our economy. Let's hope we will have some statesmen show up at the bargaining tables and not just politicians.

**Q. Did your political campaign go as you expected?**

A. In this day and time, there is absolutely no way to know what all the voters are thinking. Even in a relatively small county like Union, trying to out guess the public will generally get you in trouble. No matter the outcome of my race, I will work as hard as possible right down to the last day. In the end, we must be willing to let the voters determine the leaders for our county, school system, state and country, and trust they have researched the candidates enough to choose the right people.

**Q. Do you feel confident in winning your race as commissioner?**

A. I might use the term "cautiously optimistic". Normally, with someone running against you that is such an unknown, one might become overconfident, but not me. I fully understand that we have people who simply do not trust government at any level, are not happy with the current President, do not like incumbents and want to vote everyone out of office. Hopefully, that is a small minority of folks, but there is really no way to know with this type of economic environment.

**Q. If you win the race, how will you**

See Paris, page 5A



Lamar Paris  
**Q & A**



"Nobody can appreciate an extra hour of sleep like George... Trouble is, he's never awake to enjoy it!"

## Let us hold hands

Well, the polls have closed and the votes have been counted (some are still being counted). This reminds us that the results have always been "in the hands" of the voters. Politicians, who have been getting plenty of exercise by "handshaking", are now getting exercise by "hand wringing".

It is sad to say, but it is true, that many eligible voters didn't "lift a hand to vote."

Excuses from eligible voters indicate that they think everything is "out of hand" and they have just "washed their hands" of the whole matter. They prefer "no hand" in the selection process. This is definitely no time "to throw up our hands" and quit.

Many offices will be "changing hands" and those fortunate (or unfortunate) enough to have been voted into office will find that they have their "hands full." Some warning is in order for those taking office.

Don't "sit on your hands" lest you be caught "red-handed." Remember all of those voters you had "eating out of your hand" will be "on hand" looking for the "hand-outs."

Be careful that the "hand that fed you" doesn't bite off your hand. Don't be surprised that some supporters will now want you to "wait on them hand and foot." Some self-seeking supporters will seek to "tie your hands" until you feel like you're "hand-cuffed," and sitting on a "hand grenade."

Many good, fine, upstanding citizens who ran for office will be disappointed; you won't get the "big-hand of applause." In fact, some of you who thought you would win "hands down" will wonder if anyone "lent you a hand." "On the other hand" those who ran successfully will look forward to getting the "glad-hand."

Some candidates have found out that their "bird in hand" has turned into a "handful" of campaigning debt. This has been no "hand-me-down" or "second-hand" article. It is "first hand," from "my own hand," and some of you would like to "lay hands" on me. Before you do let me tell you about the "handwriting on the wall." The Bible tells us that as citizens we need to "join hands" and hearts in praying for those who are in authority and have the leadership over us (Titus 3:1-2, I Tim. 2:1-2; Rom. 13:1-4).

For those who are serving, are serving under the "hand of God" (I Peter 5:6). Whatever your "hand" findeth to do; the Bible says you are to do it with all your might (Ecc. 9:10). If you have ever wondered what Jesus' hands looked like, look at the end of your arms. The "hands" with which Jesus continues His ministry to the world are the "hands" of His people, Christians like you and me. Let us "join hands" as "many hands make light work." What we need is a "showing of hands."

## Small business advertising

When it comes to advertising, many small businesses find themselves lost in the whirlwind of opportunities available. Gone are the days of choosing between only a handful of options. In today's business world, the possibilities are almost endless. Therefore, the need for a basic understanding of marketing principles and a true understanding of your customer base is more important than ever.

This week's article will discuss common advertising budgets, determining where to spend your dollars, and how to measure return on investment.

According to Meredith Munger, who is a small business guest blogger for the Phoenix Business Journal located at www.bizjournals.com, the common thought, "It takes money to make money" is true.

An advertising budget is a necessary expense for increased sales and should be considered an investment in your future. Making potential customers aware of your product, consistently being front of mind, and moving them to purchase is all part of the advertising process.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) recommends that small businesses (under \$5 million in annual revenue) allocate 7-8 percent of their budget to marketing.

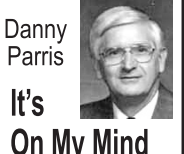
Some business segments such as heavily consumer-focused industries can spend up to 20 percent on marketing. Primarily food manufacturing companies spend up to 35 percent of their budgets on marketing.

Once you understand the need for advertising and have determined your budget, the next question becomes, "Where are my advertising dollars best spent?" Placing advertisements here and there is probably not the best strategy.

Everyone knows that failing to place the message in front of the best potential audience is like casting stones in a pond.

The answer is determined by evaluating and understanding your target market.

See Garner, page 5A



Danny Parris  
**It's On My Mind**

## 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 1940's and early 1950's. 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 budge. 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 and waited for him to go to bed. After Newell went to sleep the boys took apart the old man's buggy and re-assembled the buggy on top of the old man's barn. Paul and Bud didn't make it back home until the wee hours of the morning. They slipped into the house and beds with the smug satisfaction of finally getting even with Old Man Newell.

Paul and Bud were awakened the next morning by the familiar booming voice of Old Man Newell screaming out the words, "Your boys put my wagon on top of my barn". Papa

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## Sicilian Soup Night

I was raised Catholic in the pre-Vatican II days. For those of you that aren't familiar with this bit of history, the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was the most significant event in the modern era of the Catholic Church. To a 10-year-old kid, it meant that I could receive communion without worrying about fainting in Church because I hadn't eaten in 10 hours (fast after midnight).

It also meant we didn't have to eat the likes of tuna noodle casserole on Friday nights, nor did we have to ingest that poor excuse for meatless pizza in Holy Trinity's school cafeteria served at Friday lunch.

At that time, the fasting from meat just one day a week seemed to be a horrible penance. It wasn't until I was an adult that I realized some of my favorite dishes from my youth were prepared on those fasting Fridays. As the weather turns cold I get such a wistful hankering for soup, the mainstay of those meatless Friday dinners.

Beans and veggies were the magic combination. Most "non-Italians" are familiar with Pasta E Fagioli. Kidney beans and chopped carrots and celery make up the main ingredients of this dish.

My family, being of Sicilian heritage, ate a great deal of greens as the main vegetable in our soup, along with the white cannelloni bean. This bean is a little more tender and lighter than a kidney bean and larger and meatier than the navy bean. Mix it up with greens (my favorite is Swiss chard) and tomatoes, a little (ok, a lot) of garlic, some oregano, olive oil, um-um.

There is more to any favorite family recipe than just the food itself. If I close my eyes, I can see my Dad and I both wiping our upper lip as we always perspired there when eating hot soup. I can see the condensation on the kitchen windows from the icy, damp cold of those Lake Erie winters. I loved how the little bowl of freshly grated cheese traveled around the table,

See Leone, page 5A



Mickey Cummings  
**Around The Farm**

# Letters

To the Editor

## Veterans' Report

**Dear Editor,**  
It is my privilege to provide you with a brief report of the activities of the Blairsville field office of the Georgia Department of Veterans Service. This office covers Fannin, Rabun, Towns, and Union counties with an estimated veteran population of 8,476.

It has been a very busy and exciting year with over 7,300 veteran related contacts. The necessity for personal assistance to eligible beneficiaries filing and pursuing claims with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) results from the legal principle that no veteran benefits are awarded automatically. All benefits to which a veteran may be entitled must be applied for!

The Blairsville field office is located in the VA Outpatient Clinic building at 1294 Hwy 515 East. The phone number is (706)

See Spaulding, page 5A

## Lay it on the Line

**Dear Editor,**  
In response to "Tired of the Klan," what I am tired of are people like you and your "society" who hide their hatred and racism under the disguise of "Historical Preservation." KKK, SCV, same thing in my book. The only difference is that one organization is overt about their beliefs.

You said the KKK's use of the flag maligns the "noble purpose" of your ancestors who fought for what they knew was "just, right, and constitutional."

Well, your ancestors' thinking was flawed. Your ancestors died fighting for a cause that was un noble, unjust, unmoral, and unconstitutional, and I shudder to think what would have happened if they had won.

When you get right down to the "grit" of it all; when you lay bare the intent of your ancestors, they fought to hold on to and to preserve their way of life and livelihood, which consisted of maintaining slave states, and maintaining slaves in the cotton fields. More slaves, more cotton, more cotton, more money.

Sure, there were other issues, but the pro-

See Chavis, page 5A

## No need to disrupt

**Dear Editor,**  
After reading the article by Bill Wood in the Oct. 24th NGN, regarding the Sheriff's election, I felt I too should comment.

Mr. Wood's comments are accurate. I retired to Blairsville in 2001, after 28 years in law enforcement with a 2,000 deputy department, which is nationally accredited.

I served in various departments, including patrol supervisor, detective, hostage negotiator and instructor. I was chosen to be on a 10-person committee to revise the deployment and reporting system of the patrol division.

I know a few Union County deputies personally, and have been stopped by others at drivers' license/DUI checkpoints where I did not know the deputies. During all my contacts with the deputies, they were professional and courteous.

I presented my information; they told me to be safe and have a nice day.

Mack Mason's experience with the GSP is very similar to a trooper with the Florida Highway Patrol, an agency that I worked closely with on the street. Both GSP and FHP are agencies primarily responsible for traffic enforcement and crash investigations on state roadways.

While both may have a small investigative section, for drug and stolen vehicle investigations, that is not their main focus.

Based on his own list of credentials, Mack Mason would not have experience in criminal investigations, running a jail, main-

See Parsowith, page 5A

## Love to see Constitution in full swing

**Dear Editor,**  
Beautiful people of Blairsville, what in the world is happening to this quiet, country town? We have a 'Dictator' now for a Commissioner? I have lived in this town since 1998 and I have only found a sole Commissioner Government, who has always taken the best interests of the population in every undertaking. He (Commissioner Paris) has done an outstanding job in every respect.

Our Sheriff is under attack for not doing his job. Wow, since all these flat-landers have come to Blairsville, we are finding out what a decrepit and screwed up town we live in.

I tell you what, it has always been my beliefs that "if it ain't broke don't fix it." I haven't seen any wrongdoing on anyone's part.

My tax bill is low, all the SPLOST projects are on schedule, and the town is not broke.

Now the Democrats have found they like to be called Progressives. Different sound, same philosophy, i.e. spending money we don't have, more government to tell us what we can and cannot do. AND, OH YES, leave the Obama signs where they are. It helps remind me what a pitiful state we are in after three-plus years of no leadership.

I would love to see the Constitution come back in full swing and that GOD is asked back into our lives.

## Thank you Sheriff's Office

**Dear Editor,**  
On Monday Oct. 15, my wife Dinah went to our church at around 3 p.m. She called me in Atlanta where I was attending a Minister's meeting very upset. Our church had been broken in to and our safe had been stolen. She called some of our leaders and other members to come and assist her as she was very afraid. She also called 911 and Detective Lamar Dyer and four other detectives immediately came to

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## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 4 Legal Organ of Union County

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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; Location: 266 Cleveland Street, Blairsville, GA