

Opinions

Everybody has one

Here's two cents

I do my best to give folks their say in Letters to the Editor.

As long as they can be civil, I'll run their letter.

I don't run letters that spew hatred. At least, I try not to do that.

With all that said, the 2012 General Election is over, said and done, toss some dirt on it.

Someone asked me on Thursday if I was through crying over the elections. Well, I didn't shed one tear before or after.

The people of Union County spoke loud and clear about who they want to represent them in the various local offices of government and that's good enough for me.

It's time to mend fences, move forward and work together for the betterment of our community.

I tried to shake hands with all the candidates on Election Night. Before, and after the election. I shook them all with a couple of exceptions. I couldn't find those folks.

Meanwhile, I've heard the phrase diamond in the rough many times over the years. On Tuesday, Nov. 7th, I saw one in person.

Her name is Cindy Byers, an unassuming wife, mother and professional business woman. She ran for District 3 Board of Education. Her opponent, and the incumbent, was a well respected resident, Carlton Collins.

She won the seat with many, many votes to spare on Election Night. More than 2,000 to be exact.

Cindy told me if she had to play dirty politics to win a seat on the BOE, she didn't want to win. She praised Carlton, more than once or twice calling him a good man, a fine man and a Godly man.

Cindy, you're going to do just fine on the Board of Education. In fact, when the whole ordeal of Decision 2012 goes down in the record books, you are the face I'm going to remember years down the road.

Cindy Byers' approach to politics was/is the most selfless act I've ever seen from someone running for political office.

She was home washing supper dishes instead of being at the courthouse watching election counts.

If she won, she won, if she didn't, Carlton is a good man to be sitting on the Board of Education. She believes everyone serving on the board are Godly people.

I guess what I'm trying to say, well, Cindy Byers is a breath of fresh air. I wish all of our candidates could say they behaved like Cindy during the election process.

If all politicians were like Cindy, none of them would have a bad name. But, that's just it, Cindy isn't a politician. She's not going to cut someone's throat, and she's not going to stab them in the back. She's going to win because people vote for her. And, I think they'll continue to vote for her years from now.

Shifting gears, I take this time to congratulate Lamar Paris, Mack Mason, Lee Knight, of course Cindy, Gary Davenport, Benny Erwin and Stephen Allison for being elected, or re-elected as our public servants.

I trust that folks are ready to get back down to business, that they're ready to mend fences, and ready to build bridges.

Elections can be a volatile time, they can cause hard feelings and those feelings can remain hurtful for years down the road.

It's my conclusion that folks are just glad this whole election process is in the books. It's time to shake hands and move forward. No one ever prospered by living in the past.



Charles Duncan
Straight Shooting



Life's Foundation Stone

There can be no "government of the people", "by the people", and "for the people" unless the people are right. That means that the foundation must be built upon truth. I have believed, still believe and will always believe that God is the source of all truth and that He gave the Ten Commandments through Moses for His people, Israel. Israel had been in slavery for four hundred years. If they survived as a nation they had to live life based upon God's commands.

Our nation was likewise founded upon God's laws and if we survive we must live life based upon truth. God did not say to Israel nor to America "here are a few ideas that I want you to check out to see if they meet with your approval." What He said was, these are commands and if you live by these commands, life will work out, if you don't, life will fail.

I believe there are absolute truths that are the same for all generations. The Psalmist said, "For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations" (Ps. 100:5). Truth is truth period. I feel like gagging when folks say, "Oh", "What may be truth to you, may not be truth to me." Or those who say, "Oh" "You are too narrow-minded, you must be tolerant and accept other people's views." "You mustn't hurt anyone's feelings."

In my estimation, one of the most dangerous threats to America's freedom and future is to teach our children to accept error, falsehood and deception without any questions. We will doom and damn this generation if we do not teach them to probe, analyze, dissect, question and be relentless in seeking and searching for the truth.

There are those in high places (that deserve a low place) that have attempted to re-write our nation's history and have attempted to change God's laws to make truth be what ever they want it to be. There are people in our generation who have become so open-minded that all of their brains have fallen out of that open space and say, "Oh", truth is what you want it to be."

We need to wake up as individuals and start doing some research, and seeking truth from the right source rather than listening to a bunch of crackpots and potheads. If we do not start thinking for ourselves the next generation will look like a bunch of department store manikins (or womanikins) and robots that are incapable of thinking or having any freedom unless someone higher up is pulling the strings.

Truth does endure to all generations. There are no politicians, no high court judges, no religious bodies: Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Church of God, Assembly of God, Catholic, etc; that can change God's truth for their generation. We may not like the truth; it may convict us, hurt us, embarrass us, ridicule us, condemn us, separate us, and imprison us and a thousand other things. However, if you do not accept God as absolute truth you will never be free and you will never have a future. He that forsakes the truth of God forsakes the God of truth! (Romans 2:25)



Danny Parris
It's On My Mind



Mickey Cummings
Around The Farm

The Job

The Doctor told my grandfather that his wife, Glenna, needed some rest from the hard physical labor she performed on a daily basis. Granny was a hard worker and she and Papa had been buying land and clearing it as quickly as possible. So, when my Daddy was in the 6th grade the family packed up and moved to the "Windy City", Chicago. Papa's brother helped him to find a job in a warehouse and Granny also found a job that was much easier than clearing land and working the farm.

At first everything was great in their new home. Papa and Granny had more money than they'd ever seen. They were able to purchase a new automobile. They had indoor plumbing and electricity in their homes. Daddy and Uncle Bud were enrolled in a great school. Weekends meant the family was able to spend some leisure time together. The young parents took their kids to the zoo, museums, professional baseball and football games, and swimming in Lake Michigan. For the first time in his life Papa ate pizza. Granny said it was some of the happiest time in her life.

But, Papa missed Alabama. He missed the feel of the soil and the smell of fresh turned ground in the spring. Papa missed humid summer and the moderate winters. He wanted to go home. But, he also loved his wife and therefore, never complained about missing home. Daddy and Uncle Bud had a hard time fitting into the local community until the young parents enrolled their sons in local sports programs. The family lived in a mostly Italian Neighborhood and it wasn't hard to see that the Cummings boys were not Italian. The young boys talked funny and were picked on until the local neighborhood boys found out they could play ball. By the time my father was in the 9th grade he played on a baseball team that won the state championship. Everything was going great for the young family.

During the previously mentioned State Championship Baseball Game some things happened that were unsportsmanlike. My father's team traveled to another part of town to play against another team that was comprised of boys from another ethnicity. After these Italian boys won the game some of them were roughed up by the men of the community where they were playing. When all the boys were safely back at home they were questioned about what happened to them. Some of the local men took some of the boys back to this other neighborhood where they identified their attackers. The Italian men abducted the men who had attacked their sons. They took them down to the lakefront where they were stripped, beaten and forced to walk home naked through the streets of Chicago. These men

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10 Rules for Initial Sales Calls

What does it take to achieve a customer friendly attitude in the sales arena? No matter your job description, sales can be a part of every business transaction. Barry Farber who is a marketing consultant for corporations and business owners says certain rules apply no matter what the season or product. Certain basic fundamentals make a difference in what you offer potential customers. Are you in a sales position? Does your business require you to be a salesperson from time to time? If so, the following essential rules can help make the job more satisfying for the seller, and create the potential for a happy customer.

A great sale starts by researching the person and company you are meeting. Find out about their history, products, competition and customers. That customer knowledge will show the prospective client you are willing to go the extra mile. You can ask better questions and provide better solutions. You show that you care by looking for depth of knowledge about the customer before the sale begins. Second, confidence will be gained by your research. Confidence is an essential element of a successful sales meeting. People can read your facial expressions, your body language and your voice inflection. They can match the words from your sales pitch to your beliefs. Your deep emotions are demonstrated during the conversation. Confidence in what you are selling puts the customer at ease and lets them know you believe there is value in what you are offering. Third, time is a valuable commodity. Start with this simple phrase followed by this question, "I know we set aside 30 minutes for today's meeting, I just want to make sure that still works for you?" Courtesy is key to making a sale. The last thing you want is someone looking at their watch because they have more pressing matters. Awareness of the time frame also helps manage the flow of the meeting. Fourth, connections help break the ice



Joe Garner
BUCC



JoAnne Leone
Farmers Market Moment

My Over the Fence Neighbor

I have a neighbor whom I visit with "over the fence" at least once a day. Bella is magnificent in every way. She's only three years old and lives with her mom, step-father, a younger brother and her aunt. From my home office desk, I see her romping in the yard, almost taunting me to come out and play. When I do get around to getting over to the fence, she usually meets me with a chin on my shoulder and a kiss on my forehead.

Yesterday, when I approached the fence, I was on my cell phone. A dear friend from my college days had called from Ohio, while I was out for my walk, and I didn't feel I could get off the phone just to greet Bella. She wasn't too happy with my distraction and tried to take the phone off my ear. No, she's not a spoiled little brat. She's about an 800 lb. Tennessee Walker. And she's got me wrapped around her "not so little" hoof!

I never was around horses until I got lucky enough to have neighbors on either side move their hoofed family members in with them. I marvel at their graceful girth, their distinct personalities and their ravenous appetites for ground cover. I wish I understood the meaning of the snort, the high pitched whinny and the moaning sound they sometimes omit, but I'm pretty tone deaf when it comes to other languages. I failed first year Spanish in high school, even with a tutor.

Bella doesn't much care if we talk. She enjoys just a sniff, a nuzzle and loves to have her neck scratched and stroked. My time with her each day is short. Yet, even in those few minutes, the interaction between us has a way of changing my whole physical and mental demeanor. I'm not sure she gets the same pleasure, but she seems appreciative of my visits, none the less.

Autumn leaves blanket my property. From my front yard, I have a wonderful glimpse of the mountains as they shed their coat, ready to take on the chill of winter, bare

See Leone, page 5A

Election

I would like to repeat my thanks for all the support in not only this election but in the previous ones as well. I am very humbled and proud to once again serve the citizens of Union County as your Commissioner. I will continue to answer your questions and educate you about the working of our county through this column. Please let me know if you have any questions you would like for me to include. unioncounty@uniongov.com, (706) 439-6600 or write to Union County Commissioner, 65 Courthouse St, Blairsville, GA 30512.



Lamar Paris
Q & A

Q. Are you excited to have been reelected as our county commissioner?

A. You bet I am!! Certainly, I am relieved that there are no more campaign ads to prepare, no more signs to purchase and install, and no more worrying about the election. But I also know we have a lot more hard work to complete this year. We still have to finalize our budget for next year, make sure we keep a strong eye on expenses and prepare for what could be a long, hard winter. We are all excited to continue working for you.

Q. Have you talked to any state folks regarding the national election results?

A. I am now at a state conference of the Regional Commissions of Georgia and Senator Saxby Chambliss spoke to us for an hour this morning. It was an amazing speech and while he admitted to having a case of "election night results hangover", he was very positive that both houses of Congress and the President would be able to work together to find solutions to some major issues that are immediately facing our country.

Q. What were the major issues Senator Chambliss was concerned with?

A. Those issues that he mentioned were the Sequestration issue that could drastically impact our military spending and the entire government, (I mentioned this in last week's questions), and the Fiscal Cliff legislation that

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Letters

To the Editor

Proud of SCV

Dear Editor,

I could offer an articulate, point-by-point refutation of the assertions posited by the author of last week's "Lay It on the Line" letter, but I long ago learned that attempting to address such massive ignorance is like trying to teach a pig to sing; it wastes your time and annoys the pig.

Although my Master's degree is in Political Science, my avocation has always been history, inspired by participation in Civil War re-enacting and membership in Sons of Confederate Veterans. The angry, bitter rhetoric contained in "Lay It on the Line" is a sad illustration of how state-school mythology about the War Between the States perpetuates divisiveness and intolerance.

After every war in recorded history, the victors get to write the history. An in-depth study of the time period from, say, 1850-1870 would reveal to the student that Abe Lincoln made numerous "racist" remarks, most of the Southern states had outlawed slavery long before 1860, and a number of free black men fought for the Confederacy in the war. The cause of the war was not a "noble crusade" to free oppressed slaves; it was economic aggression by the industrial North against the agrarian South, combined with the political fracture of the autonomy of the states against the collectivist power of the federal government, which sparked the conflict. This isn't taught in public schools, because it runs against the politically correct mythology.

I suspect that the author of "Lay It on the Line"—were she old enough—would have been among those who spat on American soldiers returning from Vietnam. Like the conscripts of Mr. Lincoln's army, the draftees sent to Nam were spoon-fed propaganda about how righteous that nasty little war was; for the most part, they remained uninterested in anything but staying alive. The soldiers of the Confederacy—including five of my ancestors—were fighting for their homes and families. A close look at Sherman's march to the sea or Sheridan's campaign in the Shenandoah Valley tells you how that turned out. (At one point, Sherman massacred "liberated" black civilians simply because he couldn't feed them.)

This is not the first time I've confronted the "SCV=KKK" misconception. SCV has tried numerous times to take the Klan to court and obtain restraining orders against the KKK for their misappropriation of the Confederate flag. I've been a signatory to several of those legal petitions. In the mid-'90s, a racist talk show host on WGST in Atlanta calling himself "Ralph From Ben Hill" made inflammatory remarks about SCV that were profane and scurrilous; when I politely tried to correct him on-air, he hung up. Teaching a pig to sing...

But my fondest memory is being in a British pub, laughing and throwing darts with my Irish cousins. A rather high-toned English gentleman noticed my SCV pin, stepped over and asked "Are you some sort of Klansman in America, old boy?" I assured him I sleep on my sheets; I don't wear them. I can forgive the English gent, because he obviously ain't from around here. If such a benign aspect of our society as SCV is so appalling and repugnant to someone who has no inkling of its origins or purpose, then I suggest the offended party return whence they came. Delta is ready when you are.

Robert B. Webb

A proud voter turnout

Dear Editor,

There are many reasons to be proud of our community and I added two more to my list this week.

First, having 85-plus percent of our registered voters actually vote is a tremendous reflection on the involvement and commitment of Union County residents.

Secondly having all the candidate signs picked up in short order after election day is reflection of the quality of all candidates and their supporters.

Well done Union County.
Patrick Malone

Today, I'm hanging the American Flag upside down

Dear Editor,

Obama will continue to use Executive Orders instead of going through the Congress to get his way.

He'll appoint as many as three new Supreme Court Justices who, along with Kagan and Sotomayor, will control The Court for the next two generations.

He'll continue to seek not to "offend" Islam.

He'll push for more gun laws.
Harry Reid will help him to raise taxes. Current estimates indicate an additional \$10,000 per family -- on those earning less than \$200,000.

Obamacare will be fully-implemented. Estimates run as high as \$30T in costs. We Senior Citizens will suffer from rationed care.

Eric Holder will remain as A.G.
Watch out for Iraq and the threat to oil shipping and to Israel.

The Southern border become even more porous.
Brian Terry and Jaime Zapata will be forgotten as will the Libyan Ambassador and his three staffers.

Millions of people will remain forever dependent on the Government -- and Democrats.

We, the People, have happily, smilingly, eagerly, voted ourselves into Socialism.
George Mitchell

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