

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Rain, rain, go away

The patience in North Georgia is wearing thin. We've seen enough rain to last us, well, at least a week and a half. Really, I don't think I've ever seen that much rain during the month of July in my entire lifetime and we're only 10 days into the month.

How much more rain can we endure? There is hay, baled and sitting in the fields. Our crops run the risk of pure ruination.

Better get to the Union County Farmers Market on Tuesdays and Saturdays and buy all you can before the crops start to literally rot in the fields. The Cannery opened at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, so there's the best hint of the week.

Crops rotting in the fields is always a possibility as the soil must try and soak up more than 10 inches of rain from last week alone.

As for fireworks, well, the only real celebrations happened in Towns County. The Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce fireworks has been rescheduled for Aug. 31. Suches Fire Department will hold their fireworks celebration on Saturday, with food being ready at 6 p.m.

Now, don't get me wrong, I don't mind getting rain in the summer months. However, the rains we've seen this year have been definitely out of the ordinary. Flash floods in January and March must be taken into account as well.

On Wednesday, Union County received 6 - to - 7 inches of rain, depending on the rain gauge, with most of that happening in the Georgia 515 corridor. It didn't stop there. Almost 4 more inches fell through Sunday morning.

That's a lot of water, but, it didn't stop folks from traveling and doing what they normally do during the weekend.

In between the raindrops were various stretches of sunshine. Parking at the Union County Farmers Market on Saturday was limited to paved areas - no parking was allowed in the fields. The line of traffic on Old Smokey Road backed up to Home Depot. Still, the phenomenon of the Market continued as locals and visitors alike lined up to buy fresh produce and everything else offered at the Market.

Mowers could be heard throughout the county during the brief stretches when the rain had stopped. Folks were trying to stay ahead of the rain and keep their lawns within reason.

Umbrellas were a hot commodity county-wide. It was nice to see that local businesses who sell that item didn't raise the price to take advantage of the demand.

Lake Chatuge in Hiwassee rose more than two feet to 1,927.35; Lake Nottely in Union County was in the same boat, rising more than two feet to 1,778.53.

If you were fishing, chances are you were using chicken livers for bait and trying your hand at catfishing. But, it's not like the old days when rainy stretches prompted a rush to Foodland to buy chicken livers. Most folks were more interested in trying to stay dry rather than sit in the rain to catch a channel cat.

This week, we look forward to a forecast of 30 percent to 40 percent chance of isolated or scattered showers through Friday.

There is a chance of rain every day this week. I know that's not what we've been looking forward to, but, for right now, it's the best forecast that Karen Minton has to offer.

### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



## What Are Your Fears?

To live a life of fear is to live a life of torment. Some people are afraid of living, but they are also afraid of dying. Did you know that for everything that exists in life, someone is afraid of it?

People are afraid of rats, cats, dogs, snakes, spiders, crowds, speaking, flying, etc.

Chuck Swindoll tells the story of a young boy who was afraid of speaking. He was chosen to give the famous address of Patrick Henry to a large gathering of parents, students and teachers. He was scared half to death. His knees were vibrating, his mouth was dry, sweat was popping out on his face and his hands were clammy and cold. He began, (probably remembering a recent health class) "Give me puberty or give me death." And die he did.

Fear is a paralyzing force. It will freeze your feet, muzzle your mouth, hobble your hands and melt your mind. I enjoy talking with people who are afraid to fly in planes. I tell them what they really need to be afraid of is not flying, but crashing.

Also, I never fail to warn them of the most deadly peril of flying which is airplane poison - one drop will kill you! However, I hurriedly share with them two of the safest places on an airplane. The first is next to the black box, it always survives. The second place is to sit in the back of the plane. You have never heard of a plane backing into a mountain have you? Most people that I talk with about flying never fly again. They always take the bus.

I really don't mean to make light of fear. It is a problem that we all face at one time or other. Some people have to spend years in therapy and thousands of dollars to overcome some fear. The root of fear is sin. It goes back to the garden when Adam and Eve sinned. When God came calling, Adam responded by saying, "I heard your voice." "I was afraid and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:10). The Psalmist said the remedy for fear is faith. He said, "What time I am afraid I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3). John said, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18). Isaiah emphasized the priceless possession of faith when he penned the words, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose

### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



## UCFD Take Two

**Q. How many fire stations does Union County have and where are they located?**

A. We have 12 fire stations located in strategic areas of the county: \*denotes main stations - Station 1, 507 Shoe Factory Road\*; Station 2, 15 Jones Creek Road\*; Station 3, 14 Waldrop Road\*; Station 4, 93 Moccasin Road\*; Station 5, 80 Firewater Lane, Suches\*; Station 6, 1520 Pat Colwell Road; Station 7, 30 John Smith Road W; Station 8, 5484 Gum Log Road; Station 9, 144 Willie Hutson Road; Station 10, 166 Jones St.; Station 11 7503 Georgia 60, Suches; Station 12, 101 Choestoe Station Circle. Many of our fire stations also serve as voting precincts. Stations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 also have Neighborhood Recycling every Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon. For more details or to volunteer for this program, please call our office at (706) 439-6000.

### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



**Q. Is what we pay for homeowners insurance tied to how close we are to a fire station?**

A. Yes. If you are within 5 road miles (plus 1,000 feet from a fire hydrant), you generally have a fire protection class 6, otherwise you are a class 9. Until recently, the "subdivision rule" was also in effect. This means that if the five road miles to your home from the fire station reached your subdivision entrance, and your subdivision had a water main hydrant, then the entire subdivision qualified as if they were 5 miles from the station. However, this seems to have recently changed for some companies, but maybe not with all insurance companies.

**Q. Do all insurance companies charge the same rates based on a given fire protection class designation?**

A. No. Some insurance companies will take other things into consideration, such as the fact your county has full-time firemen in addition to an all volunteer department. The ISO system of rating fire departments is an advisory service to insurance companies. If you think you have received an unfair adjustment in your homeowners insurance based on ISO ratings, please first let your insurance agent know that you are not happy about it and second, please let us know at the Commissioner's Office. If we find that only one or two companies are charging extra fees to others, we may be able to explain to them why we think the adjustment may not be fair or accurate.

See Paris, page 5A

## The Hair People Named Business of the Quarter

Here we go into the third quarter of the year. Yes, that's right. Half of 2013 is already in the books. With each change in quarter, the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce presents to you a new recipient of our Business of the Quarter recognition. The Business of the Quarter program was established to recognize outstanding businesses and organizations that go above and beyond to serve the local community. It is my distinct pleasure to announce The Hair People as our latest recipient.

Joe Scerbo, owner of The Hair People, has been an active member of the Chamber for six years. He was recently chosen to serve as one of ten Chamber Ambassadors whose primary role is to support and assist member businesses and strengthen the membership of the Chamber. One will rarely attend a Chamber event or ribbon cutting that Mr. Scerbo is not present.

The team of stylists at The Hair People has been involved in many worthy community programs including Relay For Life and Locks of Love. They also provide gift bags to charities, the local school system, and organizations

Blairsville-Union County Chamber  
Cindy Williams



See Williams, page 5A

## Tangled Chords and Vines

My mother called me from Dallas, Texas this morning, in a panic. "Honey, I need your help. I've been online trying to choose a cord organizer and I can't decide. Would you look at the options on Sharper Image and just email me the one you think I should get?"

While visiting my Mom just the week before, I was helping my nephew install a wireless printer. At that time we discussed at great length hooking her WiFi back to an Ethernet cable to rectify those occasional moments where she loses her signal in the middle of a highly competitive online bridge game with a partner from Lithuania and opponents from Morocco and Istanbul. Cords and cables seem to have become her nemesis.

My mother is highly organized, an inherent quality that missed floating into my gene pool. So that tangled mess of technology that lurks behind and beside her desk, the issue of greatest concern this morning, is playing havoc with her obsessive need for order. I let my mind wonder if some Silicon Valley geek had a similar conversation 13 years ago with his mother, and from the basement of his teepee he invented wireless technology. Mom continues to chatter and I type into my computer "who invented WiFi?"

Number one answer on my Google search: Hedy Lamarr. Often proclaimed "the most beautiful woman in the world," the 26-year-old Lamarr was the starlet of Hollywood when, in mid-September 1940, Nazi U-boats hunted down and sank a cruise ship trying to evacuate 90 British schoolchildren to Canada. Seventy-seven drowned in the bleak north Atlantic.

Lamarr, a Jewish immigrant from Nazi-occupied Austria, was agast. She decided to fight back. Instead of the celebrity posturing we are familiar with in today's media, often used to draw attention to international humanitarian issues, she sat down at a drafting table at home and sketched out a revolutionary radio guidance system for anti-submarine torpedoes. Today, a more general version of frequency hopping is the buttress of GPS, Wi-Fi, cell phones, and Bluetooth technology.

Come on JoAnne. You may not be as gorgeous as Hedy Lamarr, but you are more than twice the age she was when she came up with this brilliance. Surely you have some genius that

Farmers Market Moment  
JoAnne Leone



See Leone, page 5A

## Letters to the Editor ...

### Traffic light needed

Dear Editor,

As a service to the citizens of Union County, I respectfully request this letter to the editor be published in the *North Georgia News*.

Recently we experienced a tragedy at the intersection of U.S. 129 and Pat Colwell Road that MIGHT have been prevented if a traffic light had been installed during the recent improvements to the intersection. The intersection is possibly one of the busiest junctions between a county road (Pat Colwell Road) and a state road (US 129) and since the upgrading of the intersection there have been several wrecks, fortunately none have resulted in a fatality, until June 30th.

I attended the original design proposal back in 2004 or 2005 and reviewed the proposed improvements to the intersection. At that time, the Georgia DOT was soliciting inputs from the citizens on the proposed changes and I expressed my suggestion that a traffic light was needed to a Georgia DOT representative recording all comments. Apparently my concern was shoved aside due to cost considerations and an outdated traffic flow study conducted several years before the contract was awarded.

Shift the scene to when the final design changes were announced many years later. There was no traffic light planned. I began a one man letter writing campaign, made personal contacts with our county administrator, our Georgia House of Representative elected official, the regional Georgia DOT official and numerous e-mails requesting the addition of a traffic light at this dangerous intersection.

Statistics at that time indicated there were more accidents at that intersection and the approaching segment of US 129 than at any other intersection in the county.

The Sunday traffic especially serving the four or five churches located on Pat Colwell Road presented a hazardous experience for the many who attend the churches.

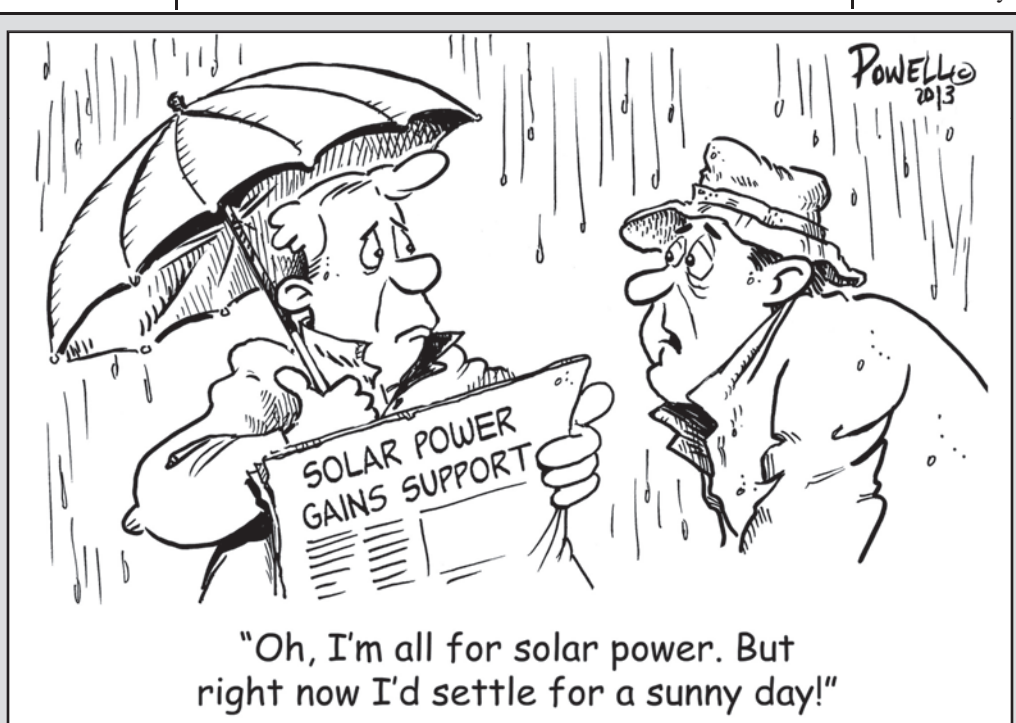
The problem with the intersection became much more acute when Wal-Mart was added to Kuituestia Road as Pat Colwell became a conduit for shoppers approaching the intersection from the north or those motorists wishing a shortcut to Hwy 515 south.

The responses I have received from those I have been regularly contacting concerning the need for a traffic light most always indicated cost as the factor in not installing a traffic light and an outdated traffic flow study.

It would have been so much less costly to install the light at the time of the improvements rather than later after money is suddenly "found" to install the light, if and when it is found.

One is reminded of the fatality at the intersection of HWY 515 and Kuituestia that took the life of one of our beloved Union County

See Madison, page 5A



"Oh, I'm all for solar power. But right now I'd settle for a sunny day!"

## Thank you

Dear Editor,

We want to thank you again for all your assistance with the newspaper articles and the Program printing for this year's Scottish Festival.

A special thanks goes to Allison Caldwell for her great help with the Program, as well as assisting with getting articles ready for the newspaper. Cissy was also a great help by accepting our emailed News Releases.

Also, thanks to Charles Duncan, editor, for the outstanding article in the issue before the festival, and to Todd Forrest and others for the follow-up article.

Also, thank you to Gail out front for her patience with our popping in and out with things for you to work on.

It really helps to have the hometown paper.

See *Scottish Festival*, page 5A

## E-Fairness

Dear Editor:

Recently I was talking with some of my favorite policy wonks about legislation currently in Congress commonly referred to as the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA) or the Marketplace Equity Act (MEA). This legislation enables states to collect sales taxes on Internet purchases, if they so choose.

First of all this legislation is being incorrectly positioned as if it is a new tax - it isn't. Here some of the actual facts.

Neither the MFA nor the MEA would introduce a single new tax or raise existing ones.

Under current law, consumers are already required to pay sales and use taxes for online purchases, so these taxes already exist; however, they usually go unpaid.

The MEA or MFA would simply shift the responsibility for sales tax collection.

Right now, it's up to consumers to track and remit taxes on their online purchases. E-fairness legislation would shift this responsibility.

See *Malone*, page 5A

## Support your commissioner

Dear Editor,

A recent editorial letter indicated that having a sole commissioner was not an acceptable way to run the administrative affairs of a county. That may be true in some circumstances, and I can attest to having been in a community which had a successful Board of Commissioners, adjacent to communities where the headlines were rampant with in-fighting among the Commissioners who never seemed to come to comprehensive decisions. I have also resided where there were less competent and capable Sole Commissioners, which was detrimental to the residents.

However, we are blessed to have a competent, knowledgeable and fiscally responsible Commissioner, who surrounds himself with

See Gray, page 5A

## Aunt Mabel's Cat

Paul and Bud Cummings were just young boys when they first encountered Aunt Mabel's old Tom cat. These two young boys would follow their father to the barn each morning. Upon reaching the barn the boys would perform chores which included fetching sweet feed for the cow while she was being milked. The boys didn't milk the cow, that was Papa's job. Dancing Betty would only stand still for Papa while she was being milked. After she was milked the boys would carry the milk pail to the corn crib to dip out some milk for the cats.

The cats were always fed at the corn crib because the crib was where the rats stayed and it was the job of the cats to keep the rats away. The boys' favorite cat had just had a passel of kittens and they were enjoying watching the kittens grow up. One morning the boys went to the crib and found all but one of their new kittens dead. They realized the culprit immediately. Aunt Mabel's old Siamese Tom cat had been visiting the farm on a regular basis. The old Tom had killed nearly every kitten on the Cummings Farm.

The boys were upset and wanted to punish the old cat. So, a plan was hatched. The boys obtained some white liquor from their Uncle Dennis. They spiked the cat milk with this liquor and fed it to old Tom. The cat lapped up most of the bowl of milk and liquor. Much to the amusement of the boys the cat staggered around all over the barn yard. The boys soon decided they could catch the cat and began to chase it. The cat took off running and tried to run underneath the crib. The unfortunate cat must have been seeing double because it ran for a small opening in the crib and actually hit a board head on.

By this time the boys were laughing hysterically. But, then Bud became serious and pointed to another cat and then another. Now, three of their cats were staggering around the barn yard. The boys knew they would be in trouble if Papa seen these inebriated cats. So, they gathered the drunken cats and hid them in the crib until they could sober up. The boys then walked over to Old Tom. To their amazement the cat was still alive, but, still in a drunken stupor. The boys knew they had to hide the cat from Papa. They looked around and the only place the cat could be hid from view and protect the one remaining kitten was the mailbox.

So, the cat was placed in the mailbox that sunny morning in October. Throughout the morning the boys would shake the box in hopes of terrorizing the old cat. The idea was to scare the cat so bad that it would never visit the

See Cummings, page 5A

### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • 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.

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