

# Opinions

*Everybody has one...*

## The Membership has Spoken

The crowd at Anderson Music Hall on Saturday was vocal. Yes, they spoke their minds and didn't hold back. They called for the resignation of Blue Ridge Mountain EMC General Manager Matthew Akins, and, the entire 9-member group of EMC Board of Directors.

Of course that was before they learned the results of the 2014 Election of Board of Directors for Union and Towns counties in Georgia, and Clay County, NC.

We're told the petition circulating to remove the EMC Board of Directors does not include its three newest members, Charles Jenkins, Steven Phillips and Chris Logan.

Yes, on Saturday at Anderson Music Hall, there was a clean sweep in the election that removed Brian Trout, Julie Payne and Lenny Parks from the EMC Board of Directors.

We feel for Trout and Payne, who have barely been on the board long enough to get their feet wet. Parks on the other hand was seen as a Board insider and members left him in third place in his race. He finished behind both Jenkins, and Mike Patton.

The message: "we want change."

Prior to the announcement of election results, board member Jerry Nichols took to the podium and told the packed crowd at the Music Hall that the board was sorry. Yes, mistakes were made, and the board was doing everything it could to correct those errors.

GM Akins also apologized to the membership, asking for forgiveness and the opportunity to make them proud of their EMC.

Board members sat quietly as Karen Kelley, the wife of former EMC Director of Operations Chris Kelley spoke of the hardships her family has endured as a result of her husband's demotion for bringing to light the long-term debt of former BRMEMC Board President Terry Taylor.

Really, there was nothing that they could say.

EMC Member Barbara Heimanson said it all when she demanded Akins' resignation and the subsequent resignations of the EMC Board of Directors.

"Terry Taylor would still be sitting up there on stage if it wasn't for the *North Georgia News*," she said. "You should be ashamed of yourselves."

Thank you Barbara, we're just doing our job.

### Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



## By The Skin of My Teeth

Here in these mountains we have numerous words, sayings, phrases and idioms that are only understood by folk who have grown up here. There are sayings and idioms that have originated in one locality but have been so expressive that they have gained widespread usage. Such is the phrase "by the skin of his teeth." Of course, we recognize that the popularity of this phrase stems from the fact that it comes from perhaps the oldest book in the Bible. Job, in answering Bildad, his so-called friend, described his awful physical condition by saying, "My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh, and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth" (Job 19:20). Thus, when someone escapes from harm or danger, we say, "they escaped by the skin of their teeth." That means by the smallest amount of margin. I understand when the Geneva Bible was produced in 1560 this literal rendering of the passage was given: "I have escaped with the skinne of my tethes." When the King James Version was produced in 1611, the phrase was retained. In just a few short years anyone who barely dodged some form of disaster was likely to say that he escaped "by the skin of the teeth." Now I certainly don't want to get into a debate with some dentist about whether the teeth have skin or not. However, there are some scholars who deny that the teeth have skin, but I believe they must because Job believed they did. There are some modern translations that translate: "I have escaped with only my gums." My firm belief is that the new phrase will never catch on.

Job's saying got me to thinking about the skin. Anyone who reads this column pretty well knows that I am not a great lover of beaches. The sea, the salt, the sand and the sun have never beckoned to me like it has to some folks. It seems that the sea, salt, sand and the sun has a strange affect on some folks; it makes them want to go naked. I grew up being taught that there are some areas of the human anatomy that you don't expose to the sea, salt, sand and the sun. You know, being a Baptist preacher and all, "we don't drink, smoke, cuss and chew, nor run with those that do." Neither do we undress in public, or so I was taught. If you have been to the beach lately you were exposed to more

See Parris, page 5A

### It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



## Questions and Answers

If you would like to know more about Georgia and Union County there is a great new website, [www.georgiaencyclopedia.org](http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org) with all kinds of information about Georgia and its counties

**Q. How many counties does it take to run a state?**

A. According to the website, the first state constitution in 1777 created eight counties: Burke, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Richmond, and Wilkes. These were carved out of the coastal areas that were settled when Georgia was a British colony. Since then, each revision of the state constitution has increased the number of counties, until the total reached 159, the limit specified in the Constitution of 1983. Only Texas has more counties than Georgia has. Union County was the 81st county.

**Q. Why is it necessary for Georgia to have so many counties?**

A. According to anecdotal history, Georgia established enough counties so that a farmer traveling by mule-drawn buggy could go to the county seat, take care of business, and return to his farm in the same day.

Politically, it served Georgians, the majority of whom lived on farms in rural areas, to have smaller counties. Each county originally had one State Representative in the General Assembly, the state's governing body. Moreover, many towns wanted to be a county seat, the location of the courthouse and jail and the center of local political activities, social gatherings, and trade. Having a large number of counties gave Georgians more representation in state government and more business in towns.

**Q. What services are counties required to provide?**

A. Every county conducts local courts of law, voter registration, and elections; sells motor vehicle tags; files official records of property ownership; builds and repairs county roads; probates wills; and administers welfare and public assistance programs. The 1983 Constitution added supplementary powers to this list of county duties. Counties are allowed to provide: Police and fire protection; Garbage and solid waste collection and disposal; Public health facilities and services, including hospitals, ambulances, emergency rescue, and animal control; Street and road construc-

### Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

## Allow Me To Introduce Sandy Kidd

Finding good employees can be one of a business owner's toughest challenges, yet biggest rewards. A lot of time is invested in an attempt to find that perfect match. With local business always at the top of my mind along with the desire to ease the burden on local employers, allow me to introduce Ms. Sandy Kidd.

### Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



Sandy Kidd hasn't always lived in Union County. In fact it wasn't until six years ago that she finally made the decision to relocate to Blairsville from Gwinnett County after falling in love with our mountains and our people. Because her passion for work and loyalty to her previous company were so strong, Sandy commuted to Atlanta even after moving to Blairsville. For the past 27 years, Sandy has worked as an Office Manager, Acquisition Assistant, and Closing Coordinator for a real estate development company in Atlanta, but now she is ready to become an asset to a local employer.

I met Sandy just this morning. Yes that's correct. She's not a long time friend or distant relative (that I know of), but rather simply an impressive woman who decided to reach out to me for advice on pursuing employment in Union County. I was quickly impressed by her professional appearance, warm nature, and engaging personality. My first impression was that she

See Williams, page 5A

My dear friend for three decades, and the person who introduced me to Blairsville, is my guest columnist this week. Pat Aube Gray is a gifted artist and writer. I'm happy to share her talent with you. - Joanne Leone

## Grapes in the City

It wasn't often that my family left our suburban Long Island, NY home to visit, but I cherish the memory of Sunday trips to my grandparents' home in Queens. The delicious aromas

### Farmers Market Moment

JoAnne Leone



of baked goods and our mid-afternoon dinner, inevitably a roast of some kind, greeted us as we entered the small apartment. I would race down the long hallway to the kitchen and the painted Hoosier cabinet, with its red-trimmed porcelain work surface, to see the ever-present home-baked pies that awaited us: golden crusted apple, coconut custard, and the most beautiful six inch high lemon meringue pie you have ever seen. I could not wait for dessert!

I was about nine years old, my brother, Billy, six. I had gotten to know some of the neighbors and would knock on their doors to say hello. If I was lucky, they would give me a cookie. Grandma would let me go through the "everything" drawer in her dresser, where I would find interesting trinkets, rosary beads, memorabilia, and old family photos about which I asked endless questions. In summer, my father would wipe the sweat from his brow with his handkerchief repeatedly, gripping about the city's sweltering heat, made all the more unbearable by the 350 degree cookstove. Out we would all go to summer's brick oven, the alleyway between theirs and the neighboring building.

My grandfather sat in a straight backed wood chair, wearing a sleeveless, white, tank-style undershirt and khaki pants, always sporting a beer in one hand. My grandmother would sit with her ankles crossed, knees spread wide, her Sunday Mass floral print dress and apron stretched and draped modestly between them. Inevitably, we were joined by a neighbor, Mr. D'Angelo, also dressed in an "Italian undershirt," as we called them back then, and I delighted in his arrival. He was unlike anyone I had known, with interests and hobbies foreign to members of my family. He actually had homing pigeons on the roof of the building! He would take Billy and me up to their coop and we would watch, mesmerized, as he released a pigeon or two and welcomed back others.

It was Mr. D'Angelo's genius, however, that provided welcome shade in the narrow alleyway. - See Leone, page 5A

## Letters to the Editor ...

Need to know more, Moore?

Dear Editor,

I was greatly concerned in both mind & spirit after reading the article in the July 30, 2014 issue of the *North Georgia News* titled, "Grand Jury hands up 12-count indictment on Farner." And, in publishing the I.t.e. titled, "Kudos for Quashing the Vermin," in the Aug. 27, 2014 issue, my concerns about that article have been realized.

I feel compelled to remind, or inform, Mr./Mrs./Miss(?) Moore and the *North Georgia News* that accusations and indictments do not mean one is guilty of any charges which might have been brought against them, also that, even the Grand Jury was only given what "facts or evidence" the prosecutor and law enforcement deemed sufficient to seek an indictment. So, unless or until a guilty verdict is delivered by the trial-juries in those cases, all those named or indicted are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

That tenet of our legal system may have been overlooked by the letter's author, who sounds certain that all those people are, not only guilty of whatever charges may be pending against them, but also, not human, as evinced by referring to them as "vermin". And your praise of the U.C.S.O. & Sheriff Mason for their ef-

See Lyons, page 5A

### Pure gridlock

Dear Editor,

This is in response to a letter from Michelle Maloney.

In what universe does she live? She wrote regarding her being a Democrat, which I have no problem with choice of party. The problem I have is with her understanding of the present. She said: "We have a two-party system in this country for a reason. Balance equals progress."

Where has she been the last four years. Since the House has a Republican Majority and the Senate a Democrat Majority, practically nothing has been done. It's not called "balance". It's called "gridlock".

The fact is there has been hundreds of legislation sent to the Senate by the House only to not be even allowed on the floor for a vote because Harry Reid (Democrat) refused to let them go any further.

Unlawfully, Emperor Obama has skirted one branch of government (three branches of government is balance) to get what he wants. If the Senate is not controlled by enough Republicans to over-ride a veto or take the ink out

See Crawford, page 5A

### Remembering 9/11

Dear Editor,

Seems just like yesterday, wow, 13 years and we still haven't forgotten and never will.

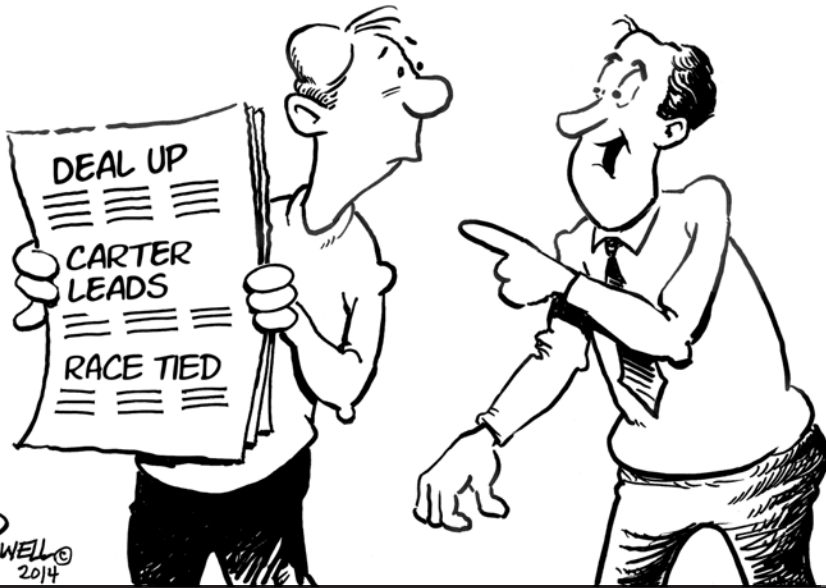
When we get hit or slammed down with planes or perhaps bombs we shall prevail for the American people are not afraid to stand up and defend our nation with our very lives, for that is why we die, because of the freedoms we so dearly love.

American folks are proud of our heritage from the white foam of the ocean blue to the land of the brave we shall smite the enemy on foreign soil or on the home front to protect our loved ones, our dear friends and future generations to come, thus the call to serve our country never grows slack, but strong in battle, forging ahead in the air, on the sea or on the ground we will not give in, until the last battle cry is heard.

Rumors of wars have been a resounding theme for over 2000 years and counting and the last band standing will sing a song of Victory in Jesus, the enemy once again has been defeated, until the next war lifts it's ugly head out of the sand of time to once again heed the cry of mother's and little children running to see their husband or wife going once again to war to defend

See Combs, page 5A

"Hey, the only time those pollsters ever get it right is when their poll matches my opinion!"



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### Apology necessary

Dear Editor,

This reader was moved by Sheriff Mack Mason's compassionate comments (NGN, Aug. 6) with regard to the adverse effects drug use has on the users themselves, their families and society in general. While he did not single out methamphetamine as the main culprit, media accounts have labeled this particular drug as the scourge of Appalachia and other similar economically depressed areas across the U.S.

Media accounts, however, have never been forthcoming about the history of methamphetamine. It was left to author Lee Child

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### Courthouse Security bill

Dear Editor,

In today's NGN, the claim is made that "Due to House Bill 60 and the risk of courthouse violence, Courthouse security had to be beefed up to include two security checkpoints at a cost of \$250,000 to deter the carrying of weapons in the building."

HB 60 does not mandate courthouse security. The carrying of concealed weapons into a courthouse is prohibited if, when and after a county chooses to impose "courthouse security."

Here's the text: HB 60/AP - 206 (e) (1) A [concealed weapon] license holder shall be authorized to carry a weapon in a government building; 207 when the government building is open for business and where ingress into such building; 208 is not restricted or screened by

See Mitchell, page 5A

### We need a Constitution Party

Dear Editor,

Personally, I think it is stupid to place a bumper sticker on your car or a sign in your yard supporting any political party or person in today's divided America. For example during the last presidential season several people in Atlanta suffered damage to their homes, cars and persons just because they had McCain/Palin signs in their yards or on their cars. One man challenged the people removing his yard sign and he was badly beaten by the alleged Democrat mob as a result. Several cars with McCain/Palin stickers were damaged or vandalized with paint. Sadly this was reported on very few stations.

Yes a two-party system and an unbiased media should bring a balance to our government, and in years past it did. The Democrats and Republicans would argue and debate the issues, sometimes heatedly but in the end they would usually reach a compromise, shake hands and move on. Many politicians would even cross the isles when logical, convincing and factual arguments could sway the votes and opinions of the people they represent. The media was fairly balanced and reported the news without a political slant. In today's political climate the parties are

See Adams, page 5A

### Old Man 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 1940s and early 1950s. They ran with the likes of Tommy Trapp, William Shelnett, 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 bulge. 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 which he used as a family car and emptied his pockets of the nails. There must've been 2 pounds of roofing 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 their 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 night in early June Paul and Bud Cummings, Tommy Trapp, Jerry Cohen, William Shelnett, 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.

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### Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



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