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vice); 506 asphalt (397 miles); 295 gravel (14 miles); 21 surface treatment (17 miles); We have 3431 road culvert locations (some locations have more than one culvert); 110 cemeteries; 506 subdivisions; 22,894 parcels; 210,546 total acres in Union County; 807 fire hydrants; 44 billboards; 77 government maintained bridges (36 are county maintained); 12 cellular communications towers.

The information listed above is just an example of the

types of information the GIS can provide. The system can store detailed information and photos for each mapped feature.

Q. Who is responsible for maintaining the GIS and gathering all the information?

A. The GIS is maintained by Shawn Seabolt and Jody Payne. The office is directed by Shawn Seabolt who started his mapping career with Union County 20 years ago. He is a former employee of the USFS

and has a degree in forestry. He was recruited to map for the County because of his mapping and surveying experience from college and the Forest Service. Since working for Union County, Shawn has obtained his GIS Certification. Jody Payne has spent over 30 years land surveying in the private sector. Jody's surveying and plotting experience have made him a great addition to the GIS and Tax Assessor's office.

Q. How can I see and learn about our GIS?

A. The Office of GIS, Planning and Land Use is located in the Union County Courthouse next to the Tax Commissioner's Office. Feel free to come by and check out all the system has to offer. The office also provides printed maps from the GIS, FEMA and the USGS. You can also view some data on their website at: www.unioncountymaps.com.

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Lester's house. Lester answered the door reeking of alcohol. The men sat down on a couch and Dad began talking about repayment of Lester's debt to Glenn. Lester interrupted, "Hold on just a minute. I am going to the kitchen to get a drink of water". Dad watched Lester go to the sink where he pulled a quart jar from the cabinet. Lester guzzled a few swallows and walked back toward the living room. Dad smiled as Glenn, who had watched Lester's actions, took what appeared to be a Hershey Candy bar from his pocket. Actually, the candy bar was a chocolate Ex-Lax Bar. This bar was a laxative and most people would eat a couple of squares to relieve their problem.

Glenn said, "Come on Paul. Lester is too smart for us. He ain't gonna pay me no money". Glenn began unwrapping his supposed candy bar. Lester reached out and snatched the candy bar from Glenn's hands. He exclaimed, "Not only am I too smart for the likes of you two. But, I aim to have this candy bar". As Glenn began to protest Lester put the whole thing in his mouth and swallowed with one chomp. Glenn

and Dad got up to leave and as they walked out of the house, Glenn said, "I hope everything comes out all right for you Lester".

As you know the Farmers Market and Canning Plant are now closed for the season. The Market will open on December 5 and 6 for the Kris Kringle Market while the Canning Plant will be open from 6 a.m. until noon on November 11th and 18th for meat and anything else you wish to process.

It has been a great year and I want to thank the following people because the Farmers Market and Canning Plant are indebted to them because of their support. Thank you to all the customers who attended our events this year. Thanks to Lamar Paris, Kristy Peney, Bobby Burch, JoAnne Leone, Larry Garrett, and Mike Thomason for all of your hard work. Thanks to all of our 78 vendors which bring their products to the market each Tuesday and Friday. Also, thanks to Tricia Spear and the Humane Society for providing the dog sitting service for customers at the Farmers Market.

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– Always drink upstream from the herd. – Letting the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than putting it back in. – When you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop digging. – Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong. – Sometimes you get and sometimes you get got. – Life ain't about how fast you can run, or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.

Well, I don't want you to

be disappointed in this column so let me get this point across "that it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). That's the reason Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). He became the point man to absorb all of God's wrath against sin so "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess.5:9).

Leone...continued from Page 4A

We arrived to find the HUGE parking lot full. The tractors were still moving visitors in and out of the orchards for the U-pickem apples. Elderly folks with walkers were meandering to their vehicles, along side children that were skipping with energy, smiles on their faces, ice cream cones in hand. We found a spot to pull into. On our walk to the main building, I started to notice something I rarely see in the mountains. And my ears confirmed what I saw. There were people visiting who were born in all corners of the world. Maybe they now reside in this great country, but they were speaking Korean, Vietnamese, Indian, Spanish, French and a Nordic language I wasn't quite sure I could nail its exact origins. I know Adelle and Bill Mercier were smiling from the heavens on this 70-year-old orchard with great pride. Their dream was to create a venue that people would come from far and wide to partake of the farm experience. Here it was. The International House of Apples.

Fifteen years ago, I met Adele Mercier at a regional tourism meeting. There were about 12 people sitting around the conference table at the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce. This little old woman introduced herself to me. At the time, I represented the tourism efforts of Towns County. She quickly invited me to come to Merciers, since I had admitted to her that I had never been there before. She wanted to make sure I encouraged folks visiting Hiawassee to come west. When the meeting started, she began to spout ideas, big ideas for bringing people to Blue Ridge. At the time, the folks who had invested in the train a year or two before, were also talking big ideas. I sat back and listened at their enthusiasm and their resolve. Many at the table scoffed at their vision. It was too big, too "out of the box." Investing regional advertising dollars specifically aimed at these two private ventures was a hard sell.

A decade and a half later, I'm standing in the middle of the same building where I had visited Adele, shortly after I first met her. It's now 4, maybe 5 times the original square footage. Where there was only one cash register, there was now eight (maybe 10), and they were all ringing up sales, with people six fold in each line. The restaurant was full, the line for the ice cream swung around the corner. The bakery racks were near empty. There were dozens of people taste testing the different varieties of apples, making their decisions as to which apples they would purchase in 3, 10 or 20-pound bags. Every nook and cranny of this attraction was jam packed with three generations enjoying this agri-tourism experience. And do you know what my first thought was? It's 6 o'clock on a Sunday. When these people leave here, they are all going somewhere to eat dinner. The restaurants in Blue Ridge are still open on Sunday at 6 p.m.

The Union County Farmers Market is building on the same platform, the desire people have to experience agriculture, if only for an afternoon. When I was a youngster, I begged my Mom to take me to my great Aunt Lucy and Uncle Joe's house during cherry season. The first time my Uncle hoisted me up into the tree, held me by my britches in one hand and the basket for me to fill in his other, was an experience I've never forgotten. Two years ago, on a Sunday morning, I went to Merciers and picked cherries. I was filled with emotion, remembering that first time in that old backyard tree.

So, again this year, as I brainstorm about the Union County Farmers Market, I en-

courage you to think about how you might be a part of this experience, too.

Think big. Think outside the box. Think like Adele Mercier. Then call me and we'll chat about it.

Memorial ... continued from Page 4A

of Georgia, nor in the southeast and possibly not even in the United States has four heads of sovereign nations ever been invited to return to their ancestral homelands for a dedication of any type. This is indeed an event that will turn the eyes of the world on Blairsville, GA as we welcome the Nations home.

Today with many Americans claiming Native American heritage it is often claimed that Grandma was a Cherokee princess. However, the term "princess" is a laughable term when used in conversation with those understanding the hypocrisy of the terminology. The fact that there was never a "princess" amongst the Cherokee, nor the Muscogee peoples is a fact lost to those other than historians, scholars of native history and the well read. The only "princesses" found amongst the Cherokee and the Muscogee peoples is and always has been those who have been selected as such during the annual Miss "Cherokee" or Miss "Muscogee" pageants held amongst the four tribes.

Prior to the removal in 1838, the Cherokee occupied parts of western South Carolina, north Georgia, north Alabama, eastern Tennessee, western North Carolina and southern Virginia. With settlers pressing into lands then occupied by the lower town Cherokee, those living in the areas of current Habersham, Hall and Barrow counties as well as lands in Alabama ceded their land to the Federal Government by the signing of the Treaty of July 8, 1817. The treaty exchanged lands in the eastern regions for land in northwest Arkansas, north of the Arkansas River and south of the White River. These Cherokees would be known as the Old Settlers and would be the predecessors of those who would form the United Keetoowah Band in 1949.

By 1838 the removal of the Five Civilized Tribes remaining east of the Mississippi to Indian Territory in Oklahoma was well under way. Those Cherokee forced from their homes and moved to the west by land and water routes on the

trail where they cried, "nuna-hi du-na tlo-hi-lu-i," would form the nucleus of what is today known as the Cherokee Nation. The remaining few Cherokees who hid out in the mountains of Tennessee, North Carolina and Georgia were granted the opportunity to remain in the mountains in close proximity to the mother town of the Cherokee, located outside of Bryson City, NC. William Thomas, a white adoptee of Chief Yonaguska would purchase land for the remaining Cherokee. This land, now held in trust by the Federal Government for the use of the Cherokee Indians is known as the Qualla Boundary.

Not unlike the Cherokee people, the Muscogee people hailed from the regions of Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina, but their ancestral lands extended as far south as Florida. Whereas the Cherokee were originally one people, the Muscogee were not one distinct tribe but a confederation of several different tribes that was said to be the most advanced political organization north of Mexico at the time of the European settler's advancement into the southeast. The Cherokee having been identified historically by the upper, middle and lower towns, the Muscogee were identified as the Upper and Lower Creeks. The Upper Creeks occupying the regions of the Coosa and Tallapoosa River basins while the Lower Creeks inhabited the Chattahoochee and Flint River basins to the southeast. The Creek would face the same hardships as their Cherokee neighbors and they too would be forced westward establishing their capital in Muscogee, OK.

For more information or to become involved in the exciting project, please visit www.facebook.com/Blood-MountainWeAreHere. Please also visit our Kickstarter campaign site "We Are Still Here Memorial".

For any questions, comments, or donations towards the project, you may contact Jim Brown at 706-745-3839 or Tobie Chandler at 706-745-5789 with the Blairsville-Union County Chamber of Commerce.

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separation of church and state—but I still have rights and an obligation to be true to my beliefs, which have not yet been totally stripped away from me, as they have been in middle eastern countries where Christians are being beheaded by zealots who demand allegiance to their religion and no other, even when those facing death are the ones performing acts of kindness and mercy among the poor.

We still have some semblance of freedom of the press, and others may offer differing opinions. While our country is not perfect, it is surely a far better system of government than any other I would choose. I have been part of a small prayer

group that has prayed privately for our local, state and federal government for many years, but this venue to do so publicly with others from many different denominations is just what has been needed. So on the first Thursday next month, and each month thereafter, I will join the Awake America group to lift my own prayers to God, that He may turn our country back to its founding roots and awaken people to the necessity of a heartfelt turning to Him for direction. Those who choose to disagree are free to stay home. That's what living in a free society means.

Respectfully submitted,
Arlene M. Gray