

Opinions

Everybody has one...

Proud Panther

As the Union County Panthers prepare for Friday night's state playoff game with The Model School, I feel swelled with pride.

Not to tell my age, but, I remember when Panthers' Head Football Coach Brian Allison donned a Panther uniform. I also remember when this younger brother Daryl took snaps for the Panthers.

Both Brian and Daryl will be coaching in the state playoffs on Friday night.

Brian of course will be coaching the Panthers as they take on the Blue Devils; Daryl is the linebackers coach with West Hall, the Region 7-AAA champions. They face Oconee County in the first round.

Of course no one is more proud than Jim and Mary Allison, the parents of these two outstanding Panthers. The hardest part for both, being in two places at one time.

Brian has done an excellent job with the 2014 edition of the Panthers. I noticed early on in his coaching career that he brings the best out of his players.

I remember the last time the Panthers finished a season 9-1. They made it to the state playoffs, hosting Morgan County at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium. We lost a heart-breaker that night to Morgan County. Brian was the head coach.

That was 2001. Brian left his beloved Union County the following year to coach Winder-Barrow's Bulldogs. He returned in 2008 and the football program returned to stability following the short-lived programs of three head coaches in his absence.

Daryl's only coaching job has been with West Hall. He has survived some lean years in Oakwood, as many of the top players in that neck of the woods played at Flowery Branch High School.

2014 has been a resurgence for the Spartans, and they've locked in a 9-1 season and a Region 7-AAA title to boot.

On Friday night, we'll all be pulling for Coach Brian Allison's Panthers. At the same time, I'll be pulling for Coach Daryl Allison's West Hall Spartans.

Even though Daryl is coaching at West Hall, you better believe he still bleeds Purple and Gold and he deserves our support.

Truth be told, I feel for Jim and Mary Allison on this Friday night. Things were much more simple when Brian and Daryl were both Panthers. Of course, both Brian and Daryl still bleed Purple and Gold and we wish both programs the best of luck on Friday Under The Lights.

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



I Am a Soldier

Today, Nov. 11th is Veterans Day. I am sure that as citizens of this great land all of us are proud and grateful for all veterans. I did not have the privilege of serving in the military. My younger brother served four years in the Marines and one year of that was served in Vietnam. My older brother served four years in the Air Force and one year of his tenure was in Korea. My brother-in-law served over 20 years in the Air Force in many places around the globe. My father-in-law and two uncles served in World War II. I am grateful for and indebted to my family members and to all those brave men and women who have answered the call to serve our country. The following article, written by an anonymous writer, reveals the qualities and tenacity of the soldier of his country and the soldier of the cross.

"I am a soldier in the army of my God. The Lord Jesus Christ is my commanding officer. The Holy Bible is my code of conduct. Faith and prayer and the Word are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Holy Spirit, trained by experience, tried by adversity, and tested by fire. I am a volunteer in this army, and I have enlisted for eternity. I will either retire at the rapture or die in this army, but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or be pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable. If my God needs me I am there. If He needs me in the Sunday School to teach the children or work with the youth, if He needs me to work with the adults He can use me because I am there."

"I am a soldier! I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up or pepped up. I am a soldier! No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me or lure me. I am a soldier! I'm not a wimp. I am in place, saluting my King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His kingdom. No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, or candy and give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or be catered to. I am committed. I cannot have my feelings hurt bad enough to turn me around, and I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit."

See Parris, page 5A

It's On My Mind

Danny Parris



Questions and Answers

Q. What are the pink ribbons that are along the side of many roads in the county?

A. These are marking the location of the new high reflectivity signs that will be located there. The project is part of a federal project providing funding to help bring county roads up to specs of state highway. These will include speed limits, curves ahead and other warning and advisory signage. Georgia DOT had been responsible for working with counties to contract with qualified personnel to assist in this project. The main advantage, other than knowing that the location and type of signage is correct, is that they will be so much easier to identify at night than current signage.

Q. You mentioned in your Q & A several weeks ago that the county, city, Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Union County Historical Society were going to be working together to restore the old Blairsville cemetery behind the Board of Education. How is that project progressing?

A. The cemetery project is going very well and is a fascinating undertaking. However, it will take the entire community to assist in fundraising. As I told you earlier we knew for sure there were 37 graves with inscribed headstones and a few others that were assumed were unmarked graves. We contracted with Mr. Len Strozzi to come out about a month ago with his ground penetrating radar and were stunned when he found 105 unmarked graves.

Q. How does he find the graves and what can you see?

A. It is really a fascinating process. No, he can't see bones or bodies as they are either long gone or almost gone years ago. But the machine reads air pockets where the body used to be. As the body decays, the grave may sink some, but it is very rare that there is not an air pocket remaining where the dirt did not actually fall completely in, thus allowing him to find the air pockets. With the crisscross method he used, he was able to find the center of every grave and tell whether it is a baby or an adult.

Q. What is the next step in the restoration of the cemetery?

A. We had a committee meeting recently to discuss this. We plan on having a final grave marker cleanup and repair day

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



See Paris, page 5A

Letters to the Editor ...

Pray for our troops

Dear Editor,

Though Christmas is only around the corner it's easy to forget about our troops around the world who are in harm's way each day. My prayer would be also for the families that have a son or daughter serving in the military, that the peace of God would surround them all with the comfort and assurance that only God can provide. My prayer too would be for those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, whether by dying for our freedom or coming home with injuries. I salute you all with great respect and will never forget the price you have made, also prayers for all our veterans. It's a disgrace what our government has done by not stepping up to the plate to honor and to help those veterans in need. It's a disgrace to the American people that illegal aliens seem to get more benefits than our own American heroes that are fighting daily for our freedoms. If it was not for our military our president would not be able to step out of the White House without being shot at, so may we all who love our great nation never forget the sacrifices of our troops, our veterans, our police personnel, firefighters and all other men and women that make our America the greatest nation under God, liberty and justice for all... amen

Frank F. Combs

Thanks Union County

Dear Editor,

I want to thank you for your coverage of the Future Leaders Scholarship Speech Contest Finals. It was a pleasure to work with all of the young people who participated in the preliminaries as well as the finals. Those who came and heard the speeches left with a new appreciation for our young people in Union County. So often the media nationally portrays young people as disinterested in government, history and politics, but we had very passionate speeches from our young people who had strong convictions concerning the topics about which they spoke. I cannot wait for next year's contest.

I also want to thank not only the judges of the finals who were listed in your article but also the judges who gave of their time to handle the preliminaries: Cary Cox, Marcie Culpepper, Lee

See Allison, page 5A

Good Neighbors say 'Thanks'

Dear Editor,

The Good Neighbors Auto Club wants to thank you for helping to make our 30th Annual Auto Show, that was held at United Community Bank at Main on Saturday, October 18th, a huge success. From the Trophy Sponsors to the local merchants who donated to the Silent Auction and Raffle as well as the vendors, participants, and spectators, we appreciate each and every one of you. But special thanks go out to you and your newspaper for the fine article that was printed in your paper afterwards detailing the Auto Show.

We were blessed with a beautiful day and a wonderful turnout of 230 registered participants which included cars, trucks, and automobiles. Thanks to the support of everyone involved we will be able to continue to give deserving seniors scholarships this coming spring. Our scholarship recipients come from our member's communities that include Union and Towns counties in Georgia, as well as Clay and Cherokee counties, NC. Additionally, you help us support other local charities as we are not limited to just scholarship awards.

Once again, a huge thank you to all who helped us this year and we look forward to your support next October for our 31st Annual Auto Show. Plans are already in the works, so mark your calendar for next Oct. 17, 2015.

Sincerely,
The Good Neighbors Auto Club



Examine the coat tails

Dear Editor,

I am very disappointed in the credibility of your newspaper, the Oct 29 edition. I believe there is or maybe was something newspapers called "Truth in Advertising." Apparently you've decided to toss this out the window. On page 5A you have an ad for Nunn, Carter, & Vogel, nothing wrong here. But then on page 6A you allowed the Assoc of Patriotic Progressives (ie libs) to buy space to print flat out lies about Perdue, Deal, & Collins.

As a newspaper person you should know better than to allow this to be printed in your paper. I hope you will take the time to renounce these lies APP is trying to spread. It's a shame the Democrats only have two inexperienced

See Cannon, page 5A

God Bless America

Dear Editor,

Thanks to whoever put the American flag on the island at Canal Lake. Small things like that is what makes America strong. God bless the USA.

Melva Lynn Drake

Just the facts

Dear Editor,

I would like to respond to Mr. Maloney's letter of last week and his contention that President Obama is doing a better job than I may think. But first, I'd like to clarify a point. My thoughts on this administration's performance were not inspired by FOX News. It might surprise the writer that I form my opinions through various means. I listen to CNN, PBS, CSpan, and even

See Derflinger, page 5A

A wake up call

Dear Editor,

The elections are over, the dust has settled, some people are cheering—others are moaning. Over the years I was a Democrat for many years, then an Independent for several years, and now a Republican. But my trust is not in any Party, because in the past couple of years I have read books on how our government is broken. Both parties are responsible, and it goes back a long, long time.

See Gray, page 5A

Veterans Day

Dear Editor,

Unlike those who, like my wife Brenda, can trace their American heritage back to the Revolutionary War, or beyond, I was the first born in the United States of Italian immigrant parents, who were part of the flood of adventurous Europeans who arrived at Ellis Island during

See Esposito, page 5A

John's Family

John's wife was Martha Pace who was head strong and did not approve of the alcohol. This difference of opinion between the man and his wife led to a separation and John moved to Missouri with another woman. This event coupled with other events had far reaching impacts upon the Cummings boys.

John's boys included Will, Riley, Lum, Lon and Howard. The boys had three sisters. Immediately after John left his family things began to unravel. First, sometime around 1919 an influenza epidemic swept across the country. Both of my great grandfather's (Lon) sisters died while still in their teen age years. Also, about this time Lon's brother Lum was called into the army and went to fight in Europe during WWI. Just before Lum left the whole family was gathered at the home place for a family meal. By this time the older boys were busy raising their own family and the only children left at home were Uncle Howard and Aunt Tiny.

Uncle Howard was only 17 years old. He and a good friend had been out hunting when they found an old pistol. The boys decided to take the pistol home to clean it. Uncle Howard and his friend, Joe, walked up to the house where they greeted the Cummings family. The boys went into the house and proceeded to tinker with the pistol. The gun accidentally discharged and Howard was fatally shot. Howard ran around the house in a panic and fell dead in front of his family. Riley and Will thought Joe was guilty of killing their younger brother and they swore their vengeance. At 17 years old Joe was forced to leave his family and move to Detroit where he worked and never came back to Alabama until Riley and Will Cummings had gone on to meet their maker.

These events were too much to bear for my great-great grandmother Martha. The loss of her husband, the loss of two her daughters and the loss of her youngest son caused Martha to have a nervous breakdown from which she never recovered.

Uncle Lum went on to serve honorably in WWI. He survived more than one mustard gas attack from the Germans and he was one of the last soldiers of the United States to ever ride a horse into battle. He came back home after the war to raise a family and establish a big Herford Farm in North Alabama.

Lon continued running the saw mill after his daddy left. John's old partner, Champ West, had a daughter named Laura. Lon and Laura married one another and raised their children (one of which was my grandfather) there on the home place. Lon took his family to church every Sunday and even played the pump organ for Sunday services.

See Cummings, page 5A

Around The Farm

Mickey Cummings



Take 5 With Jay Burks

This week's Take 5, puts the spotlight on Jay Burks, owner of Jay's Medical Equipment.

Jay's Medical provides equipment for in home use such as beds, oxygen, and wheelchairs. The business opened in May 2007 as a way to serve the needs of Union County by a locally-owned company. Over the past seven plus years, Jay's Medical has been an active member of the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce as well as an invaluable member of the Union County business community.

1. Tell us your favorite thing you do in your position?

I love being able to work with our patients and providing them solutions to their problems.

2. Tell us a little bit about your background. Where did you work before opening Jay's Medical?

I worked with a national company doing the same type of work. Being a national company, profits were more important than patient care. That is why I decided to start my own company with some great employees that wanted the same.

3. What was one piece of inspirational advice you received growing up?

Growing up, my parents taught me to always help someone in need. That has definitely been great advice as I have pursued my own business.

See Williams, page 5A

Master of the Gardens

Though the sun was shining bright, the late autumn damp cold kept me away from attending a dedication ceremony in Meeks Park, on a recent Sunday afternoon. I had received an email invitation a few days before, and I was quite moved by its intent.

On that blistery Sunday, our local Master Gardener Extension Volunteers planted 600 daffodil bulbs. The bulbs were being planted to honor the memory of the children who perished in the Holocaust.

When I was a youngster, my mom told me the compelling story of Anne Frank. Just two years younger than Frank, they both were young teens during WWII, only on different sides of the ocean. My mom's oldest brother was in Europe, fighting the Germans at the time Frank was in hiding.

Mom's name is also Anne, and when she told me the story, it was as if she lived it, too. I later saw a picture of Frank at age 13 and it was almost a mirrored image of photos I'd viewed often of Mom at the same age. In high school, I read the book, *The Diary of Anne Frank*. I eventually saw the movie depicting this amazing story of courage. Most recently, I was emotionally moved by the performances of the junior high school students in Cumming, GA, who presented the stage play, very sensitively directed by my oldest godchild, Lauren.

A few years ago, at home in my recliner, I watched the movie "The Boy In The Striped Pajamas". This film is a Holocaust drama, and it explores the horror of a World War II Nazi extermination camp through the eyes of two 8-year-old boys; one the son of the camp's Nazi commandant, the other a Jewish inmate. I still feel the chills that ran up and down my spine as this story unfolded in my family room. It was fiction. And it wasn't.

These 600 bulbs planted in Meeks Park are in memory of children who were taken from this earth 4,366 miles away seven decades ago. It is just one of many gardens that will be planted worldwide, with daffodil bulbs numbering 1.5 million total, the number of children that perished at the hands of the Nazis, a Living Holocaust Memorial.

I plan to visit the daffodils this spring. I will

See Leone, page 5A

North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

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Owner / Publisher

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Editor

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer



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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.

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