

Pinnacle...from Page 1A



Dahlonega, and was in the process of building a fourth in Cornelia when Pinnacle announced the merger.

“With the Southern Bank & Trust family joining us, we will have 21 branches,” said Anna Grant Jones, Vice President-Marketing Officer at Pinnacle Bank.

For his part, former SB&T President and Chief Executive Officer Tony E. Collins said SB&T was “delighted to partner with a bank actively serving its customers and communities with distinction since 1934.”

“Our customers will benefit by a significant expansion in the markets served by the combined bank, as well as the greater breadth and depth of products and services offered as part of this combination,” Collins said. “Pinnacle Bank is a true community bank, and decisions will continue to be made locally by bankers with a vested interest in our customers’ businesses and communities.”

Following the merger, Collins joined the Board of Directors of Pinnacle and continued to serve as Senior Market Executive within Pinnacle Bank, “with the primary responsibility of overseeing the communities

currently served by Southern Bank & Trust.”

“Collins leads a team of experienced bankers at Southern Bank & Trust who have agreed to remain with Pinnacle,” the bank said in December.

Pinnacle began replacing SB&T signage last week, and while the bank may look different on the outside, customers will still be greeted inside the bank by the people they’ve come to know and trust over the years.

“Customers are going to see their same familiar faces in these branches,” Grant Jones said. “Southern Bank & Trust was just a really good fit with us. They have the same values and principles that we do.”

“We work in our communities and work on relationships with our customers –people aren’t just a transaction for us. Southern Bank & Trust is a true community bank, and we are, too, and that’s why we are very excited to have them join the Pinnacle family.”

The Blairsville branch began its internal data integration and software changeover on Friday to get ready for a Monday, May 11, switch from SB&T to Pinnacle Bank operations, to include all

customer account information, online banking, bill pay options and more.

Of course, things have been somewhat complicated due to COVID-19, requiring the bank to switch to drive-thru only services for a while. But Pinnacle is ready to serve the community using a “phased-in approach to reopening our lobbies” that have been closed since March.

This approach will employ “essential protocols such as social distancing, limiting the number of customers in the branch and frequent sanitization.”

In Blairsville, Pinnacle Bank plans to reopen its lobby on Monday, May 18. Lobby hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every Monday through Friday.

People preferring to remain outside can use the Pinny Interactive Teller Machine, which is a live drive-thru teller available via touchscreen interface, offering extended hours services Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“When you visit Pinny, you speak with a live Pinnacle Bank teller who assists you with withdrawing or depositing cash, cashing a check,

transferring funds, making a loan payment, checking your balances and more,” according to pinnaclebank.com.

COVID-19 has presented society-wide challenges for individuals, governing bodies and businesses alike. Fortunately, Pinnacle Bank has been able to assist its customers in many ways, including those with business accounts.

Thanks to the “Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act,” or CARES Act, passed in March, Pinnacle Bank has helped 997 businesses and counting put food on their employees’ tables with a total of \$105.8 million in funding so far through the Paycheck Protection Program.

Furthermore, the locally owned Pinnacle Bank has offices in over 12 counties of Northeast Georgia “and offers a wide range of financial services.”

“As a community bank, our communities are important to us, and people will learn that over time,” Grant Jones said. “We are excited to be in these communities.”

People with questions can call 877-759-7939 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. or visit www.pinnaclebank.com for more information.

Day of Prayer...from Page 1A

spirits, and this is a real effort for prayer. I am so excited that we are able to have this event, even though it is a little different from how we planned.”

As of Sunday, more than 1,600 people had tuned in to watch the event featuring pastors praying over various aspects of society. The roughly hour-long

program opened with a brief introduction, with the first local prayer warrior being Towns County Sole Commissioner Cliff Bradshaw.

Ryan Wilson of North Mt. Zion Church of God played music between prayers, and participating pastors stayed hopeful, recommending that

the community trust in God and support each other in these times where there are those in need and people worried.

“I just want to encourage everybody to keep their eyes on the Lord and not to lose hope in this time,” Thomas said. “Right now, I know there are a lot of people who are discouraged because things haven’t gone the best way.”

“We are very much a people of habit with our lives, and with that interrupted, it has been a little discouraging. I just want to encourage our community to keep their eyes on the Lord and not to lean on our own understanding, and to trust him even when it doesn’t make a whole lot of sense.”

The program will remain online for people to visit and revisit as many times as they please, making it the first time the event has been readily available to the public whenever they want it. To watch the program, visit the “2020 Towns County National Day of Prayer” Facebook Page.

A similar event usually hosted in Union County each year did not take place due to COVID-19.

Local student Karley Mathews selected as Fulbright finalist

Karley Mathews of Blairsville, GA has been selected as a Fulbright finalist. The highly competitive and prestigious program enables graduates to pursue research activities, become English Teaching Assistants, or enroll in graduate school.

Mathews, a December 2019 graduate from Blairsville, GA, with a degree in modern languages with a concentration in Russian language and literature.

She will teach English in Belarus.



Karley Mathews

The Georgia Mountain Writers Club May meeting



The Georgia Mountain Writers Club February meeting

The Georgia Mountain Writers Club last met in February to share stories and encourage one another’s writing. We miss our monthly meetings and reluctantly, but willingly, practice safe distancing by not getting together. Reluctantly? Yes. We’d rather be together! Willingly? Absolutely. We all like staying healthy. So, we join everyone else by waiting for the day when we can meet again.

Our meeting place has been Mountain Regional Library which is still closed.

Most of us are in the upper age bracket encouraged to stay at home into June. Therefore, we will not meet in May.

We are hoping to resume in June, although there may be a change in date, time, or location. Stay tuned!

Meanwhile, keep writing. One suggested writing topic is “Life In Lockdown”. Take these next few weeks to reflect on the changes you’ve seen.

How has your life changed? Transitions, from Winter to Spring, and from

full schedules to days in PJ’s, from meeting face-to-face to meeting on Zoom. (Did you even know what Zoom was?) Write a fictional story, a factual piece for your grandkids, a poem funny, scary, beautiful or depressing. Vent, or Invent; its’ your own story!

Whatever you are doing, fellow Word-Smiths, keep writing! We look forward to the day when we meet, and share, and encourage each other in following our paths.

Submitted by
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