

## Chorus...from Page 1A

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The Union County Middle and High School chorus classes teamed up to sing the national anthem at the Saturday, Aug. 18, Gwinnett Stripers baseball game in Lawrenceville.

It was a good day for the

Triple-A Stripers, who defeated the New York-based Buffalo Bisons 5-1 at Coolray Field.

Many fans were quick to point out that the fantastic pitching from Touki Toussaint likely resulted in the decisive victory, but some credit should go to the patriotic encouragement of the Union County youth at the start of the game.

## Dr. Gottsman at Mountain Home Music Theater

On Saturday, August 25 at 7 PM, Dr. Michael Gottsman and his band The Varmints will be appearing at Mountain Home Music Theater in Hiawassee. Have you ever wondered what a doctor does to relax? Well, come out to Mountain Home Music that

night and you'll find out in a big way.

Dr. Gottsman, an orthopedic surgeon with Northeast Georgia Medical Center in Gainesville will transform into a musician. He loves music, but of course as a doctor he is very busy and doesn't have a

More than 150 kids from grades six through 12 took the field to perform "The Star-Spangled Banner" that Saturday, led by teachers Alicia Covington of the high school and Melissa Pilote of the middle school.

By all accounts, it was a neat and unique experience for the students, and everyone enjoyed the baseball game and subsequent fireworks show that evening.

lot of free time, but when he does he is playing music. If you have never heard he or his band before, you're in for a treat. So come on out Saturday, August 25 at 7 PM. It's just what the doctor ordered!

The music hall is located 2.5 miles west of Hiawassee on Hwy. 76. Look for the red building and the flashing sign. For more info call 706-896-3624 or after 3:30 PM on Saturday call 706-781-7866.



Are you the male descendant of a Confederate Veteran and tired of seeing American history maligned, reinterpreted and erased?

Consider join the David W. Payne Camp #1633, Sons of Confederate Veterans. Monthly meetings are held in the Community Room of the United Community Bank in Blairsville, across from Chick-fil-A, the second Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. Meetings are of a historical nature and the public is welcome to attend.

## Property Tax...from Page 1A

new homes, the year they're built, they don't go on the tax rolls. Next year, they go on at a lower price, and then (it's) the third year before they really actually go on at the full price."

Paris said he was hopeful that, in the future, property values would track better with the increased costs of doing county business, so as to avoid further tax increases.

"But nothing can be guaranteed," said Paris. "My goal for the past 18 years has been to keep our property tax rate as one of the lowest in the state of Georgia. We have ranged from the No. 1 lowest in the state to the fifth lowest in the state throughout these years."

"We are currently second lowest in the whole state of Georgia. We will remain in the Top 10 lowest, even with

this increase, and when you combine the school and the county together, we should be in the lower five in the state of Georgia, still.

"So, while a tax increase really hurts – hurts me – we probably should have been raising all along, a little bit at a time. We pride ourselves on having the best county possible at the very lowest cost to the taxpayers."

Coming up with an annual budget can be a complicated process, reflected most recently in the \$2.3 million amendment to the FY17 budget in June.

The large amendment proved necessary due to an unforeseen combination of increased expenses, advantageous property acquisitions, decreased tax collections, and underbudgeting in some categories between 2016 and 2017.

## Larson...from Page 1A

as part of its 10-year financial plan.

Fuel costs have come down largely due to a shift in recent years away from coal and toward nuclear and renewables, contributing to relatively flat power rates since 2013.

And after major investments to drive down costs associated with power delivery, TVA now feels comfortable enough with its fuel and transmission capabilities to go ahead and start aggressively paying down debt to set the stage for continued low rates in the future.

"We want TVA to be in the strongest financial health position so we can have lower rates going forward in the long term," said Larson.

BRMEMC General Manager Jeremy Nelms said he was thankful to Larson and his associate, Candyce Hitchcock, for joining the board in the Aug. 14 meeting.

"While the majority of the communication was consistent with what local power companies in the Valley

have been hearing over the past several years," said Nelms, "I was encouraged to hear in such a public forum as our open board meeting that TVA does not see the need for the last three rate increases in its 10-year plan, those last three being 2020, 2021 and 2022."

As previously reported, TVA President and CEO Bill Johnson will be attending the BRMEMC Annual Meeting on Sept. 8 to make prepared remarks.

Unfortunately, Johnson will not be available to answer public comments during the Q&A portion of the meeting.

"However, he has committed to joining the board prior to the annual meeting and discussing the concerns enumerated in our letter with the board and management of the EMC," said Nelms.

The EMC board will meet next in the annual meeting, which will see the election of three director candidates and the potential adoption of two bylaw changes.

Up for election this year

## Lee...from Page 1A

Further, the caller stated that the shooter was actively engaged in shooting inside the residence at the time of the call.

The report came from neighbors residing across the street who had initiated a welfare check on the female, and the shooter was reportedly barricaded inside the residence.

Deputies from the Cherokee County (NC) Sheriff's Office were dispatched to the scene of the reported incident, and while on scene, numerous shots were heard along with breaking glass.

At one point, a deputy was able to check the condition of the female, later identified as Lee, and found that she was already deceased from an apparent gunshot wound.

Deputies then contained the perimeter of the residence.

During this time, Cherokee County (NC) Emergency Management Administration placed a reverse 911 call to residents in the immediate area, notifying them to stay in place.

Additional resources were called, including: the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation; the Cherokee Tribal Police Department SWAT; Jackson County (NC) SWAT; Cherokee County (NC) Emergency Medical Services; and the Ranger Volunteer Fire Department. The Federal Bureau of Investigation also offered assistance.

Apparently, as Cherokee Tribal Police Department SWAT approached in an armored BearCat, the male inside the residence fired several shots at the vehicle.

As the incident progressed into the early morning hours, several attempts were made to contact the male in the house, with no result.

Utilizing the NC State Bureau of Investigation's robot, the male individual, later identified as Mashburn, was located deceased in the residence from an apparent

## Derrick Whittle Memorial Scholarship Fund

Smoked Boston Butts by Jimmy Combs - September 22nd - \$35.

Proceeds will go to Derrick Whittle Memorial Scholarship Fund. These scholarships will be awarded to Union County graduating seniors in May 2019.

Call 706-781-7581 to place your advance order! Don't forget about the huge yard sale on September 21 and 22 at the Union County Civic Center!

"We're looking at ways to cut our budget, but we are not going to sacrifice quality of life for you or for our children if at all possible," said Paris. "We have and will continue to do our very best at operating Union County in a practical and resourceful way, now and in the future."

"Please stand with us as we all work together to continue making Union County to be one of the best and safest counties anywhere in which to live, work and play."

As for school property taxes, the Union County Board of Education will be setting its 2018 millage rate in a called meeting on Thursday, Aug. 23, at 6 p.m. in the board office.

The school board will be accepting a slightly lower rollback rate of 11.74 mills, which will generate \$222,756 more in taxes than in 2017, for a projected total of \$14,641,479 in 2018 school property tax collections.

are three director seats, one each in Union County, Towns County and Fannin County.

The bylaw amendments include setting the definition of "member in good standing" for the purposes of becoming or remaining an EMC director, and whether or not to establish district voting for director candidates.

If approved, the phrase "member in good standing" will be defined as any member who has not lost his or her right to receive electric service from the cooperative.

Concerning district voting, currently, EMC board directors are elected at large, where every member in each county can vote for the directors in every other county.

The board makeup is based on county population and includes nine total directors: three directors from Union County; two directors each from Towns County and Clay County, North Carolina; and one director each from Fannin County and Cherokee County, North Carolina.

Should members vote to approve district voting, starting next year, they will only be able to vote for candidates running in their home county.

Election packets complete with election notices, paper ballots and voting instructions were mailed to members the week of Aug. 6, and mail-in ballots must be received back by Sept. 6.

Online voting opened the week of Aug. 6 via DirectVote.net/BRMEMC, and online voting will close on Sept. 6 ahead of the annual meeting.

Members will also be able to vote in person at the annual meeting, which will be held at the Union County Schools Fine Arts Center on Saturday, Sept. 8, beginning at 8 a.m.

self-inflicted gunshot wound. Cherokee Tribal and Jackson County's SWAT teams were able to clear the scene, and they did not locate any other persons at the residence.

"This is a great tragedy and loss for all concerned," said Cherokee County (NC) Sheriff Derrick Palmer. "Our hearts and prayers go out to all the family members of those involved in this unfortunate incident. My office and I want to thank all the agencies and our great public for the assistance we received during this lengthy ordeal."