

Opinions

Everybody has one

Class of 2012

Congratulations!
You'll hear this time and time again. And, believe me, it comes from the heart. On this occasion, you get a message from the editor of the North Georgia News. And, nothing means more than to hear those attaboys and attagirls from the people who mean the most to us.

The editor of the North Georgia News is a graduate of Union County High School, Class of 1978. Wow, that seems like a century ago. But, it's only been, well, for the sake of my classmates, I'll let you do the math.



Charles Duncan
Straight Shooting

First, I'd like to congratulate the Class of 2012 at Woody Gap. The Falcons have a proud tradition and correct me if I'm wrong, Woody Gap is still the smallest public school in the state, if not the Southeast. It's still strong and still churning out graduates. Principal Jinjer Taylor does a magnificent job and is a wonderful administrator.

I know several folks who walked that aisle in Suches, and they're proud to say they're Falcons.

Also, I want to say that the Mountain Education Center High School is one of the most brilliant ideas to come down the pike in recent memory. Not everyone can relate to the traditional high school experience. A lot of young people want to work during the day, and still want to earn a high school diploma. The Mountain Ed Center offers that opportunity. And the state of Georgia and the North Georgia Mountains benefit greatly from those collective efforts.

We also take this time to recognize the graduates of Mountain Area Christian Academy. MACA brings a Christian-centered educational approach that isn't offered in the public school system. It's growing, with approximately 40 students in its classrooms. We salute the MACA Class of 2012.

Last, but not least, I want to share with you what being a graduate of Union County High School really means to me.

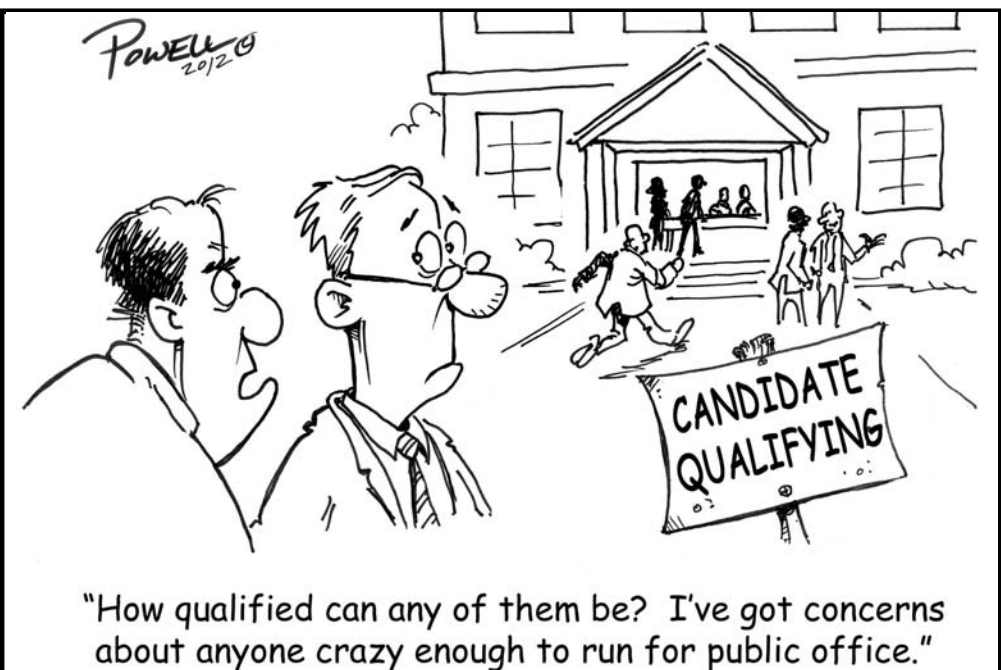
It means pride and bleeding Purple and Gold. It means that the world is at your feet, the door is wide open and you can be anything you want to be. I learned just this week that we're ranked the 32nd best high school in Georgia and No. 1,697 in the Nation.

Be proud you are a UCHS graduate. I must admit, when I graduated, I didn't have a clue what I wanted to do with my life. I had a few ideas, but, for the most part, I was without a plan.

Eventually, as you now know, I found my niche.

Nevertheless, I studied Criminal Justice

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"How qualified can any of them be? I've got concerns about anyone crazy enough to run for public office."

Soil Nutrients

My great grandfather's name was Lonnie Cummings. He raised row crops with horses. He was a black smith and operated a saw mill. Lon quit school sometime around the third grade. However, he was an avid reader and was very good with numbers. Lon was an innovator and was always trying new things on his farm.



Mickey Cummings
Around The Farm

Sometime around 1923 Lonnie met Mr. Woods, the first County Agent in Franklin County Alabama. Mr. Woods convinced Lonnie to plant a cover crop behind his cotton. He said it would boost his yield in the next crop. So, Lonnie planted vetch in his cotton in September before he harvested the cotton in October.

The next spring they broke the ground where the vetch had been planted and it took them eight days to plow up what normally took about two days. The vetch was so thick you could hardly walk through it. They planted corn where the vetch had been. This plot of ground is located right next to the road and everyone traveling to Phil Campbell from Traptown passed this corn field.

When the corn was harvested Mr. Woods came out and measured the yield of corn. The whole community showed up to see what the yield of Lon's corn would be. That September Lon harvested 80 bushels of corn per acre on what he had previously averaged 12-15 bushels per acre. Uncle Riley and Uncle Will told my great grandfather that if he kept using vetch it would cause is ground to wear out. The reason Lonnie got such a good yield was due to nutrients in the vetch that was plowed under as a cover crop.

There were three nutrients in the vetch that was needed by the corn. Nitrogen is an essential element for plant growth. It is a part of every living cell. It is probably more re-

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Chickens and Roads

Why Did the Chicken Cross the Road?
As a minister I have been asked all kinds of "important" questions, like which came first the chicken or the egg. Some folks want to know why preachers like chicken so much or why did the chicken cross the road. You know, all of those important life changing questions. So I thought I would share with our readers this week the most modern, updated version of "why did the chicken cross the road?"



Danny Parris
It's On My Mind

BARACK OBAMA: The chicken crossed the road because it was time for a change! The chicken wanted change!

JOHN MCCAIN: My friends, that chicken crossed the road because he recognized the need to engage in cooperation and dialogue with all the chickens on the other side of the road.

HILLARY CLINTON: When I was First Lady, I personally helped that little chicken to cross the road. The experience makes me uniquely qualified to ensure- right from Day One! - That every chicken in this country gets the chance it deserves to cross the road. But then, this really isn't about me.

DICK CHENEY: Where's my gun?
BILL CLINTON: I did not cross the road with that chicken. What is your definition of chicken?

AL GORE: I invented the chicken.
DR. PHIL: The problem we have here is that this chicken won't realize that he must first deal with the problem on this side of the road before it goes after the problem on the other side of the road...what we need to do is help him realize how stupid he's acting by not taking on his current problems before adding new problems.

OPRAH: Well, I understand that the chicken is having problems, which is why he wants to cross this road so bad. So instead of having the chicken learn from his mistakes and

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Sales and Marketing

As a small business owner, you understand the importance of local training to learn new techniques in sales and marketing. It is an ever-growing and ever-changing aspect of business. In cooperation with the Towns County Chamber of Commerce and SCORE, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce invites all business owners and interested parties to take advantage of up to five classes on Sales and Marketing in the months of June and July.



Joe Garner
BUCCC
Blairsville - Union County Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber works closely with our local SCORE chapter. SCORE is a network of small business counselors throughout the United States who work under the auspices of the Small Business Administration. Over the past several years, many of our local businesses have already reaped the benefits of working with our SCORE representative, Joe Ruff. Mr. Ruff understands the specific business environment and business challenges that exist in our area.

The sales training classes are kicked off at the Union County Community Center on Tuesday nights starting June 12th. We take a break the week of July 4th and continue for two weeks at the Towns County Chamber of Commerce with the marketing training for two Tuesday nights starting July 10th. All Classes are held from 6 to 8 pm. Participants can choose to attend the Sales portion only (\$35), the Marketing portion only (\$25) or both for \$50. The details include:

Face to Face Sales Calls (Blairsville)
Week One is June 12th Fundamentals of Face to Face Sales Calls, Worksheet and Sales Plan

Week Two is June 19th Worksheet and Sales Plan Presentations

Week Three is June 26th Role play of Face to Face Sales Calls

Week Four is July 10th Word of Mouth Marketing Concepts

Week Five is July 17th Internet and Email Marketing.

To register for the above courses, please call the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce at (706) 745-5789 or the Towns County Chamber of Commerce at (706) 896-4966.

A detailed handout is available online

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Student Loans

Unless Congress acts, interest rates on subsidized student college loans will increase from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent for new loans that begin after July 1, 2012. No student who currently has a student loan would be impacted if the interest rate goes up on July 1, but the Department of Education estimates that it could affect an estimated 7 million students who seek to borrow money after July 1. Democratic Leader Harry Reid has introduced a bill, S.2343, which stops these student loan interest rates from doubling but pays for it by permanently raising taxes on job creating businesses and diverting money that would otherwise go to fund Social Security and Medicare.



Johnny Isakson
On the Hill
United States Senator

Senate and House Republicans have introduced an alternative bill that stops these student loan interest rates from doubling and pays for it by ending a controversial "slush fund" that was included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, also known as "Obamacare." I am a co-sponsor of the Republican proposal, S. 2366, the Interest Rate Reduction Act.

In a vote in the Senate this week, a motion to proceed to a debate on Senator Reid's legislation failed to get the 60 votes needed. Republican leader Mitch McConnell is also seeking to have a vote on the Republican alternative, but that vote has not been scheduled.

Student lending is important to education, and everyone agrees that Stafford student loans should remain at the current rate of 3.4 percent. The disagreement in Congress right now is how we pay for it. I am optimistic that once the political gamesmanship ends, Congress will come to a solution and do what's right for the students of America.

This and That

I recently had the honor of visiting with soldiers at the Shepherd Center's SHARE Military Initiative, a comprehensive rehabilitation program that treats soldiers who suffered mild to moderate traumatic brain injury and PTSD while serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. Lockheed Martin Aeronautics recently held a final delivery ceremony for the F-22 fighter jet program, and I was proud to deliver remarks at that event.

I enjoyed seeing old friends and meeting new folks at Young Harris College. I enjoyed speaking to the new graduates at YHC's Commencement.

Our country is great for many reasons, but most importantly for the soldiers who have fought and died to preserve freedom."

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Letters

To the Editor

A proud Momma

Dear Editor,
With May 23rd being the last day of school before the teachers and staff members take their well-deserved summer vacation, I would like to take a minute and say thank you to all of the devoted individuals who work so hard to make the Union County School System such a success. My little boy is finishing up the first grade at Union County Primary School. During this year, I have seen Principal Collins treat the entire primary school (and their siblings) to free ice cream for a job well done on testing week, I have seen the ladies at the front office dress in the friendliest Halloween costumes (which really is a wonderful thing to see), and every morning, rain or shine, I have seen the traffic officer (Mr. Scott) smiling and greeting us parents while juggling the student drop off lane, the pedestrian walk-way, and the school buses dropping the children off and heading on back out. The lunch ladies always have a smile on their face as they happily go through their day, and the bus drivers are always in the brightest of spirits when they pull up at the end of the school for the afternoon route.

It truly brings hope for the world when I see this many people come and work together to make the school environment safe, successful, and enjoyable, and on that note, I say thank you, to every person who has played a part of this year's success. Enjoy your summer, and I look forward to seeing everyone in August.

Jennifer Pfund
Proud parent of a child attending UCPS

Proud to Remember

Dear Editor,
HOW does a person keep their keyboard dry??

In reading your article regarding your Momma, I had to constantly wipe tears off of my keyboard for fear it would short it out. I can relate to your sentiments. My Momma passed away August 11th, 2004, a year and three months after my Dad passed away on May 11th, 2003. I shouldn't be talking about my parents online, or in the paper, but if we don't choose to talk about the sweet memories of our parents, then their deaths have been in vain.

I loved my parents while growing up and love them the same even though they are gone.

Decoration and Homecoming is coming up in June where they are at rest. I haven't been able to go the past two or three years due to circumstances beyond my control that have arose. But again, I think back at what they BOTH use to say to me..."Don't waste your money or your time on us after we are gone, neither waste your money or your time on us while we are here. Use the money and the time with yourself and your own family, for in time, we will just be a passing fad to you."

Fad or no fad, they were my parents and might I say very deeply loved THEN as much as they are still loved NOW!!

Thank you again for a WONDERFUL story!! And again... WELCOME to the position of EDITOR!!

Mrs. D. Barnes

Proud of Ruth

"Good for you, Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey. We are outnumbered but there are many in the community who feel as you do. I applaud you for letting folks know there is another side to the prevailing religiosity which is widespread in this area."

Betsy Chamberlain

Praying for Ruth

Dear Editor,
Thank you for putting the names of letter writers in bold print at the end of their letters to the editor. Whenever I see Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey wrote the letter, the print enables me to say a brief prayer for her soul and then move on.

Ruth Kelly

Act of Kindness

Many Many Thanks!

I was in Blairsville post office today mailing a package to my grandson in Afghanistan Michael Cory Sheriff US Marines.

As I was waiting on the clerk to get all articles ready, we were talking about his time in Afghanistan and how much the soldiers would appreciate me sending the package. I stated I mail one as often as I can.

A gentlemen that was standing in line waiting came up to me and asked if he may pay for the postage, that it was the least thing he could do for the sacrifices the soldiers are making for us.

I thanked him and told him I would write my grandson and tell him of his kindness. I just want the gentlemen to know how much I appreciate his kind act and how much the soldier will too.

I didn't get his name but I pray that God will bless him for his act.

Thank You so much!
Marie Cook,
Grandmother of USMC Cory Sheriff

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