

Opinions

Everybody has one

An American success story

He was my friend, my brother and an American success story.

Claude Beaver was all of these things and more.

He moved to Union County from Copper Hill, Tenn. in 1970 with his mother and siblings. His father had died in an automobile crash.

It wasn't long before this young man and I became close friends. Soon, we played Army, Cowboys and Indians, and good guys, bad guys.

Claude was an essential part of my childhood. We went fishing, hunted squirrels, rabbits and about any other wild game you could harvest from these mountains.

We remained close friends throughout our teen-age years and the years that took us into adulthood. Claude was my buddy, I was his and there wasn't anything we wouldn't do for each other.

Claude wasn't interested in book learning. No, he dropped out of high school in the 10th grade. However, when he dropped out of school, it was just the beginning of his education.

Claude was one of the smartest people I ever met. There was nothing that he couldn't do. When it came to cars, he could fix any of them, regardless of make or model. He learned how to fix anything that was broken.

He eventually moved on to Gainesville and took a job at a convenience store. He spent every day trying to better himself. He did just that the day he took a job at Primex Plastics in Oakwood.

Claude rose through the ranks, there was nothing that he couldn't do for the company that made Plexiglas. He became an invaluable member of the Primex team. When the opportunity came for him to take the plant manager's job at the Primex plant in Mesquite, NV, Claude was ready. He spent 30 years as one of Primex's most loyal employees.

Then one day, he faced his greatest challenge – cancer. It started on his big toe, which doctors were forced to remove. Afterward, it climbed his leg and settled in his calf. It didn't stop until it reached his lungs. All of this in less than a year.

I hadn't seen Claude since 1993. Two weeks ago, I heard he was battling cancer. On Friday, I learned he died at his home on Sept. 20th, in Overton, NV. My heart sank.

I spent the weekend thinking about almost every moment we spent together. I decided to write this column as a tribute to his soul. Claude was saved, he knew his place in Heaven was secure. However, he told his sister Evelyn that he just wasn't ready to leave. That's understandable, he had 21 grandchildren he wanted to watch grow up. He planned to return to Blairsville, build a house and once again, fish the mountain streams.

I've never really thought about it until I heard the news of Claude's passing. He defied the odds of a young man growing into an adult without the aid of an education. He didn't just defy the odds, he knocked them out of the water.

Claude Beaver was an American success story. His life is proof that determination will take you anywhere you want to go in life. To this day, I've never met another human being with more determination. Good bye my friend, until we meet again.



Charles Duncan

Straight Shooting



Don't Make Your Mind Mad

I've been writing this column "It's on My Mind" for about fourteen years. Sometimes "It" is not really on my mind. "It" may have been on my mind but there are so many other things on my mind that "It" has completely left my mind. My mind gets sensitive on occasions. I get the feeling it does not appreciate being over crowded and shoves "It" right out. Today is one of those days that try as hard as I possibly can, I can't remember what "It" was that I planned to write about.

The mind is an awesome thing. As you grow older, the mind that you have used, abused and sometimes misused makes up its mind to get even with you. Some days it just wanders off and leaves you high and dry. At times I have tried to trace it down to see where its hiding place is, but it is very crafty and sneaky and I lose its trail every time. The good news is that it soon gets over its pouting spell and returns.

Let me warn you young folks – don't you treat your mind so badly that it gets mad and takes revenge. You can be in real trouble. I mean it does things that will aggravate the daylight out of you. For instance, you are walking in a mall and behold you meet a friend that you have known for fifty years and you are thrilled to see him/her, but just as you extend your hand to shake his/her hand your mind says "gotcha" and leaves, taking your friend's name with it. You struggle through your conversation praying and hoping that you don't have to call your friend's name. What really gets your goat, as soon as your friend is out of sight; your sneaky little mind prances back in with your friend's name. How wicked can your mind be!

My mind has been with me ever since I was born and we have been good, close friends most of my life, but sometimes, not very often, my mind really gets under my skin. As my mind has gotten older it has gotten, should I say mischievous, or just downright ornery. Every now and then I run across something very important and I put it up in a safe, secure place knowing that I will definitely need it in the future. Sure enough the day comes that I need that "important thing" and my mind has snatched it and hidden it where I can't find it. After I have improvised and don't need it, my mind nearly always brings it back. My mind and I have some

See Parris, page 5A

Local Lore to Explore

Southern and Appalachian lore has been used for decades. It has been passed down for generations and has become commonplace in many of our conversations. Those who understand don't think twice about it. Those who don't are inevitably left wondering what in the world was meant by that phrase. Whether you've heard them all, or never have quite figured out their meanings, the following are a few local lore stories and sayings to enjoy.

Earlier this summer, a reader of my column asked that I explore the meaning of Gumlog, Cherrylog, Ivylog, Licklog or Pinelog. What does the "log" mean? Several of these "logs" are parts of names of communities in or surrounding Union County. Since June, I have been on a discovery search, visiting with everyone that I thought might know more about this topic. Although I will share what I have learned thus far, I think many answers are still out there. Some believe the meaning goes back to the early settlers of each of these small communities' history. They simply needed a foot bridge to cross a creek or branch in the community and cut down a gum tree or tree covered in ivy. Then used the log to make a bridge and cross the creek. This explanation seemed okay until I tried to explain the name Licklog. Since there seems to be no logic for this one, here's my best guess. As I was growing up, the term "I had the lick" meant you were worn out from your chores. If you had hauled hay, put it all in the barn, worked till dark, sweat had poured from your body, you were soaking wet and your energy level was exhausted you would say, "I had the lick". Therefore, I think a possible description of a huge log that took hours to cut down and haul to the branch as a foot bridge could be so named the "Licklog." If you have further insight on this topic, please send me an email so that I can share details as they come my way.

Here are a few other southern sayings that might bring back distant memories. Many are in use today. "Ball hootin'" means skidding logs downhill fast. Anything going downhill fast that is on the verge of getting out of control could be said to be "a ball hootin' it". Some say it will rain if leaves show their backs when the wind blows. Always believe half of what you see and nothing you hear. "Grinning like a mule eatin' saw briars" means someone is up to something that is mischievous or no good. If you are "up the creek without a paddle," you are part of a hopeless or impossible situation. If your nose itches, you are going to have company. The weather will be fair until you hear

See Garner, page 5A

Teetotaler

I remember the days when my Papa would talk to me about morals and how I should conduct myself. He especially worried about me during my college years. One of the things he continuously harped upon was the consumption of alcohol. Finally, one day I asked him, "Papa, why don't you drink?" He told me the following story.

"When I was a teenage boy we went to 'Church Singings' to meet girls. That was one of the only places a girl and boy could socialize. One evening Skeeter, Russell, Pick, and a bunch of other boys were headed to St. Paul Church to a 'Singing'. We had a 3 mile walk to get to the church so we stopped by a bootlegger's house to get a gallon of wine. The only thing we could afford was some home-made Elderberry Wine. Seven of us boys drank that whole gallon of wine before we got to church.

That "Singing" turned into a long drawn out affair. Normally, a Singing would last 2-3 hours. This one lasted nearly 4 hours and I was feeling the need to go to the outhouse. However, I knew if I got up to leave I would get a whipping. My parents were not there, but that didn't matter. In those days any parent would give you a whipping for being disrespectful in church. So, me and the boys just sat there. By the end of the service we were hurting. When the preacher dismissed the service I got up and ran out the door. When I got to the safety of the bushes I was in for trouble. That Elderberry wine does something to your insides. I was burning inside and the more I went the more I needed to go. That was an awful experience. I swore off of alcohol of any kind after that night. Also, drinking alcohol can get you into all kinds of trouble. So, I don't want you to ever drink anything. I am a "Teetotaler" and I want you to be one as well."

Even to this day I don't drink at least intentionally. Five years ago I began to can a few things out of the garden. One of the first things I tried was tomato juice. One day I decided to try to make some V-10 juice. I am one of those people who tinker with recipes. So, I found some bell pepper, cabbage, peas, celery, hot pepper, onions, carrots, tomatoes, apples, pears, blue berries and grapes to mix into the juice. After making the concoction I let it sit for a few months. When I opened the first bottle the stuff fizzed and foamed. I was concerned so I sent

See Cummings, page 5A

An introduction to Kale

I know you know what kale is – but do you know who Kale is? You may know what an apple is but if Gwyneth Paltrow introduced you to Apple, she would be presenting her daughter to you.

I've taken it upon myself to name the newest addition to the Union County Farmers Market. I've named him Kale. I've also given this inanimate object a gender. Kale is a male. My rationale, he's "better looking" than he is "pretty." Kale is long and green. Yes, the vegetable. So is Kale, our new addition – a computer kiosk that will be unveiled this Saturday at The Market.

The kiosk was an amazing donation made to our Market by United Community Bank. Our plans for the kiosk are many. During the last month of the Market season, we will be surveying those attending to see what you like best about the market. You will also have the opportunity to sign up for monthly e-news updates, letting you know what events are coming up at the Farmers Market, as well as what new produce is arriving, a spotlight on our vendors, and opportunities to participate in competitions such as bake-offs or BBQ contests.

Those of you that have the opportunity to read my column, Mickey Cummings' column and all the other wonderful copy that the North Georgia News has shared with you about The Market this season, are well apprised of most of these things, though you get this information just the week before, without much notice.

Those who come to us nearly every week who reside outside of Union County, and all our visitors from out of the region, don't have the same opportunity to keep up with us through this publication. Kale will be a valuable asset in securing a way to keep everyone aware of what's happening at the Farmers Market.

Next year, we'll set Kale up to take your votes. Opportunities that come along to vote for your favorite Farmers Market. We want you to share with the rest of the world what you share with us every week. We know how much you enjoy having this facility and all that is organized around it. We want you to vote so we can make our presence known to others seeking out just such a place to visit.

So, next time you are at the Farmers Market be sure to stop and meet Kale. Take our survey, and sign up to keep abreast of all the latest Market news. And a special shout out to United Community Bank for making this opportunity possible.

Here's what's coming up the next few weeks. Tuesday, Oct. 8 will be our last seminar night. We will be featuring expert beekeeper, Glen Henderson. He'll be at Blackberry Jam booth discussing

See Leone, page 5A

Letters

To the Editor

Tired of blame game

Dear Editor,

He promised Hope and Change and if he didn't get the job done he would be a one-term President. Let's hold him to his word. Some news outlets are his minions and can find no fault with him. Let's see. 5 trillion more debt. 2 down grades of our credit rating. Wealth re-distribution. Obamacare, (they lied-it is a huge tax on everyone and not promising for seniors). Grown government. Bailouts. Paid of cronies. Blame game. (It's not his fault). Minion politicians who use entrusted positions to promote envy and their socialist agenda. Are you happier now? Washington thinks we can spend or Uncle Ben can print us out of the economic disaster. When the "takers out number the makers" where is the money coming from? By the way I'm on SS and pray its still in my future. Anyone familiar with the word bankruptcy?

See Ginn, page 5A

Please be clear Mr. Editor

Dear Editor,

In the editorial of September 19 ("No to Charter School"), you stated that you did not oppose charter schools in principle; you did, however, object to their creation by taking money away from local school districts. Are we to presume that our local charter school, the Mountain Education Center, which you praised, did not and does not take money away from the local school district? You chose to quote (obviously in agreement) the Georgia School Superintendent's argument against the amendment related to charter schools: "until all of our public school students are in school for a full 180-day school year; until essential services like student transportation and student support can return to effective levels; and until teachers regain jobs with full pay for a full school year, we should not redirect one more dollar away from Georgia's local school districts, much less an additional \$430 million in state funds."

Nowhere in his words or in the rest of your editorial was there any reference to what

See Ramsey, page 5A

Academic success and what lies ahead for UC Schools

Dear Editor,

The concrete walls are stark. The boards are littered with broken chalk while students are outside beating the dust out of the erasers. The desks are in rows with students in alphabetical order. The teacher is at the front of the classroom using a monotone voice. These are the images from our school-days. The classroom needed something different to accommodate the individual differences of students.

Much like the student taking their fingernails and raking them down the chalkboard, everyone cringed. Everyone paid attention.

In today's classroom, the walls are covered with student work and content-specific visuals. Chalkboards have been replaced with dry-erase boards and interactive whiteboards. Students' desks are moved during class to accommodate the activity structured by the teachers. The most important change is the responsibility of learning, which in no longer all on

See Williams, page 5A

Say no to Viewpoint

Dear Editor,

I regret that I have sent viewpoints to the OLDER newspaper. I say regrets because not only did it lead in to unnecessary conflicts and etc. but it made me feel bad later. It also made me stop to think that unless you can face up to your words, that is, have a FACE as well as a NAME, then it means nothing! Just like all of these people who refuse to give interviews or comments on a situation, because they KNOW they are guilty, and hiding behind themselves. Where in offering to give a brief statement direct and up front shows your stamina, security as well as showing that you are NO COWARD! And besides, the old viewpoints were pure push, and continuously the same thing from week to week and seldom ever changed. Some times, the Letters to the Editor tend to be based on one issue over and over. I say when there has been ONE POINT made, MOVE ON, and make room for another point to be made. Thank You, God Bless and have a GREAT DAY!

Mrs. D. Barnes

What's in a score?

Dear Editor,

For three years running, ISI (the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, a non-profit, non-partisan, tax-exempt educational organization) conducted a scientific survey of civic learning among Americans. The first year they surveyed only college students and the average college senior failed the civic literacy test with a score of 53 percent. The following year ISI once again tested colleges students nationwide, and the results of this second survey corroborated the results of the first: The average score among seniors was 54 percent (not one school - including Harvard, Yale, and Princeton - could beat a "C" average!). For their third study on the kind of knowledge required for informed citizen-

See Esposito, page 5A

Keep it real

Dear Editor,

Let's be clear about who instated the onerous requirements for acquiring a GA Driver license for voting purposes.

The REAL ID Act of 2005, Pub.L. 109-13, which applies to all states, was introduced by the Republican controlled U.S. House of Representatives in 2005 and signed in to law in May 2005 by President George Bush.

William Miles

The last day to register to vote or make any changes to your voter registration for the November 6th, 2012, General Election and December 4th Runoff (if needed) is October 9th, 2012

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Kenneth West
Owner / Publisher

Charles Duncan
Editor

Lowell Nicholson
Photographer



Adam Gilreath
Advertising Director

Janice Boling
Staff Writer
Todd Forrest
Staff Writer

Website: www.nganews.com
E-mail: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com
Mailing: POBox 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

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