

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Thanks for the get well wishes

When you've got a small staff helping to put together what sometimes seems to be a monumental weekly task such as putting together two newspapers, when one person is out, the job gets tougher.

With that being said, I'm the person who has been out. I'm dealing with some health issues. I want to thank all the people who stepped up while I was missing in action.

Of course it goes without saying, Todd Forrest and Shawn Jarrard took some heavy weight off my shoulders. Allison Caldwell stepped up big time in laying out the newspaper last week.

There's special thank yous that go out to Gail Gilbert, Cissy Alexander, Wanda West, Steven Caldwell, Shawn Henrikson and Lowell Nicholson. I also want to thank Kenneth West for being understanding and patient during my health crisis. I thank Joe Collins, Charlie Rogers and Mike Freeman for just being themselves. Elizabeth Harper and Jessica Green as usual are always pulling for me to get back on my feet.

It's a hard-working bunch at the *North Georgia News* and *Towns County Herald*. One thing that I've always enjoyed about working here is that we are a team. When one person goes down, the "next person up" mentality kicks in, and working together, the job gets done.

I want to extend special thank yous to those who have checked in on me, and have offered to pitch in and help out if needed. I want to say thank you to my sister Jerri Gill for being there for me, and Betty Jo Allison for helping care for me also.

Thank yous go out to Union County Sheriff Mack Mason, Commissioner Lamar Paris and Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley for keeping a check on me. A loud shout out goes to Union County sheriff's Lt. Daren "Bear" Osborn for keeping a check on me and to all those good folks who have had me on their prayer lists.

I want to thank Dr. James Varnell, Dr. Thomas Gary, and the dedicated staff members at both offices for making sure I'm in the right hands.

I'm a firm believer in the power of prayer. Some prayers have already been answered, and as I go through the healthcare process, I'll need a few more prayers answered.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Georgia History

Savannah is a wonderful place to visit. It is a beautifully preserved monument to the history of Georgia's founding. I renewed my interest in the topic recently by reviewing Colonial Georgia and the Creeks: Anglo-Indian Diplomacy on the Southern Frontier, 1733-1763 by Dr. John Juricek, Professor Emeritus of History at Emory University, and part-time resident of Blairsville. As a native Georgian and a Christian, I find some aspects of colonial history noteworthy and challenging.

In 1732, General James Oglethorpe, the planner of the much-admired City of Savannah, was among the Trustees receiving a charter from King George II for the new colony. Dr. Juricek explains that Georgia was intended to be "a refuge for the disadvantaged of England and Europe" and "where enslavement of blacks and exploitation of Indians were prohibited." These great goals reflect Christian compassion and decency, if only our forebears had met them.

South Carolina provided generous support for our new colony, since these neighbors welcomed a buffer between them and the Creek Indians. By this time, the Creeks were familiar with Europeans, had established trading partnerships, and some had intermarried with the English. In 1733, at the recommendation of South Carolina Governor Robert Johnson, Oglethorpe selected Yamacraw Bluff to settle the first colonists and establish the City of Savannah. This was the location of an existing trading post and Indian settlement along the banks of the Savannah River. Chief Tomochichi was willing to accept the English and offer them land. From this initial encounter, Oglethorpe reported to the Trustees that the Indians wanted "to be instructed in the Christian Religion," an admirable but overly optimistic idea.

The final authority for a land treaty rested with the various tribes of the Lower Creek nation which occupied what is now South Georgia and Alabama. During treaty talks, historic notes have one chief saying to the English, "I knew you were sent by Him who lives in Heaven, to teach us Indians Wisdom." Perhaps these religious sentiments led Oglethorpe in 1735 to extend an invitation to John and Charles Wesley to serve in the new colony. Both were

See Fowler, page 5A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Questions and Answers

The questions below refer to the construction project adjacent to downtown Blairsville and Hwy 515 and have been answered by the Downtown Development Authority. This project is within the city limits of Blairsville and therefore any further questions should be directed to City Hall.

Q. What is all the grading going on along Hwy 515 across from the Courthouse?

A. The project consists of a new access point into Downtown Blairsville from Hwy 515 and will replace the existing ramp on Pat Haralson Drive. The multi-phase project will begin with the ramp and will eventually include ample public parking, retail and greenspace just off the square.

Q. Where will the new road empty onto Pat Haralson Drive?

A. The ramp will meet the current intersection of Pat Haralson Drive and Young Harris Street and will help alleviate traffic congestion along that busy corridor.

Q. Will there be a red light or 4-way stop at the intersection of Pat Haralson Drive and Young Harris Street?

A. A final decision has not been made on this yet.

Q. What will happen to the current exit going to Cooks Restaurant from Hwy 515?

A. The exit will be converted to public parking.

Q. How long will it take for this project to be completed?

A. The DDA goal is to have the project completed within 120 days, weather permitting.

Q. Who is responsible for this project?

A. The Blairsville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the City of Blairsville are responsible for the project. Funding for the project is derived from a variety of state, county and local sources.

Q. Who has assisted in this project?

A. There are multiple firms and government agencies involved, and where possible, local contractors were utilized. H & H Resources provided the engineering, Rochester and Associates provided the overall design. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) provided technical assistance and oversight.

See Paris, page 5A

Letters to the Editor ...

Chick-fil-A

Dear Editor,

Everyone has been excited the new Chick-fil-A has joined our Union County businesses. From the onset of construction to the grand opening a few weeks ago, Chick-fil-A has been serving all its new customers. With this stated, I wish to let folks know that they are not only a delicious source of nutrition, but are a part of our friendly, hometown folks willing to help out a customer in need.

Last Wednesday, I thought I'd treat myself to Chick-fil-A's cuisine for the first time since their opening. I deliberately had waited to allow the rhythm of organized service to settle in and our citizens to get into the routine. Anyway, I drove in, placed my order with a nice young lady, and fell into the line going around the building. As I approached the window to receive my order, my car began to steam up as it was overheating. I turned off the engine and when the car ahead finished, I tried but couldn't get my car's engine to turn over again. Embarrassed, I tried in vain to get my old 1998 car to cooperate. Now in addition to failing to crank, my key got stuck in the ignition! Exasperated, I advised the young lady in the drive-thru window of my problem, repeatedly apologizing. The next thing I know, a gentleman comes to my car offering to try and help me. After explaining my predicament, the gentleman suggested he get behind my wheel

See Brigman, page 5A

Hate Crimes

Dear Editor,

The U.S. Department of Justice defines hate crime as "the violence of intolerance and bigotry, intended to hurt and intimidate someone because of their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, sexual identity or disability."

Forty-five states and the District of Columbia have laws against hate crimes. This means that if bias is involved, a crime such as vandalism, assault, or murder is also a hate crime, and the penalty is more severe than it would be otherwise. Florida, Maine, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. have hate crime laws that include the homeless status of an individual.

People commit hate crimes for many reasons:

They are ignorant about people who are different from themselves (and terrified of the difference)

They need to be able to look down on others in order to compensate for their own low self-esteem

They have been brutalized themselves (though not by their victims) and therefore see brutalizing others as fair game.

Penalty-enhancement hate crime laws are

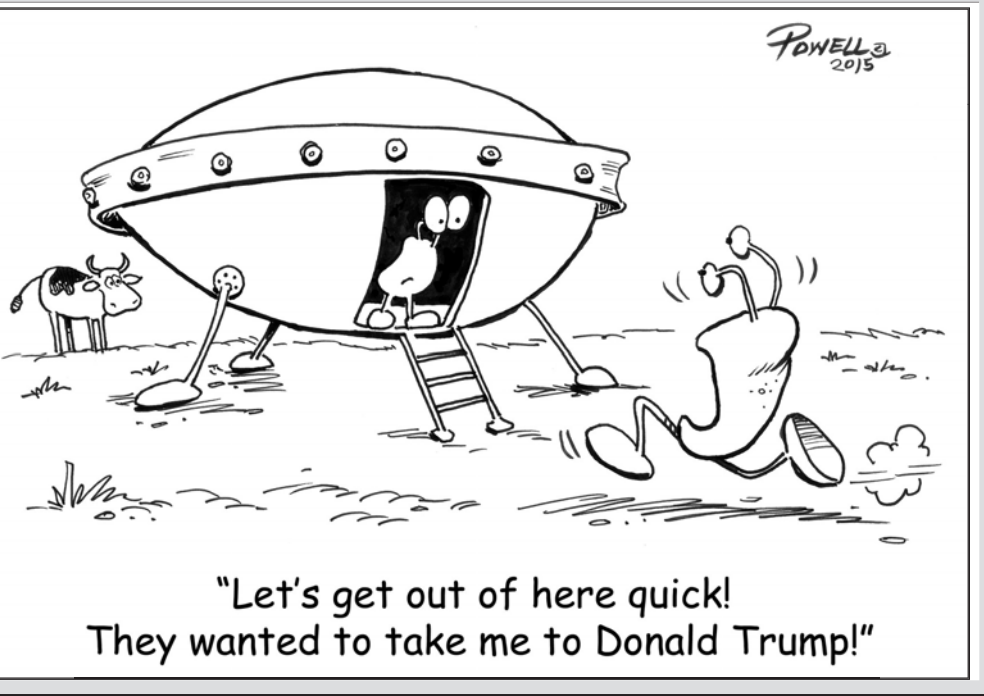
See Whitaker, page 5A

Animal Cruelty

Dear Editor,

We (live) in a nice, peaceful neighborhood until the neighbors who call themselves animal lovers decided to show cruelty to their pets. A pet lover is someone who cares for the well being of their pet. They do not go off and abandon them for 2 to 5 days left on the porch with no one to check on them and consistently bark 24/7. Also while they are home they leave them outside on the porch with no care or consideration for the neighbors to have to endure the constancy of their poor cries for attention. As humans we apparently upkeep our homes, we help our neighbors when they let us; we are required to be law abiding citizens. Where are our rights for peace? We cannot open our doors, windows, carry on a conversation and have family down time without the presence of the constant barking. It disturbs me to think that the people who call themselves pet lovers are actually pet abusers. If you cannot take the time to love, train, discipline and care for your pet, then you should find them a home that will.

Jackie Wells



Tanyard Apartments II

Dear Editor,

Last year the attorney representing Tanyard II apartment complex requested an extension for needed repairs. The request was granted. The residents have patiently waited. In the past month we have seen progress. The roofing, windows and gutters have all been replaced. But now comes the hard part.

On Oct. 19, all interior repairs will be done. For several of us, this will be an inconvenience but the remodeled apartments will be a blessing. However, there are many elders and disabled individuals that can not manage to pack and move their possessions. I am asking the churches of our community to come to our aid. We are asking for people willing to pack, move, transfer, and store our belongings. So this is a plea for your assistance.

Please contact Linda Allen at (828) 361-0653 to coordinate with the effort.

New School Prayer

Dear Editor,

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.
If Scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.
Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.
For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all.
In silence alone we must meditate,
God's name is prohibited by the State.
We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.
We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen, and the
'unwed daddy,' our Senior King.
It's 'inappropriate' to teach Right from Wrong,
We're taught that such 'judgments' do not
belong.
We can get our condoms and birth controls,
Study witchcraft, vampires and totem poles,
But the Ten Commandments are not allowed.
No Word of God must reach this crowd.
It's scary here I must confess.
When chaos reigns, the school's a mess.
So, Lord, this silent plea I make:
Should I be shot, my soul please take!
Amen
George A. Mitchell

Sir John

Sir John was a man whom trouble followed around like a good old dog. He was a good man and had a strong work ethic. He was a carpenter by trade and worked many hours away from home on the metro area around Atlanta. Sir John was the subject of many practical jokes and his life seemed to involve one funny story after another.

He worked in the construction trade with many of his family members one job involved staying in a hotel during the week and traveling back to Morganton for the weekend. On the trip back home Sir John and his nephews stopped at a country gas station to fill up. While paying for the gasoline one of the nephews noticed some pickled eggs on the counter. The gasoline, pickled eggs and some soft drinks were paid for and crew of men left the station and began the long drive back Highway 5 to Blue Ridge.

The pickled eggs were passed around to each individual and soon the packet was empty except for the liquid and a solitary pepper. One of the nephews bet Sir John that he would not eat the pickled pepper. The pair of nephews knew the pepper was hot. But, what was not known was the pepper was a Ghost Pepper from South America. Even though Sir John was known for having a cast iron stomach his esophagus was not prepared for the world's hottest pepper. So, without a moment's hesitation Sir John pulled the pepper from the bag and placed it into his mouth. He only partially chewed the pepper before swallowing it.

Sir John smiled and immediately demanded his \$20. But then a strange twitch began in his left cheek. He slowly held the package up and asked his nephews about the print on the label. One of the young men reared out loud, "Warning: Do not eat the pepper. Not for human consumption". By this time Sir John's face had turned a deep red and he began experiencing much pain. The nephews offered their uncle their soft drinks which were immediately consumed. But, the drinks offered no relief.

At this point Sir John was in complete agony. Fortunately, the trio was nearing the little hospital in Canton. Sir John was taken to the emergency room and admitted into the hospital. The emergency room doctor told the family that the pepper had actually caused a hole to form in Sir John's esophagus. He recovered after a few days. But, to this day he will not eat a pickled egg. He bragged to the family that he had snookered his nephews out of \$20. I guess he didn't count the cost of the trip to the Emergency Room.

Next week at the Farmers Market we will

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Cindy Williams



8 Simple Tips To Get Your Business Noticed

One of the primary goals of our Chamber of Commerce is business education which leads to business growth. Over the years, I have been fortunate to hear numerous speakers share a wealth of information on business marketing. This week I want to share a few key points that stand out to me in regard to getting your business noticed.

1. Use Social Media – Although these are sometimes dreaded words, social media offers unique opportunities to reach broad audiences. Build business connections on LinkedIn or try posting your next event on facebook. Do not let it overwhelm you, but be aware of the key offerings of social media.

2. Be A Source Of Information – That's right. Do not be stingy with what you know. Teach others about your area of expertise. One of the best ways to win their confidence and their future business is to teach them something beneficial.

3. Connect With Other Business Owners – Call it networking or call it therapy, either way, you will need mentors and partners along the way. Make an effort to connect with others who share a passion for business.

4. Develop Relationships With Your Customers – Treat your customers like friends

See Williams, page 5A

Better Than Baby Food

In the 1960s, when Mom wanted to make a winter side dish for breaded pork chops or ham, she took out that rectangular frozen box of Bird's Eye Squash. A bright orange and the consistency of finely pureed baby food, Mom would add brown sugar, salt and pepper, along with a nice pat of butter, to make it pretty acceptable.

When I got old enough to help her in the kitchen it would be my responsibility, as the prep cook, to try and disengage the block of squash from the white waxed cardboard container. This was not an easy task. We had no microwaves back then, so the best I sometimes could do was to put it in the pan with a ¼ inch of water, and watch as it melted enough for me to get the white box out of the pan before it went into the depths of the squash. If I failed it was like feet in quicksand, never to be found again except by my unsuspecting sister while chowing down on this puree.

I imagine you can still find this frozen treat at the grocery, but as an adult, I have traded this version for the butternut squash found in the fresh produce section year round. What I haven't traded in is the frustration of getting beyond the challenges of the packaging. It seems that the skin on the squash is as difficult to remove as that box was to the block.

Recently I decided that I wasn't going to fight with the savory gourd any more, nor was I going to spend nearly four dollars a pound for the pre-cut and pared version available in cellophane bags that are almost as impermeable. I decided to Google the challenge and I found an acceptable alternative.

By cutting the top and bottom of the squash off, piercing the remaining skinned piece with a fork several times and then placing in the microwave for about four minutes, I found that I can use a knife or a vegetable peeler to easily take the skin off the pulp. I then cut the cylinder in half, scoop out the seeds and then I'm set to proceed with whatever cooking recipe I choose. I can cube and roast it with fresh cranberries and hazelnuts and a dash of ground cumin and cinnamon. I can cube it, steam it and mash it with apple but-

Farmers Market Moment

JorAnne Leone



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North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

Kenneth West
Owner/Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer



Website: www.nganews.com
E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com
Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

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.

Phone: (706) 745-6343 Fax: (706) 745-1830 * P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514