

Opinions

Everybody has one...

National Day of Prayer

May 5th marks the 65th anniversary of the National Day of Prayer nationwide.

To celebrate this very special event, there will be a public gathering featuring several area pastors, and a prayer testimony by Paul Smith, director of Citizens Impact Ministries.

Here's a little information about our upcoming event.

Everyone is invited to this special event to be held at First Baptist Church in Downtown Blairsville, on Thursday, May 5th at 6:30 p.m.

The signing of the official government proclamation for the event is set for April 19 at 6 p.m. in the Union County Courthouse.

The Theme for 2016 is "Wake up America" based on Isaiah 58:1a. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet."

Special prayers include those for, government leaders, military, local emergency workers, medical professionals, law enforcement, our fire department, families, businesses, youth, world missions, Israel, and the Body of Christ, as well as our community.

The public is welcome to come join in this united effort and unique opportunity. It's an opportunity for all American citizens and their elected leaders to join in prayer and to acknowledge together the sovereignty of almighty God, and to see His guidance for our Nation as we depend on Him.

As for the keynote speaker, Mr. Smith oversees Citizen Impact Ministries. The ministry provides motivation for students, and adults, to be informed and active citizens; monitoring legislation on the state and national levels; and ministers to those involved in public policy.

Some of his responsibilities, in addition as a Pastor/Church Planter, he performed the duties of government liaison/legislative director for South Carolina Association of Christian Schools, and the Georgia Association of Christian Schools from 1996-2009.

Currently he serves as South Region Legislative Director for the American Association of Christian Schools.

Prayer means something different to us all. To me, it's been the difference between life and death.

See Duncan, page 6A

Straight Shooting

Charles Duncan



Ultimate Questions

Recently, a political candidate explained his spirituality with, "Every great religion in the world – Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism – essentially comes down to: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." His point was that "we are all in this together."

I appreciate the effort to unify people. Americans could use some common ground these days. He chose Jesus' statement (the "Golden Rule") as a unifying principle, but unity was not Jesus' purpose (Luke 12:51). Over-simplification obscures truth.

One's worldview addresses the ultimate questions of our existence. Ravi Zacharias summarizes these as origin, meaning, morality, and destiny. Chuck Colson's questions are, where did we come from, what is wrong with the world, what can be done to fix it, and how now shall we live? In Christianity, the answers are explained by Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Ethics.

The politician addressed only Ethics which sufficed for political purposes, but it is quite incomplete to say that Christianity "comes down to" an ethical statement. It is a common error to presume that Jesus was just an ethical teacher, although that was certainly part of His earthly mission.

Jesus' most expansive ethical teaching is found in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5-7), which contains the Golden Rule, the Beatitudes, and the Lord's Prayer. He says to turn the other cheek, love your enemies, and give to the poor. He teaches that you cannot serve God and money, and should not worry. As difficult as some of these are, he summarizes with this: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). He raised the ethical bar to an impossible standard.

Why did he do that? Jesus did not want us to mistake ethical living as a path to God. Jesus' ethic is certainly to strive for, but our imperfections are what is wrong with the world. His fix was to fulfill the Law and the Prophets (5:17) on our behalf through his atoning sacrifice on the cross, and to offer us righteousness by faith. The gift of his Spirit empowers us to live His ethics.

So, what does Christianity "come down to"? In a name, "Jesus." He is the only path to the Father (Jn. 15:6). He said, "He

See Fowler, page 6A

All Things New

Wayne Fowler



Commissioner's Questions

Q. You mentioned last week that you would tell us about future plans at Meeks Park. Can you tell us about them?

A. While it is certainly not a secret, I am sure many people have ridden up to the Meeks Park Pool area and have seen the new weird looking colored equipment. It is called a Splash Pad and will have several different water features for the tots. It has a large marshmallow that pours water down like a shower, and fish bones that have nozzles that squirt water as your child moves through them. The Splash Pad also has tiny marshmallows they can sit on, little water wheels that pour water in short spurts, a large bucket that fills and then dumps the water on the children, and there are some nozzles and a fish tail in the ground that randomly squirt water up into the air.

Q. What is the status of the Splash Pad construction?

A. If everything goes according to plan, the Splash Pad will be completed by the end of this month. The pool and Splash Pad are scheduled to open the Saturday before Memorial Day which will be the 28th of May. They are putting the fence up now and are completing an area for the placement of cabanas. The cabanas are small covered tent areas that parents can rent to be in the shade while the kids play. It also has a small pool 6" deep for the mothers to place chairs in to be able to partially sit/lay in the water and a gentle incline that tots can walk into the small pool area. The Splash Pad is a great addition to Meeks Park Pool and will give the kids and parents something new and exciting to do this summer, all thanks to SPLOST!!

Q. I heard a rumor that some adult exercise equipment will be installed at Meeks Park. Can you tell us what it will be?

A. This is something we have been working on for quite a while. It has required a lot of research and testing to find the best equipment at the best possible price. I traveled to other parks and tried out some of the equipment they had in place to make sure it was useable equipment for adults of all ages. The equipment will consist of various pieces of low impact exercise machines for use by the public, including: exercise bikes, rowers, air walkers, a lat pull down machine, a chest press, and more. Some of this

See Paris, page 6A

Q & A from Union County Commissioner

Lamar Paris



Business after Hours

One of the many events that the Chamber enjoys doing is our quarterly Business after Hours and celebrating our Business of the Quarter. While working in banking, I attended several of these events. It was a great way to catch up with friends and business acquaintances that I hadn't seen in a while. It was also a great way to network and develop new business relationships in a relaxed atmosphere.

Our next Business after Hours/Business of the Quarter will be held on Thursday, April 14th from 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. at Park Sterling Bank. Park Sterling is also sponsoring the event alongside Amazing Grace Catering & Events. Amazing Grace will be providing the catering that evening. If you have not had an opportunity to sample their culinary creations, you are in for a treat! You will definitely not be disappointed.

I am proud to announce that Cabin Coffee will be honored as Business of the Quarter. Their contributions to the downtown square and Union County have been significant. So we are happy to salute Wayne and Judy Jolley and the Cabin Coffee Company.

Whether you are a brand new member of the Chamber, or have been one for a long time, we want to encourage you to be a part of this event. Bring your business cards and enjoy a wonderful evening of quality networking. Linda, Yvette, Tobie, Sheila and I look forward to seeing you there!

Blairsville - Union County Chamber

Regina Allison



From the Ground Up

Melissa Mattee



Herb Gardening

Herbs have been grown since ancient times and used as both flavorful food additions and medicines. They are hardy plants that can thrive in a variety of conditions, making them an excellent choice for beginning gardeners and experienced green thumbs alike.

Herb garden establishment and maintenance is similar to vegetable gardens. Most herbs do well in average, well-drained soil with a pH of 6.5-7.0, and flourish with at least 6 hours of sunlight. Planning what herbs you want in your garden is important because though most are hardy, some require different conditions than most. Rosemary and lavender prefer a soil pH of 7.5, and basil, chives and parsley require more fertilizer to replenish their leaves because they are harvested so often. Once you have established which herbs you want to plant and have tested your soil, it is important to till well and make the required amendments (lime, fertilizer, etc). After planting, mulching is highly recommended to control weeds and keep diseases at bay. You can propagate herbs in a variety of ways. Seeding is one of the most common methods. Seeds should be planted in late winter or very early spring and kept indoors so they will be ready to transplant after the frost-free date. In our mountain climate, there is a possibility of frost up until May 15th, so keep immature and delicate plants indoors until mid-May. Seeds should be planted only half the depth of their diameter, so simply pushing them into the soil and lightly covering them is sufficient. Once the seedlings have 2-4 leaves, they can be transplanted into a larger container or the garden. Make sure to water the transplants well.

Cuttings can also propagate herbs. To do this, cut about 4 inches of new growth from a mature plant containing 3 nodes or more. This cut should be made just below the node (where a leaf joins the stem). Remove the bottom leaves, and insert the cutting into potting medium up to the lowest node. Keep the soil warm and consistently moist until the cutting has taken root, or after about 6 weeks. At this point, your new herb plant can be added to the garden.

Container gardening is another option for

See Mattee, page 6A

Heroin Myths and Facts

Myth: Heroin is cheap.

Fact: Heroin is not cheap. It can cost you everything that once mattered to you. It will cost you your dignity, self-esteem and self-respect. It will cost you a decent job, the loved ones in your life, and your children. It can cost you your life.

Myth: One of the most common and most detrimental myths about teen heroin abuse, is that heroin isn't a drug that most teens turn to.

Fact: Some parents incorrectly believe that teens stick to "light" drugs to party, like marijuana and alcohol. By remaining in denial, parents may neglect to recognize the signs that their teens are using heroin and fail to intervene when it's required. Signs of heroin abuse can include changes in routine, changes in personal care, and a new tendency to act recklessly. For example, teens that were once successful in school might stop attending or start failing their classes. They can also begin neglecting their personal hygiene, or have changing concerns about their appearance. Irresponsible behavior can be anything that is out of the ordinary for a teen. Parents who believe the myth that teens don't use heroin are sure to miss these essential

See Anti-Drug, page 6A

Letters to the Editor...

Why all the fuss?

Dear Editor,

We moved to Blairsville from St. Petersburg, Florida last August. Having read your paper to inform ourselves of local happenings and vibes, I had been wanting to write but was hesitant after reading some of the personal ranting and thumping going on in your Opinions section. (Oh My God! And that is worth spelling out.) When did Christianity become such a spiteful competition as to who is the most holy? God is alive in all of us. He doesn't require constant introduction. Christianity is meant to be Love, Respect and the Welcoming of all Gods creation. Not just whom we personally pick and choose. He may be in us, but we are not him. Don't judge. In other words "The practiced should not preach without due provocation."

That being said, we would look forward to reading a more insightful and current events related Opinions page. Possibly by delegating religious views to the Church section where appropriate. This is not a view on religion so much as it is the content and its location. Different views can be expressed thoughtfully and with respect to all. No one should be afraid to speak out with intelligence and clarity. Our silence breeds complacency. It only allows perceived wrongs to continue unabated.

On a positive note, Blairsville has a good soul. Just leave the rest to the great "I Am" (God).

Respectfully,
Kyle Mills

The Windstream Debate

Dear Editor,

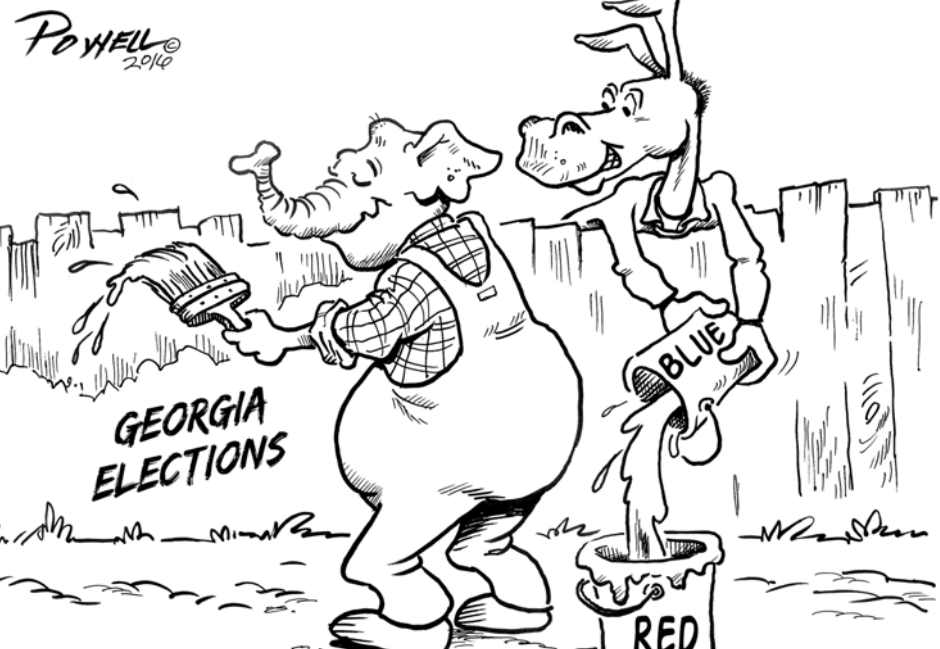
This letter is regarding Congressman Doug Collins calling Mr. Tony Thomas, president and CEO of Windstream Communications on the carpet.

That encouraged me to hunt down letters to Windstream written back in early 2014.

It has been a nickle here, a dime there of increases of which they (Windstream) blamed the Federal Communications Commission, and when I contacted the FCC, they denied as being the culprit and blamed Windstream.

As I stated, this goes back to early 2014. Now, my question is - What took Congressman Doug Collins so long to get involved?

Sincerely,
Jean M. Holsapple



Step up and Volunteer

Ask any kid what they want to be when they grow up and you will get some very different answers. When I was a kid, I didn't want to be a firefighter. One day, one of my friends showed up with a radio on his side and started telling me about joining the volunteer fire department. I was interested but didn't really know what I was getting into. I joined, and after my first training fire, I was hooked. I knew then that I wanted the fire department in my life.

We are in a time when the volunteer fire service is dwindling. This is alarming due to the fact that the fire department is responding to more calls each year. The fact is we are in need of volunteers now more than ever. There are so many interesting rewards from becoming a volunteer firefighter.

First, you know what's going on in your community. I know this may sound strange but when you receive emergency calls on your portable fire radio or your cell phone, you know about an emergency and where it is located. Second, you get to go to that emergency. How many people can say that they went to a structure fire last night? Or they went to a car accident and helped extricate the victims? Not many people can say that at work the next day; only firefighters.

The most important thing that you can do is serve your community. By becoming a volunteer firefighter, you respond to emergencies in your community and help them in a time of need. If you have ever had an emergency, you understand and appreciate the response from the fire department. Volunteer firefighters also help to keep our taxes low. Without the volunteer firefighters, the career staff would not be able to handle the call volume and the county would be forced to hire more firefighters. Keeping a combination department with volunteer firefighters helps keep our taxes low.

Some of you may be thinking that you can't go into a burning building thus you can't be a volunteer firefighter. That is not true. Going into a burning building is just a small part of what firefighters do. It takes many support personnel doing other jobs to enable the few firefighters who go into the burning building. We need volunteer firefighters who can drive fire apparatus, respond to medical calls, respond to car accidents, install smoke alarms, and the list goes on.

As a volunteer firefighter, you will be able to know the happenings in your community; respond to emergency calls and help your neighbors. If you want a challenge; to see and do things that most people never get to; and to help your community; step up and become a volunteer firefighter today. Applications can be obtained at Union County Fire Station 1 located at 507 Shoe Factory Rd. By the way, I want to say thank you to all the Union County Volunteer Firefighters for their service.

Union County Fire Department ~ Our Family Protecting Your Family ~

Fire Dept. from Union County Fire Chief

David Dyer



Hiking the Logan Turnpike Trail

I first heard about the Logan Turnpike from C. R. Collins. I was fortunate in that we attend First Baptist Church and I attended Kiwanis meetings. Both of which C. R. attended regularly. There have been many times when I heard Mr. CR talk about traveling over the Logan Turnpike with his father.

According to Ethylene Dyer Jones, who had written many articles about the road, the Union Turnpike was first constructed in 1821 by John Lyon and Joel Dickerson. They later sold the rights to the road and some extensive land holdings on the southern slopes of the Blue Ridge to Major Willis Logan for \$3,000. He operated the road for 30 years. But, other members of the family operated the toll booth on the south side of the mountain until Highway 129 opened in 1925. The road was 7.5 miles long and made its way from Louisville through the Testate Gap to Choestoe.

A stage coach from Augusta, Georgia to Athens, Tennessee used the Turnpike and Major Logan established a stagecoach stop which entertained overnight boarders. Wagons with four wheels were charged 2 cents per mile. Market animals driven over the Turnpike to Gainesville were also charged on a per animal basis. Once again according to Ethylene Dyer Jones, many farmers in Union County would drive animals such as sheep, hogs, cattle and turkeys across the mountain to Gainesville to market the animals.

Mrs. Jones says in her written accounts that Jack Shuler and his family lived at the foot of Tesnatee Gap where they operated the Ponder Post Office and a store. The family was paid by Major Logan to maintain the Logan Turnpike on the north side of Tesnatee Gap.

C. R. Collins once told me about a killing at Spiva Bend in Union County. There was a Spiva fellow hiding out during the Civil War. He refused to fight for the South. The Home Guard caught him by a large outcrop of rock. He refused to be captured so he was shot by that group of people. At a spot near Tesnatee Gap where the Appalachian Trail crosses the Turnpike the Ru-



See Cummings, page 6A

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