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yes and if you do not support it you can vote no.

Q. What do the other items mean related to bonds and payments?

A. It is a part of the language of every SPLOST vote we have ever had. Basically, it means that the county has the option of selling bonds to finance some of the SPLOST projects up front and start them now as opposed to waiting until the money is collected over several years.

The theory is that with

Williams

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Visitors come to Union County and spend money in local businesses. These businesses collect and remit sales tax. The sales tax helps to pay a significant portion of the important and necessary services that all residents enjoy such as quality roads and bridges and safety services. Additionally, it allows for county resources that we all enjoy, but would not otherwise be available. These items then no longer have to be paid for strictly out of property taxes. Everyone can appreciate lower property taxes.

The decision to vote yes or no for the continuation of the SPLOST is yours. I encourage you to ask the appropriate questions that will lead you to an informed decision. I also want to remind you that while the current SPLOST is in effect, your local purchases in local businesses are one of the easiest and best ways you can show your support for your neighbors, for your community, and for your own well-being.

the cost of inflation, it often saves money to go ahead and borrow some of the money at the beginning of a SPLOST, then pay it off over the six-year period of the SPLOST. However, we utilize the services of financial professionals to guide us as to the best way to manage our SPLOST program and finances.

Q. Do SPLOST bond debts have to be paid off during the period of the SPLOST?

A. Yes. We have always done that. The county bonded funds to build the jail, to build the courthouse, and to build many of the county projects over the past four years. In each case, and with the current SPLOST, all of the SPLOST bond indebtedness must be paid off during the period of the SPLOST, which is the beauty of the program.

Q. How much money did the county bond for the current SPLOST (IV)?

A. Up to \$15 million was authorized by voters; however we chose to only bond \$5 million. In SPLOST III we bonded \$6.9 million to build the courthouse and it was paid off in 2009. Prior to those, bonds were issued for the jail construction by the previous commissioner and paid off in 2001. In each case, it was paid off and each month, before any SPLOST funds are expended, we first set aside money to pay off the SPLOST Bond, which guarantees that it will be paid off during the six years of the SPLOST.

Q. Was the Union County Community Center built with SPLOST bonds?

A. No. It was built with separate Urban Redevelop-

ment Bonds to be paid back over a 20-year period from the issuance in 2010 (final payment of Aug. 1, 2030). However, our goal is during the SPLOST IV period (if approved) that we will not only pay off any SPLOST bond indebtedness, but hope to pay for most or all of the URA Bond.

Q. Does Union County have a lot of debt as other surrounding counties have?

A. No. Our only debt is the current SPLOST bond which will be paid off in March 2015, which was \$5 million initially, but now has a balance of \$1,755,000, and the Community Center loan which is \$5,105,000. The goal will be to pay off the Community Center during the six-year period of our next SPLOST leaving the county with zero debt.

Q. Is Union County in good financial condition?

A. We are in excellent financial condition. We have not had to lay off any employees or furloughed anyone. We have been able to give raises the past two years, (2 percent and 3 percent) and we have been able to pay all our bills and we have an A-plus credit rating from Standard and Poor's, one of the best county ratings in the area.

Q. Are there other ways to determine how a county manages their finances?

A. Absolutely. First, something you would not see, our vendors appreciate the fact that they are paid in full and on time each month. We have not had to borrow any money (Tax Anticipation Notes) to operate the county on and we have a cash reserve. So if you hear anything to the contrary, it is simply not true.

Q. Someone left an information packet illegally attached to our mail box that was opposed to the SPLOST vote and had a lot of false information in there about you and others. Can they

legally attach these items to our mail boxes?

A. No. It is an absolute violation of federal law and is a crime of theft from the Postal Service of thousands of dollars in lost postage. At a minimum, this group will have to pay the Post Office for all items hung on mail boxes and those involved could also be arrested and or prosecuted.

Q. What can be done about the misinformation in the packet delivered to our mailbox by this group?

A. There is nothing anyone can do because we are a country of free speech. It does not matter if it is true or false. As for the misrepresented information and lies contained in the distributed document, all I can tell you is that this is the same little group that had WSB-TV's investigative reporter Richard Belcher come to Union County a couple of years ago and investigate the SPLOST-funded Horse Arena and the same group that paid George Anderson, the state's most notorious government corruption investigator (called gaddy) to come investigate me and Union County. Richard Belcher determined that we had in fact built the horse arena under budget with nothing else wrong, while George Anderson, after spending weeks researching their complaints and spending over 12 hours grilling me personally with questions, realized there was absolutely no wrong doing in the county and the complaints from this group were misrepresented or simply made up. This group then sued George Anderson because he found nothing against me or the county. There is a lot more I

would like to say about this group, but for now, it is better unsaid.

Please remember to early vote this week through Friday (8 a.m./till 4:30 p.m.) and next week you can only vote

at the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 5th from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m.

Please remember to vote and thank you for supporting what is best for Union County.

Parris ...from Page 4A

ence brought the curse of sin upon all mankind. Since then men and trees have been important to each other.

Biblical writers have likened men to trees. The Psalmist said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:1-3).

The prophets detailed the foolishness of the Israelites that would go into the forest and cut a tree. They would use part of it to decorate their house, another portion of it for heating fuel and carve part of that same tree for a god to bow down and worship. Men

are not to worship trees but to worship the God who created trees. Jesus said in His Sermon on the Mount that the fruit identified the tree. Likewise, a man's works (fruits) will identify his true nature whether good or evil. Someone has said that a man is like a tree. He is best measured when lying down. The first man, Adam, messed things up by eating of the fruit of the tree in the garden. The second Adam, Christ Jesus, came and died on the cruel tree to put away the sin of Adam's generation (I Peter 2:24).

As a result someday we will live in a garden where the Tree of Life stands on either side of the River of Life. And its leaves are for healing and not for viewing. "I will look unto the hills. From whence cometh my help? My help comes from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2).

Cheves ...continued from Page 4A

a mentally disturbed woman, to pay the salaries of Capitol police. This piecemeal funding did not provide money for cancer research, disease control, highway safety, scientific research, and the FBI. There were thousands of government workers laid off whose agencies were not involved with Obamacare, such as the Food and Drug Administration which protects us from food contamination, and the Centers for Disease Control, which was unable to keep track of flu outbreaks.

The authors of the Oct. 23rd letter said: "The biggest of the big lies is that the government will not be able to pay what it owes on the national debt, creating a danger of default;" that taxes collected during the shutdown would exceed the interest due on the national debt. Taxes collected might pay the national debt interest if the debt ceiling were not increased, but there wouldn't be enough to pay social security benefits, bills submitted by medical providers for Medicare services, food stamps, HeadStart, or for most other government functions.

Last but certainly not least, they falsely claim (or perhaps are simply ignorant regarding the debt ceiling law) that "Even if the debt ceiling is not lifted, that only means that government is not allowed to run up new debt." Not so! It means that the government is

not allowed to borrow funds necessary to pay existing debts previously created by Congress, including redemption of government bonds, many of them owned by foreign nations. Without an increase of the debt ceiling permitting payment of existing obligations, reputable economists predict a global economic disaster.

It has been reliably estimated that the House Republican shutdown, an attempt to extort defunding of the Affordable Care Act, cost the US economy \$24 billion. Even such notable Republican politicians as Senators John McCain, Lindsey Graham, and Mitch McConnell, and conservatives like George Bush's adviser Karl Rove, radio commentator Rush Limbaugh, and columnist Charles Krauthammer, have sharply criticized the shutdown.

In the same issue, you published an editorial cartoon, which falsely infers that the Democrats share equal responsibility for the shut down as the Republicans. That is absolutely untrue. The shutdown, and the threat not to increase the debt ceiling, was deliberate extortionate tactics used by House Republicans, first by Speaker Newt Gingrich during the Clinton Administration, and most recently by Speaker John Boehner and his irrational Tea Party members.
Charles Cheves

Cummings

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But, the celebration was short and filled with apprehension. Within a few days Bud was to report to another assignment which would eventually lead to the war in Europe. Bud got up one morning and left his wife and young family crying. He began the long walk to Phil Campbell to catch the train toward Mississippi. He had not been gone long when Dot heard her mother call her name. She walked into the kitchen and she heard, "Dot, your daddy has forgot his tie and he will get into trouble if he isn't properly dressed. So, take this tie and run after your daddy. When you catch up to him give him the tie".

Dot, ran a couple of hundred yards and then turned south on the road to Spruce Pine. The 5 year old girl caught up with her daddy after about a quarter of a mile. When she could see him Dot called out, "Daddy, you forgot your tie". Bud turned around when he heard the voice of his young daughter. As Dot drew close to her daddy she could see tears streaming down his face. Bud hugged his little girl and then turned and walked on toward the train station in Phil Campbell. It was all Bud Baker could do to leave his young family not knowing whether he would ever see them again. Yet Dot Baker knew beyond a shadow of doubt that her daddy loved her very much.

Leone ...from Page 4A

searchers at the London School of Economics examined the relationship between volunteering and measures of happiness in a large group of American adults, they found the more people volunteered, the happier they were, according to a study in Social Science and Medicine.

Compared with people who never volunteered, the odds of being "very happy" rose 7% among those who volunteer monthly and 12% for people who volunteer every two to four weeks. Among weekly volunteers, 16 percent felt very happy—a hike in happiness comparable to having an income of \$75,000–\$100,000 versus \$20,000, say the researchers. Now I understand why I feel so rich when my bank account says "zilch."

Suches Fire Dept. Haunted House

Woody Gap School will be having a Haunted House fundraiser at the Suches Fire Dept. on Thursday, October 31st from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Cost: \$2 for children, \$4 for adults. All proceeds will go to Woody Gap School. Hope to see you there... come out if you dare!

Thompson...from Page 4A

that goes on, on the border such as the drug cartels smuggling drugs and who knows how many terrorists from other countries come across our border. This is about open borders. They have a hidden agenda. They want you to believe this is the right thing to do. Pass it without reading it then they can add whatever they want to, to it. Wake up. This is not about the family unit leaving someone behind. Again this is the fear tactic they use.

Then they pass the farm bill that has been tabled for a long time.

Then the Fundamental Transformation of America can be complete. We will no longer be free. We have already lost so many of our rights. We

will be a socialist/communist country with a dictator. If you haven't noticed he is already a dictator, his way or the highway. Wake up America or your children and grandchildren will never know freedom, their lives will be controlled by big government. I can't bear the thought of this. There is nothing free in this world. What the government gives, it can take away. From the beginning God blessed our country. Our founding fathers built this country on faith in God. Millions of men and women died and fought to save our country from tyranny and are still doing so today. Our fighting soldiers and veterans have given us freedom to this day and our government insists on disgracing them.

Please, pray to God that He will have compassion and mercy on us as a nation and return to Him. He has been the way yesterday, today, and will be in the future. Please stand up for God and Country. He is our only hope. God bless the United States of America.
Charlotte Thompson

Ashurst

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Here are my 2 conclusions about this fella: If he is indeed a spiritual person, he has a great deal of growing to do. Secondly, I bet he is from out of town. Why? Because in spite of our decaying society, we Blairsville folks still remain the kindest, nicest, and most generous people in all of NE Georgia. I guess once every 27 years is very good, huh?

Dr. Ray Ashurst

Ramsey

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Political Action Committee). We have heard it all before and will no doubt hear it ad infinitum. Mr. Schultz's words are indicative that the warriors inside the pro-Israel Trojan Horse – forever menacing the American people – are all too ready and willing to do battle for their cause and, that there are Americans who have signed on.

More and more Americans, according to the latest polls, are asking why we are obligated to pull other countries' chestnuts out of the fire – the most ungrateful and dangerous being that of the state of Israel. Enough already! The welfare of the United States first, for a change.

Ruth Elizabeth Ramsey