

Veterans...from Page 1A

"We honor more than 58,000 patriots who sacrificed all they had and all they would ever know," said Commissioner Paris. "We draw inspiration from the heroes who suffered unspeakably as prisoners of war, and we pledge to keep faith with those who were wounded and still carry the scars of war, seen and unseen."

"Twelve-hundred and sixty-nine of our service members are still among the missing in action, and we pledge as a nation to do everything in our

power to bring these patriots home. I call upon our citizens to honor our Vietnam veterans – our fallen, our wounded, those unaccounted for and all those who served."

In the meeting, Commissioner Paris remembered one of Union County's native sons and great patriots, who passed away June 9 after a period of declining health.

"I would also like to acknowledge Hoyt James King, one of those heroes of Vietnam, who was shot down

in a helicopter, MIA for two weeks, yet in the end, over 40 years later, he recently fell to the condition of PTSD, and is yet another casualty of the Vietnam War," said Commissioner Paris.

"He left our world and our county at the age of 67 last week, way before his time – he simply could not deal with the demons of that war any longer," continued the commissioner. "So, whereas the hope of this group when they talk about bringing the Vietnam Wall Memorial here to Union County was to give these people a sense of peace and place, unfortunately, this gentleman will not be able to join them in that celebration, and I think for that, that's a real regret."

Vietnam Veterans Mike

Priven and Mike Ruback joined Commissioner Paris to accept the proclamation, along with several other Vietnam vets of Union County: Raymond Tiburski, Charles Honaker Sr., Rick Eggleston and Gene Clopton.

"On behalf of all the members of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1101 Blairsville, and on behalf of all Vietnam Veterans in Union County, I would like to thank Commissioner Paris for this proclamation," said Priven, who is president of VVA Georgia Chapter 1101.

"It has been 40 years since the end of the war, and Vietnam Veterans are just now becoming recognized," Priven continued. "Additionally, I want to thank Mr. Paris for all

he does for all the veterans in this county, regardless of what war they fought in. Other counties would do well to follow his lead."

Union County DAV and VFW Commander Mike Ruback spoke in the meeting on his experience as a veteran, specifically about his treatment in the county since moving here eight years ago.

"I lived in South Florida for 38 years," said Ruback. "Nobody ever recognized me as a veteran. I came to Union County, and when I wear my hat, I get stopped at least a dozen times. And I give the same answer – when they say thank you for serving, I say it was my pleasure to serve."

In October, Vietnam Veterans and the community

at large will be able to take part in a special project that is under the care of the VVA.

"Hopefully everyone is aware that the Vietnam Wall, the Moving Wall, is coming to Blairsville Oct. 8-12," said Priven. "Please come see it, you will never regret you did. It will be a solemn place, and it will be open 24 hours a day, and we will guard it. We hope to see you there."

The Moving Wall is a half-sized replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the nation's capital, and has been traveling the country for 30 years.

To donate to the cause of bringing the Moving Wall to Blairsville, visit www.gofundme.com/blairsvillevva.

Chick-fil-A...from Page 1A

My brother, Chris Liberatore is expecting to open a new Chick-fil-A in Cleveland on the same day we open our store here in Blairsville."

Daniel Liberatore said he couldn't put into words how he feels about the Blairsville community.

"It's an amazing feeling being here," he said. "From day one, we've been welcomed. The support and encouragement and friendliness of this community have been incredible. My family and I feel so welcomed."

Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley said he couldn't wait until the doors are open at Chick-fil-A.

"This is going to be such an addition to our community, to the city and the county," Mayor Conley said. "We are so family oriented to begin with, the values that Chick-fil-A has, the ethical

values and all that Chick-fil-A brings to our community is just so welcomed."

"It's just an exciting time in our community and the addition of this restaurant is just a great happening," Mayor Conley said.

The addition of Chick-fil-A is five years in the making. Union County Economic Development Executive Director Mitch Griggs summed up the day with one word – "finally!"

"It's a terrific day for everyone," Griggs said. "It's been a long road for sure – approximately five years

from start to finish to get us to this point. The biggest thing is Chick-fil-A stuck with us. They didn't give up on us. They didn't get tired of waiting for the state permitting. Eventually, we got everything worked out."

Griggs said the jobs associated with Chick-fil-A are a welcomed sight.

"They're going to hire quite a few people," Griggs said. "Chick-fil-A will plug into this community in a big way – they will be responsive to our community. We're really excited about this – we're excited it's really happening."

Haralson...from Page 1A

it refurbished, and we've got it 99 percent like we want it," said Akins. "We've still got a little bit to go, but we're just ready and wanted the public to know that it's ready to go. We want people to come in here and see what we got."

Haralson's daughter, Austine, married the man who, aside from Haralson, would become synonymous with the law office.

Ben Carr, who died in 1991, used the office for 35 more years following Haralson's passing. But after Carr died, the building fell into disrepair.

Fortunately for Blairsville residents and history buffs, the Historical Society decided to purchase the building. The society paid \$15,000 for it, and spent \$31,000 and a year getting the office back in working order.

Thomas Jefferson Haralson, Pat's father, constructed the building a short time after the Civil War. Pat put the office to legal work upon graduating with a law degree from the University of Georgia and passing the bar exam in 1897, at the age of 26, until his death in 1956.

Part of the restoration included retrofitting the building with heating and air, as well as a bathroom. The roof had caved in some years earlier, causing much water damage to items inside the historic site, so a new ceiling was also added.

The building contains a catalogue of original items used by the prominent lawyers, including century-old law books, Carr's still-functional typewriter and a leather briefcase used by Haralson himself.

When Haralson died, Austine Carr's influence became more apparent, as paintings of birds and other personal touches cropped up around the office, lending her aesthetic sensibilities to the cramped – to today's standards, at least – space.

Austine had several passions, cats not the least of these, according to Historical Society Member Libby Stevens.

But she also had a love of gardening. She had been a member of garden clubs at both the state and local levels, and even internationally, as a member of a garden club in Japan.

"The history needs to be preserved for our future generations," said Tom Rafter of the Historical Society. "It was a nice crowd, a nice ribbon-cutting and a nice dedication."

Around 35 members of the community attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony, including civic leaders Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris, Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley, Chamber President Cindy Williams and Chamber Membership Coordinator Linda Lawrence.

The Carr/Haralson Building will be open the same hours as the Courthouse Museum on the Downtown Square. For more information, visit www.unioncounty-history.org.

