

# Opinions

Everybody has one...

## Habitat for Humanity

Did you know that now is an excellent time to consider donating land or real estate to Habitat for Humanity? With the appreciation of property values in recent years, and the increase in property taxes, donating property to a charitable organization is a great way to potentially save on tax bills, utilize as a tax deduction, and make a meaningful contribution to the cause of Habitat. Whether it is undeveloped land, a rental property, unwanted inherited properties, or a home, your contribution provides housing solutions to our community.

2022 has been a busy year for Habitat. We are currently working on our 14th Helping Hands project. Our first home build of 2022 is underway, and we are hopeful to have more builds in the near future. With that being said, the building materials, land and labor needed to achieve our work have all gone up. Habitat would like to continue the good work we are providing in our local communities, and to do so will require a continuation of the support and generosity we receive from our donors. Donations, whether property, financial, or items provided to our Restore, help Habitat significantly.

Habitat for Humanity Towns/Union Counties is dedicated to providing safe, affordable housing in our area. We can utilize the land to build more housing, or if the property is in another area, we can sell the property to help fund our local community work. Ask your legal or tax advisor for guidance on property donations. If you or someone you know has a property to donate, please contact Charlotte Randall at 706-745-7101. Feel free to stop by the Habitat for Humanity Restore at 225 Wellborn Street, Blairsville, GA, 30512.

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." ~Coretta Scott King

**Habitat Happenings**  
Executive Director  
*Charlotte Randall*



## Find the Anchor

"We Make Marines," the sign shouted as I drove beneath it. It was a steel version of a Parris Island drill instructor making sure I got the message.

I was out of my element, and a bit unnerved. The gate sentry made me park within eyesight so he could run a background check. "I'm supposed to be on the access list," I explained. He chuckled. I complied.

Upon my release, I drove through the base to the homes along the waterfront. I was visiting my Auburn roommate from long ago. Captain Terry Gordon, USN, was set to retire after 30 years as a chaplain to Marines and Sailors.

The next day, it took three Marine generals, a letter from George W. Bush, a video message from Charles Barkley, and a Marine band to celebrate Gordon's final bosun's whistle. They also celebrated his family for their support. He traveled the world to advance the Navy's mission. As a chaplain, he advanced the Kingdom of God.

The same day, newly minted U.S. Marines were graduating from 13 weeks of basic training. They had endured separation from their families, physical and mental endurance training, and The Crucible - the final transformation from recruit to Marine.

One was looking back over his career. Others were looking forward to theirs. All were transitioning. As are we. Life comes at us in seasons, doesn't it? You are always transitioning, adapting to changes, even while you wish things would stay the same.

Life transitions can be either a steady current or a lashing typhoon. Either way, you need something to steady you. By faith in the Lord Jesus Christ you find God's unchangeable purpose, to offer a hope that makes sense of life. We "have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast" (Heb. 6:18-19).

Some young recruits did find the anchor of their souls that previous weekend. At a Parris Island chapel service, over 100 of them indicated they wanted a personal faith in Christ. Amen.

**All Things New**

*Wayne Fowler*



## Commissioner's Questions

### Q. What is a Sole Commissioner?

A. It is one of the most simple governments and has the ability to get the most done with the least amount of confusion and disruption. A Sole Commissioner serves as a Commission Board (Legislative) and as operations (Administrative) manager.

### Q. How many Sole Commissioner forms of government still exist in Georgia?

A. There are seven counties that still have this form of government. Five are in North Georgia and two are in South Georgia. They are Bartow County (Cartersville), population 106,456, Walker Co (Lafayette), pop 63,802, Chattooga Co (Summerville), pop 24,826, Towns Co, Pop 11,815, Union County, Pop 23,999 and in South Georgia Pulaski Co, Pop 11,185, and Bleckley Co, Pop 4,605.

### Q. Are there any unique benefits of a Sole Commissioner form of government?

A. Two main benefits are accountability and speed of decision making. If a citizen has an issue, they know who to come to. If a decision is needed, it can be made quickly. This has a great benefit in resolving conflicts, attracting economic development and securing funding opportunities. At the regional and State level, the County speaks with one voice, and a Sole Commissioner can form valuable personal relationships with officials who can provide partnerships, grants and other benefits, from the Capitol, to the Legislature, to GDOT, DNR, EPD and a host of agencies and non-profits.

### Q. You say that the Sole Commissioner is not a Dictator, but you make all the decisions. How can that be?

A. The Sole Commissioner does not make all the decisions. I am mostly over only the budget of the elected officials. Therefore, the Sheriff, Probate Judge, Magistrate Judge, Clerk of Court and Tax Commissioner, Coroner have their own offices and budgets and manage and operate them to their state standards. In addition, there is the Recreation Board, Development Authority Board, Golf Board, Alcohol Board, Building and Development Office and several others who manage their own day to day operations and budget. Then the Road Dept, Fire Department, E-911, Maintenance

See *Paris*, page 5A

**Q & A from Union County Commissioner**

*Lamar Paris*



## Letters to the Editor

### Entertainment and Recreation

Dear Editor,

Spring Activity in all the venues makes us aware of how much the office of our Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris has done to improve family entertainment, athletics and recreation in the past 20 years. There are things going on all over town. Meeks Park and canoe run and dog park, the Ag Center, Chamber of Commerce and View Restaurant, pickleball courts and athletic center, Performing Arts Center, the Farmers Market (remember its humble beginnings in the parking lot outside the commissioner's office). The list of accomplishments goes on and on, so get out and enjoy! A special job well done to Lamar and his (our) staff for bringing an Aldi grocer to Union County.

Just saying,  
*Cindy Mae Tidwell*

### Thank You

Dear Editor,

I want to shout out a great big "thank you" to the fisherman, crews of two pontoon boats, and my neighbors who came to my rescue on June 28th. I capsized my sailboat just outside Jack's Creek. Because of the boat taking on water and at the risk of sinking, the fisherman tied a bow line to his boat as two pontoon boat men jumped into the water without hesitation and helped me right her. My neighbors saw my bright sails go down and not come back up, and sped toward the scene. With their boat they safely towed me back to the boat ramp. And, miraculously, I was able to locate my valuables (driver's license, boat registration, etc.) so nothing of value was lost.

I am so appreciative of the quick response, caring and skills by our Blairsville nautical neighbors! I will be forever indebted to them.

*John Daniel*

### Gun Control Part II

Dear Editor,

This is my response to a condemning review of my Letter to the Editor titled "Gun Control." The critic apparently knows historical facts but demonstrated little ability to chronologically follow history. He flamboyantly pointed out that the militia was in existence before the writing of the Second Amendment. The Militia that he referred to was established for the defense of an American Colony that was formed by the British. The "A well regulated Militia ...." in the Second Amendment discussed in my letter was referencing the need for a Federal Militia to defend the united states (formerly the American Colonies). When the Second Amendment is read in that context, then it becomes more clear that the

See *Tornabene*, page 5A

### Road Rage

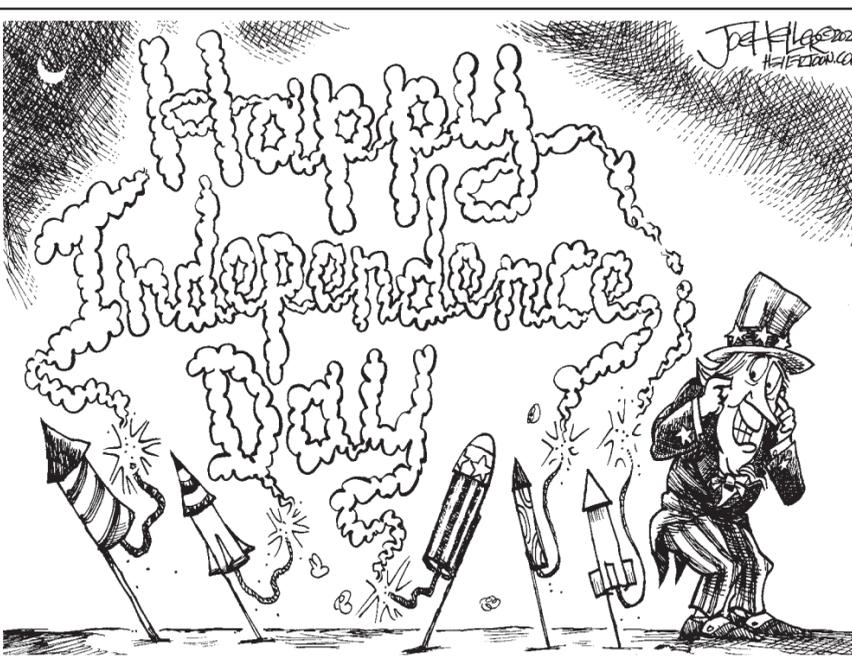
Dear Editor,

I've lived in the Blairsville area for 17 years. We came here when the infrastructure could handle the population and it was so delightful and slow moving. Nowadays, there's so much traffic that I hate to go to town. In today's world no one is taught how to use a four-way stop or a roundabout. It's comical to watch people lose their minds trying to master these mind-boggling structures. Stop signs? Union County don't need no stinking stop signs.

Today, I had the most unusual thing happen to me. I was pulling out of Foodland turning toward the square. Traffic was as usual too heavy for what these roads were designed for. I found a little break in traffic and proceeded out. There was minimal chance of me being hit by anyone.

After pulling into my lane, I looked left and a cute little Volkswagen Beetle was coming from the square. The driver was laying down on the horn and in full road rage. Screaming and making an awful face. Like I said, there was minimal chance she would hit me in her lane. Being the nice guy that I am, I smiled at her. Then, I had to do a double take. It was a Nun. A full habit wearing freaking NUN losing her mind. I felt so terrible for her. Apparently, she had dropped her Rosary or something terrible had occurred that she was late for. God help me. I couldn't help but laugh. I briefly felt that I should turn around, follow her, and make sure she safely got to her destination and pray with her. But, she was long gone. Long gone like the little Blairsville of the past. Now, it's multimillion dollar houses, stor-

See *Brown*, page 5A



## Letters to the Editor

### Attention!

Dear Editor,

Trying to get information from the Board of Elections is like... Oh, Gee... Libby Stevens has canceled the next meeting due to COVID that week! Her words, not mine. Guess she or the other members are having COVID exposure July and August... Humm???

Trying to get ballot images for the May 24 General Primary Election and she is stalling! She sent the absentee ballot images and the two provisional ballot images. Guess she doesn't really know how to access the file or the early and day-of voting or, Humm, can't because she knows that there really is fraud somewhere or everywhere in there?!

*Marsha Lodes*

### Goodbye America

Dear Editor,

Goodbye, America that was. I can remember growing up, things were peaceful. We didn't have to worry about many things, especially our rights and our freedom. Today's world, what in tarnation has happened? First, we've officially lost our right to abortions. Supreme Court overturned Wade vs Roe. And that's alright for them to do so? And now they're looking at overturning other rights that we have. When is it going to stop, people? It's way past time we take our country back, or bury our heads in the sand and start applying some vaseline. Nuff said.

*Nick DeGolyer*

Proud supporter of PERSONAL FREEDOM

### Board of Commissioners?

Dear Editor,

Petitions have been circulated in the town square and elsewhere to place the referendum for a multi-member county commission in an upcoming election. This could include one commissioner in each quadrant of the County and an at-large commissioner. The days of the sole commissioner making unilateral budget, tax, land purchase/sale and other decisions behind closed doors for an entire county are long past. There are only five such counties in the entire U.S., all of them in rural north Georgia.

See *Cooper*, page 5A

### Independent Legislatures

Dear Editor,

It's about time for our side to see the light. The Moore v. Harper case before the Supreme Court will make the decisions easier. The leaders in the state can continue the revolution they started when Obama appeared. Let's consider

See *Green*, page 5A

## Hootie and Old John

Hootie was a likable fellow who loved to make people smile. He enjoyed telling stories and looking important. He always enjoyed being in the limelight. This man was a person which would give the shirt off of his back to help another person. But sometimes as he aged his stories would become exaggerated.

For example, a fish he caught as a boy grew nearly 5 inches during his lifetime. An old boar coon he and his daddy caught years earlier had increased by 10 pounds. His favorite coon hound which was just an average dog when living had become a world beater during his senior years. According to Hootie he even walked to and from school in 10 inches of snow and it was uphill both ways.

But there was another side to this storytelling old man. Once a family down the holler from Hootie had some trouble. Old man Mitchell broke his leg and couldn't plow his mules to break up the ground for spring planting. Hootie showed up at the Mitchell Farm to break the land for the family and wouldn't take any payment for his service. Later in his life our storyteller cut firewood for the young family of a fellow named Homer. Homer was laid up sick in the dead of winter, and Hootie's efforts kept the family from freezing. He was always the first person to show up and the last to leave when work days were held at the church house.

But, later in life, Hootie developed some problems of his own. He had trouble with one of his legs that necessitated his use of a crutch. This resulted in a real slowdown in his escapades in the woods. Hootie's wife became ill and passed away while one of his sons ran into some legal trouble resulting in his incarceration. However, the man's demeanor never changed. He still spent his time smiling, telling stories and trying to help others.

There was another man in the community called Old John. John, like Hootie, was an outdoorsman. He loved fishing and hunting. But, John was a person who always thought he had to be the best at everything. Unlike Hootie, John's version of the story always revealed that he wanted to be better than everyone else. So, if your coon hound treed 45 coons last winter, then John's would have treed 46. Or if you killed a 6-point buck, he would kill a 7-pointer. But, these were stories where John always did better than anyone else. And he enjoyed letting you know that he was better than you.

Old John was especially hard on Hootie. All the old men would gather down at the little country store and begin telling stories. Hootie

See *Cummings*, page 5A

**Around The Farm**

*Mickey Cummings*



## Fire Ants

Fire ants are very common throughout Georgia. Thankfully, we don't have as many in the mountains as they do south of us. However, once you experience a fire ant bite, you won't ever forget it. Another problem with fire ants is that you rarely get just one bite. Fire ants were first reported in Georgia in the 1950s.

They've been found all the way from North Carolina to Texas, and down to Florida. Let's talk about fire ants and things that you can do to control them so that they don't take over your lawn or pasture.

If you can manage to get an up-close look without being bitten and stung, you'll see that fire ants have two nodes between their abdomen at the end of their body and the thorax in the middle of their body. Fire ants generally like to stay in open grassy areas.

Fire ants are most active when temperatures are between 70 and 85. In the fall fire ants are active because they are foraging for food. This makes fall the best time to treat them. Treatment during the spring and summer is also possible, but effective population control will be less likely. When it's really hot during the summer time fire ants will burrow deeper into the ground, making them more difficult to treat. Treatments in the summer are best done in the morning or evening when it's cooler.

Using a bait will be the most effective way of controlling fire ants. Amdro is the main ant bait that is used for fire ants. Broadcast the bait either over the mounds, or in a four-foot circle around each mound. It's important to know that Amdro is not labelled for use in vegetable gardens. It has to be used in scenarios where the plants growing there are not going to be eaten. If a few mounds remain after seven to ten days, a follow up application of Orthene will be effective against those problematic mounds. Take a long stick and quickly put a hole in the center of the mound. Then fill the hole with insecticide to eliminate those mounds. When applying pesticides always make sure to read and follow the label.

I have also seen people using orange oil mixed with soap and other ingredients. This treatment is effective because it eats away the ant's skin. However, it will also kill any other insects, grubs, or worms that are in its path. It could also strip away the outer layer of any roots that it meets.

There are not many biological controls for fire ants in the United States because they are an invasive species. Fire ants are native to South America and have many natural enemies

See *Williams*, page 5A

**Blairsville - Union County Chamber President**

*Steve Rowe*



## Chamber of Commerce

It's great to be able to reflect back on July 4th and all that it truly means. You hopefully have fond memories of time spent with friends and family, being able to have a three-day weekend, and if you were the lucky one, winning the Chamber raffle.

But the truth is that there is more to what we celebrate on July 4th. We are truly blessed to live in a country where we are free to express our opinions and to live the life we choose to live. Some choose a Ford while others like Chevrolets, and some choose to spend time on the lake, while others enjoy a hike to their favorite waterfall or peak. This Country was built on debate and a lot of prayers, but when it was all said and done, our founders were still able to spend time together and enjoy what they did have in common.

We live in a community that is very unique. Our leaders are able to work together to get things done for the betterment of the residents. This does not mean that we will agree with

See *Chamber*, page 5A

**Watching and Working**

*Jacob Williams*



## North Georgia News

Published since 1909 • Legal Organ of Union County

**Kenneth West** Publisher/Owner  
**Shawn Jarrard** General Manager/Editor  
**Derek Richards** Advertising Director  
**Todd Forrest** Sports Editor  
**Lowell Nicholson** Photographer

Website: www.nganews.com • Email: northgeorgianews@hotmail.com • Mail: P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, GA 30514

The North Georgia News is an independent and nonpartisan publication. As such, third-party views contained herein are not necessarily the opinions or positions of this newspaper, e.g. advertising, press releases, editorial content, perspectives expressed in articles covering local events, etc.

Publication No: 001505

Advertising, News deadlines Friday at 4 p.m. • Mail Service for all subscriptions except 30512, 30514 & 30572 - One Year \$45. In county, carrier delivered subscription is \$5. 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. 24, 1988, at the Post Office in Blairsville. NORTH GEORGIA NEWS is not responsible for errors in advertising beyond the cost of the actual space involved. All advertisements are accepted subject to the Publisher's approval of the copy and to the space being available, and the Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.

Phone: 706-745-6343 Fax: 706-745-1830 • P.O. Box 2029, Blairsville, Georgia 30514

**Paris... continued from Page 4A**

Dept. Building Dept, Transfer Station all operate and manage all their employees and mostly come to the county with budget related items only. So, you see, there are many, many people making everyday decisions on their own and only must come to the county for large expenditures to be approved.

Those expenditures then come before the Finance Dept, the Purchasing Dept and the Manager prior to reaching my desk for final approval.

**Q. What items in the county are you directly involved with?**

A. I supervise the operations of my office. In my office you will find accounting (Finance), personnel (Human Resources), open records, accounts payable, purchasing, marketing, and construction project management. My office greets the public, answers questions, connects the public to the correct county resource, writes grants, and administers software necessary for various

county functions.

**Q. Are there other issues that separate a Sole Commissioner from a Commission Board?**

A. When you are the Sole Commissioner, you have to make it your business to attend many, many community functions. It is your job to announce new projects, new contracts, agreements, notices, ordinances, and proclamations, etc. If you do not participate in everything related to county government, your county will never work properly. As Sole Commissioner, you must know everything about every office, employee, elected official, project, and cost. While you do not make every decision, you have to know what is going on all the time. This makes the Sole Commissioner type of government so special!

Next week, I will answer questions asked specifically about the Commission Board type of county government.

**Cooper... continued from Page 4A**

Whether you like the existing antiquated system or long for something modern, registered Union County residents/voters should consider signing the petition to get a referendum on a ballot. Signing the petition does not mean that you support the proposed change, only that you would like to exercise your right to vote for or against it. It was last voted on several years ago on the Republican side of the primary ballot and lost by less than 1%. This is not a party issue, but an issue of fair representation for all citizens by something other than edict by

one.

Union County residents are being presented an opportunity to join the rest of the Country in the 21st century in being able to vote for commissioners; to ask questions and present opposing opinions at County Commission meetings without being escorted from the meeting by County deputies at the direction of the Sole Commish. His 22-year reign needs to come to an end.

Congratulations on choosing to exercise your right of free choice.

**Dan Cooper**

**Tornabene... continued from Page 4A**

"right of the people to keep and bear Arms" is referring to those members of the Federal Militia and not all people. The Federal Militia was not fully realized until the Civil War – the Union Army, a well-regulated Militia with enlisted soldiers.

Another point of contention was the weapons that I identified as those used by American Militia who were warding off the English. The high caliber repeating air rifle the Critic flaunted made the arms I described unimportant in comparison. However, there are citations in the literature that state the only military use of the high caliber rapid fire Girandoni Air Rifle was by the Austrian Army starting in 1780. I found no citation to support a claim that this air rifle was widely available to the American Mili-

tia. However, it has been cited that some of the English soldiers carried this rifle. This air rifle also had a bad reputation: very difficult to manufacture, always in short supply, required training and about 1,500 strokes of a hand pump to fill the delicate air reservoir that could be easily damaged and made inoperable. The Critic's belief that the air rifle influenced the writing of the Second Amendment will never be answered, but it doesn't matter because it is inconsequential.

The Critic's personal thoughts about gun control contradict the statistics calculated by many countries with and without gun control. Minimizing the number and removing specific types of guns from the people will work.

**Thomas G. Tornabene**

**Chamber... continued from Page 4A**

everything, but I think if you sit back and look at our community as a whole, you will agree it is pretty special or you wouldn't choose to live here.

We have one of the best recreation facilities around. We have Meeks Park where our kids can play and everyone is welcome to enjoy the walking trails or just sit by the creek and listen to the water running over the rocks. And let's not forget about the festivals and events held in the park. And, how about the Farmers Market, Bryon Herbert Reece Farm, the Sports Complex, and many more that are available for us to enjoy.

We have a school system that is second to none. They provide a STEM program as well as a growing College and Careers Academy, and let's not forget about the award-winning Ag program. Did you know that the CCA was one of a few regional academies and the only academy in the State of Georgia to cross state lines? This not only provides our kids with the best opportunity to succeed but also addresses our future workforce needs.

And our health care

system! Union General is expanding to help serve the residents of our region so that you don't have to travel to get the services you may need. The new Medical Office Building, which is scheduled to open in October, will provide expanded services in Orthopedics, Women's Health, and heart-related services. Union General Health Systems provides 21 Clinics to serve our residents' needs.

And let's not forget our law enforcement, firefighters, and first responders. Please be sure to thank them and our Veterans for all they do to keep us safe and to protect those freedoms that the Fourth of July represents.

Thanks to all our Leaders that help make Life Better in Blairsville!

**Brown...**

**continued from Page 4A**

age buildings, and people with just too little patience and the ability to drive.

Y'all be safe out there, ya hear? Find something to make you laugh today. I did.

**Darrell Brown**

**Cummings... continued from Page 4A**

would get started telling a tale, and Old John would let him get halfway through a story and then make a smart aleck remark about his exaggerating or even telling a downright lie. The old man's face would redden as he quit his story and he would just get up and leave the store.

William was in the store the day of this incident and overheard Old John's scathing words. William said, "John, you ought not be so hard on Hootie. What's the harm in listening to his stories? We all need a little laughter." Once again Old John told everyone that the old man was just full of hot air. "I bet he has never even killed a big deer." "Maybe he has and maybe he hasn't, but, that old man is a good old man and you shouldn't be so hard on him," replied William.

Not long afterward William's son, Dumplin' (he loved chicken and dumplings), killed the biggest deer many people around these parts had ever seen. The old Buck had massive beams and registered 9 full points and broken tine. The young man killed the deer in a place he called "no man's land" which can be found on the east side of the Duncan Ridge. The young man carried and drug the massive deer some three miles back to his home and was about to hoist the buck up by a winch when Hootie drove up.

He got out of his truck and began to laugh. He walked up to Dumplin' and patted his back. He wished to make sure the boy received his due congratulations. Hootie said, "This old buck reminds me of the time I killed that 8 -- or was it a 10-pointer? -- when I was 16." Then the old man fell silent. A

look of deep thought fell across his face. He looked at Dumplin' and then his Dad. For a moment all was silent. Then Hootie said, "You fellows know how Old John is always ragging me? He always says I could never kill a buck bigger than what he has killed. I wonder if you boys would let me borrow this deer for an hour." William looked at his son and grinned. Both of them told Hootie to take the deer for a spell.

They helped the old man load the deer into the back of his old 1963 Chevy Truck. He then drove down to the store where he related to all that would hear about how he'd taken this old mossy back buck. Yes, Old John was there and heard it all. That old man went to his grave thinking he had been bested by Hootie's big deer in 1973. That old fellow moped around for months trying to figure out how he had been bested by that lovable old man. And he never called Old Hootie a liar again.

**Williams...**

**continued from Page 4A**

there. Researchers have to be very careful about introducing a natural predator, because the effects of that introduced species are unknown on our ecosystem.

If you have any questions about fire ants and fire ant control, contact your County Extension Office or send me an email at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

**Green...**

**continued from Page 4A**

viable separation where appropriate, the legislature must control voting who can vote, how and where.

As conservative judge Luttig says, the 2024 election is very important to the independent state legislature doctrine. Police must be given more power when provoked. So-called liberal progressive journalists, writers and artists have to stop the wild accusations. Abortion, thank goodness, is settled. Yay for the right to life.

**Marshall Green, Jr.**

**Your Patriot Reflection**



**The Nearness Of God**

The Founders repeatedly acknowledged and proclaimed the nearness of God in every facet of the struggle they encountered in becoming a free nation!

To name just one: George Washington. Historian Charles Bracelen Flood, in his research on Revolutionary War discovered that there were 67 desperate moments when Washington acknowledged that he would have suffered disaster had the hand of God not intervened on behalf of the struggle for independence. In his first inaugural speech he said: "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency."

The Founders believed in a Creator who is both intelligent and benevolent and therefore eager and able to respond to people's petitions. God has not changed today, so it must be us who needs to draw near to Him, personally and nationally.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuaswarriors.org.

**BLAIRSVILLE HEAVEN'S SAINTS M/M PRESENTS OUR MONTHLY BIKE NIGHT**

**2nd SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH**

**ABIDE COFFEE SHOP**

**Parking lot**

**214C Young Harris Street**

**Blairsville, GA 30512**

**4pm---???**

**ALL riders are welcome**

Bike nights will continue until October. Come out and join us. Get to know some of our local Bikers.