

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Never forget 9/11/01

I remember the tragedy, just like it was yesterday. I was in the newsroom in Dawsonville, I was on deadline, it was a Tuesday.

A call came in from a reader, they asked if I was watching television. They didn't ask what channel, you see, it was an event that was broadcast on every available channel.

We didn't have a television in the newsroom at the time. The caller didn't tell me what was happening, simply telling me I needed to find one quick. Afterward, a television became an important part of our newsroom.

I went down to the Dawsonville Pool Room. I knew where the television was in there, and every eye in the room was focused in that direction.

I entered the Pool Room, I looked at the television just in time to watch the second plane hit the second of the Twin Towers in New York City.

I asked Gordon Pirkle, the proprietor, what was going on. "Best as I can tell, terrorists are flying planes into buildings in New York City," he said.

Breaking news would soon alert us that the Pentagon in Washington, DC also had been struck. Later, there were reports of a plane going down in Pennsylvania.

The air space in Georgia had been closed; for that matter, it was closed nationwide. Georgia 400 was the main drag in Dawson County, and it led straight to the State Capitol. On that day, there was very little road traffic for obvious reasons.

I bring all this up because we're right in the midst of the 12th anniversary of one of the darkest days in our nation's history.

The official list of dead, 2,996 total, included 19 hijackers, and 246 people aboard the crashed planes. In New York City, 2,606 were dead, and 125 died in Washington. Forty-four persons aboard Flight 93 died in a field in Stonycreek Township, in Pennsylvania.

If you have the time, stop by Fire Station 1 today. There's a memorial inside the headquarters building, a chunk of steel from one of the fallen towers in New York. It includes an American flag, and a plaque denoting the significance of the 70-plus-pound piece of metal.

The significance is that 343 firefighters died that day as they risked life and limb to help at the Twin Towers tragedy.

First responders were among the many who perished as the towers collapsed and crumbled to the ground, leaving a plume of smoke and ash.

It was like the aftermath of a volcano eruption. In a way, a volcano did erupt. The thick molten lava of that day spread for years, and eventually, led to economic turbulence that continues to this day.

Remembrance services are scheduled locally at Pine Top Baptist Church, and House of Prayer. Pine Top will be open all day beginning at 8:45 a.m. on Sept. 11 and includes a 7 p.m. Day of Prayer service. House of Prayer will be open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Let us remember; let us never forget.

Letters to the Editor ...

A Leap of Faith

Dear Editor,
For several years, the *Run Above The Clouds* has supported Woody Gap Students in several ways, mostly through a scholarship program. We have traditionally given aid to the students the year they graduated, as did a lot of other people and organizations, and this got the graduating seniors off to a pretty good start with their post high school education.

We have come to realize that this isn't always enough. College costs are high and have increased greatly in the last few years. Frequently, after a year or two, the scholarship money is used up and family resources are exhausted. Often students who are doing well academically, have to drop out due to lack of funds.

The leap of faith is this: the *Run Above The Clouds* will offer scholarship assistance, not only to graduating seniors, but if they are successful in their studies and funds are available, we will support them for up to four consecutive years.

In order to do this we are working to grow

See *Miner*, page 5A

A treat to behold

Dear Editor,
Although we did have more rain this summer than many of us would have liked, we certainly were fortunate to have much more moderate temperatures this summer than we endured over the two previous years. Data for the Blairsville area from the University of Georgia for the period June 1st through August 31st shows that last year, 2012, our average daily high temperature for the entire period was 84.46 and we had 17 days of 90 degrees or higher (including one sweltering three day period where the temps ranged from 99.5 to 100.2 degrees). The 2011 summer period was the hottest our area has had in recent memory, with an extreme average daily high temp of 87.81 degrees and a full 30 days of 90 degrees or above. For the current year 2013 our summer period average high temp was only a modest 81.56, and we had NO days of 90 degrees or above. I hope you all enjoyed the comfortable temperatures this summer as much as I did.

Jack Glassmyer

Soften the water

Dear Editor:
While Union County goes about bringing Coosa Water Authority practices into the 21st century (see Ruth E. Ramsey's letter of Aug. 28th), how about requiring them to soften our water. I have heavy mineral scale on every bath surface, dish and utensil in my home due to the ultra hard water Coosa supplies us. A call to their office several years ago with this question elicited, "Well, they just don't do it that way."

How can we mandate soft water throughout our county service area?

Pat Rice

Making an Impression

Some time ago while reading our devotions the wife and I enjoyed a devotional thought by Michael Guido. He tells the story of a crowded bus on a hot summer day. The occupants were tired and on edge. One passenger in particular became very obnoxious. She embarrassed the other passengers by using profanity. As she exited the bus she was still cursing and the driver said to her, "Ma'am you left something." "What?" She asked. "A BAD IMPRESSION," he said.

One thing is certain, wherever we go, whatever we do and the people we make contact with, we always leave something – a good impression or a bad impression. The same day we read this devotion we planned to make a beeline to several places of business. There were some things we needed so we planned to make a day of shopping. The first stop was very pleasant. The employees were friendly and helpful. In fact, we spent a lot of time in this business. When we left we felt really good and happy.

Next, we went to a very large place of business where I wanted to make a sizable purchase. I checked the options on display and after a good while I selected what I wanted. In all of this time no one ever offered to assist us. Finally, in desperation I searched until I located an employee. Although, the employee came at my request he didn't seem none too happy about it. He did find out that the item I wanted was not in stock and the display item was missing some parts. I left this store disappointed, not altogether because they didn't have what I wanted but because the employee seemed unhappy because he had to wait on me.

My point is not to make a mountain out of a molehill but a little friendliness makes everything more pleasant. The next stop was to purchase two items. The young lady was very helpful, friendly and knowledgeable. She was patient and deliberate in explaining everything about the two selections we had made. However, this store did not have them in stock. But we left happy because of the friendly service we had received. Later in the day, we went to another large store to purchase

See *Parris*, page 5A

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Your tax dollars at work continued...

Q. Where is the Senior Center located?

A. The Union County Senior Center is located at 95 Senior Center Drive. If you are traveling west on Hwy. 515, you exit on Meeks Ave. as if you are going to North Georgia Technical College. Then turn on Senior Center Drive which is the first road to the left. The Senior Center is at the bottom of the hill on the left. Their phone number is 706-439-6105. Hours for the center are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Q. Does the county support the Senior Center?

A. Yes, they receive \$95,000 per year in support from us. They also receive funding from Legacy Link which also provides federal and state monies to senior centers in 10 other counties in the Georgia Mountains Area.

Q. What age do you have to be to go to the Senior Center?

A. The Senior Center serves ages 60+ in Union County. **Q. What activities and services do they offer?**
A. The Senior Center provides hot meals, transportation to and from the center as well as drug store and grocery shopping. They have exercise programs, quilting, crafts, games and other activities. Their Meals on Wheels program provides home delivered meals to qualified seniors and a hot meal is served at the center Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m.

Q. Does it cost anything to go to the Senior Center?

A. There are no fees associated with joining the Senior Center; however, everyone is allowed an opportunity to donate toward their meals if they are able. Due to rising costs in fuel, there "could" be a transportation cost share based on income.

Q. I heard the Senior Center is expanding. Is that true?

A. Yes, it is true. In 2012 the center received a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant from the Ga. Dept. of Community Affairs) grant in the amount of \$295,687 to add a much needed addition to the center. This addition should be completed in November 2013.

Q. How much space will be added to the center and what will it be used for?

A. The new additions will add 2,322 square feet to the existing building. We are adding one large activity room, and a smaller

See *Paris*, page 5A

Blairsville Connect

Several months ago, I introduced the concept of podcasting in this weekly article. For those unfamiliar, a podcast is similar to a radio program in that it is a broadcast; however, they differ in that a podcast is an online, prerecorded radio program over the Internet that consists of audio or video files. The format can be anything from audio-books and poetry to sports commentaries and more. The topics are unlimited and can satisfy almost any inquisitive mind. It was also at that time that we introduced Blairsville Connect, a podcast forum dedicated to connecting listeners with today's business and civic leaders in the Blairsville-Union County area.

Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



Since the launch of Blairsville Connect in February of this year, almost 30 local businesses and organizations have had the opportunity to introduce themselves to our listeners. We have covered a wide range of topics including real estate, restaurants, festivals, and attractions. Listeners have learned about new businesses in the area and ones that they may not yet have discovered. They have also been given tips on accessorizing a wardrobe, how to select the best wine to pair with your meal, and

See *Williams*, page 5A

Living, Loving and Laughing In Lucca

Today I write to you from within the walls of Lucca, Italy. A city/commune in Tuscany, Central Italy, Lucca is situated on the river Serchio in a fertile plain near the Tyrrhenian Sea. That's the brief description Google gives. This ancient fortress, where Dante spent much of his exile, has converted its military walls into a promenade where Italians and expats circle each day. Within these Renaissance era walls, which are still intact, 75% of the travel is pedestrian, 20% more on bicycles and only 5% is motorized. It is a pace of life I could get use to in a heartbeat.

Farmers Market Moment

JoAnne Leone



When one makes a trip, without purpose, to Italy, a Roman holiday should hold romance. I had mine yesterday. Dining in a lovely outdoor café, I caught the eye of a handsome Frenchman. I flirted unabashedly, until he smiled. His name was Alex, and his brown eyes danced with the promise of love. I fell, hook, line and sinker. It didn't take long before we were in each others arms. There was a great deal of affection and innocence in this tryst of sorts. He took my hand and we walked around the café, sharing an intimacy that only one can have that quickly with a dog or a child. Alex was a child; a one year old bambino, with a lovely mother who trusted that I was going to give her beautiful boy back to her when I finished our affair of the hearts. His giggle, his smile and the fact that I got to make a Frenchman drool when in my arms was better than anything Audrey Hepburn experienced with Gregory Peck.

I am on this trip at the invitation of a dear friend. She fell in love with Lucca on an earlier visit and promised herself she would come back to spend at least a month to see what it would be like to experience life here, not just a holiday. I have found Lucca to defy the laws of gravity. I admit, with both bravo and embarrassment, that I managed to successfully complete 18 years of education without having taken a calculus, trigonometry, chemis-

See *Leone*, page 5A



Stick to issues; don't pass judgment

Dear Editor,
I would like to respond to Mr. Ferrandino's letter published in the Aug. 28th, issue of *The North Georgia News*.

I reject his blanket statement that you are not a Christian if you can't forgive someone for their transgressions. It would be a perfect world if we could forgive everyone for actions they take that harm others but we don't, do we?

Have you forgiven Hitler, Stalin, the Boston Bombers, and the hijackers of 9/11? I would say that many Christians would tell you they have not. Besides, in the case of Jane Fonda, who is a self-admitted, life-long communist, forgiveness from you or I would not matter to her. Communists do not believe in Christianity that's why when they take over a country they eradicate places of worship. Marx believed religion was the "opium of the people." Marxist theory as developed by Lenin saw religion as a "retarding human development."

I believe that it is up to God to pass judgment and give forgiveness to those mentioned above, but since communists are mostly atheists, I don't think they would care about that either. Perhaps, in time, I may find some forgiveness for her, maybe it may take the same 40 years that she waited to apologize for sitting in the gun's seat, but not for the aid and comfort she gave to the enemy; she is still proud of that.

In regards to who started the war in Vietnam, the writer is incorrect in laying the blame at President Johnson's feet. President Truman in 1946 gave the French \$15 million dollars in economic aid to fight the communist Viet Minh led by Ho Chi Minh. This was followed by more aid and military support by President Eisenhower. President Kennedy continued with more aid and more military troops. When President Johnson became president there were about 16,000 U.S. servicemen in Vietnam. There had also been 100 U.S. servicemen killed when President Johnson took office. By the way, the first U.S. soldier to die by the hands of the Viet Minh occurred in 1946. His name was Lt. Col. Peter Dewey, who was on a mission to find downed pilots after the surrender of Japan.

In regards to your statement that the Tonkin Gulf was fabricated by the U.S. government, I believe the correct record will show that the USS Maddox was attacked by three North Vietnam patrol boats on August 2, 1964; however, the attack on Aug. 2, 1964 against the USS Maddox and another ship was in doubt, even though the men serving on board thought they were under attack. And on this issue I guess we will just have to decide who we choose to believe, men who were there and under fire or men who weren't there. Perhaps

See *Derflinger*, page 5A

Uncle Johnny and the Car

Uncle Johnny was a very old man (90's)

when my parents married. One of the things he most loved was raising a fine garden. He was known for having a beautiful garden. Uncle Johnny also raised a small patch of Burley Tobacco for his own consumption. He recalled the following story about raising tobacco.

Way back in the early 1900's Uncle Johnny went to the tobacco patch to weed out his crop. This patch was between his garden and the old road bed. Actually, the road was an old, deeply rutted, wagon road. Uncle Johnny had taken his old shotgun to the fields that day because the ground hogs were eating his collards. He figured to save his collards and get his supper all in one shot. One other aspect you should understand is that Uncle Johnny had never seen a car. Some fellow from up in New York had come down the east coast and was driving across the southern states. He was a salesman and he went through each little community and town to show off this automobile. He hoped he would convince locals to purchase one of these automobiles.

Uncle Johnny said it was a fine day in late July when this event occurred. The tobacco was getting tall and just about to flower. Uncle Johnny was hoeing morning glories from the tobacco. Suddenly, he heard the strangest sound. Something was coming up the road and it was wheezing and hissing. Every now and then he would hear something similar to a goose honking. Actually, the salesman was tooting his horn and waving at various neighbors. Uncle Johnny was watching as the man crested the hill and came toward his tobacco patch.

Uncle Johnny didn't know what to think of this scene. There was this thing coming down the road making all these strange noises and a man was riding its back. Uncle Johnny had just come from a revival where the preacher's sermon dealt with Revelations and the rider upon the dark horse that brought death and destruction. So, Uncle Johnny thought that an evil beast had captured this poor man and was about to eat him. So, he reached for his 12 gauge and shot the monster. The shot killed the beast. But, the poor man was so scared he didn't even stop to thank Uncle Johnny for saving his life.

I have relayed the preceding story to you as it was told to me many years ago. Surely Uncle Johnny didn't really think this car was actually a monster? We'll never know because

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



See *Cummings*, page 5A

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